

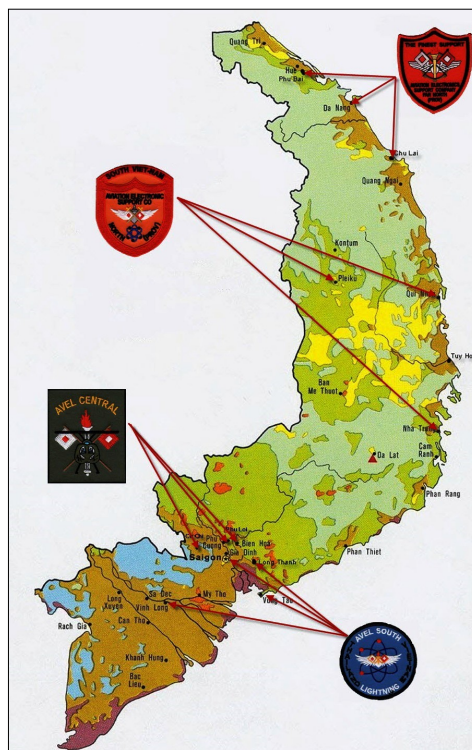
### Celebrity Vietnam Vets

#### Donald Thomas Steinbrunner

Don Steinbrunner was born in Bellingham, Washington in 1932. He played football in college for Washington State College where he was the captain of the team. While in college he was a member of the ROTC.



Steinbrunner was selected in the sixth round of the 1953 NFL draft by the Cleveland Browns. He played as an offensive tackle with the Browns in 1953. He was initially cut in training camp but brought back after the fourth game. The Browns won the Eastern Conference with an 11-1 regular season record.



Steinbrunner played in the 1953 NFL Championship Game at Briggs Stadium in Detroit, but the Browns lost 17-16 to the Lions.

Steinbrunner left his professional football career in 1954 after only eight regular season games to fulfill his military requirement from ROTC. He joined the Air Force as an air policeman and opted to remain in the Air Force and make it a career. He was trained as a navigator and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant. While in the Air Force he was an assistant football coach for four seasons at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs.

Steinbrunner was sent to Vietnam in 1966, and after an injury was offered a safer assignment, which he refused. Major Steinbrunner's plane, a C-123 Provider, was shot down on July 20, 1967, during a defoliation mission spraying Agent Orange on the jungle forest canopy, killing all five crewmen aboard. He was posthumously awarded a Purple Heart and the Distinguished Flying Cross. He is buried in the United States Air Force Academy Cemetery in Colorado Springs.





### **Ode To The Wall** by Tracy A. Towery

I took a trip today, not thousands of miles like the masses here, but one just as profound. As I journeyed I touched them, all of them and they touched me. As I walked I ran my hand over the names inscribed into the black granite and I heard the voices. They all have stories ...

I heard whispers and painful frightened cries of men, more like boys, many just old enough to vote and shave, and of women. Brothers, Sisters, Mothers, Fathers, Husbands and wives. All of those who fought and never made it home.

Viet Nam, the war of wars. The sacrifices American soldiers made should have never been; but they were not the only victims nor the only casualties. There are those who lived through Hell and came home to tell. And though I could never know the pain and suffering, the loss of those who survived and of those who died, I hear their stories.

All I have to do is look at the lone soldier standing at the Wall - his head is bowed, his soul is shattered, his heart is broken, and his friend is dead. And as I watch he reaches forward and touches the name of one who fought beside him. He has memories of their talks, of winning, of defeating, of returning home, and of dying, but they never talked of doing these things alone - never alone.

He stands there, lost in his own thoughts, reliving the terror he tries to forget, his shoulders shudder as he realizes that he didn't come home whole. I watch as a single tear runs down his cheek and for a moment I feel his pain.

All I have to do is to look at the son standing at the Wall, mourning for the father who went to war and returned in a casket. At four years old he could not comprehend what had happened, his father had been taken from him at a very young age in his life. I watch as he runs through the 'what-ifs' in his mind - and he is alone.

I watch as that same single tear runs down his cheek, as he cries for the memories never made and for the very few memories he has to last him a lifetime. For the father he lost, for the grandfather who never knew a grandchild, and the grandchildren that never knew him. The love is there, along with a painful gaping emptiness that never goes away.

All I have to do is stand next to the woman searching for a name on the Wall. I watch as she locates ... the husband? ... the father? ... the brother? So I ask who it is that she has found on the Wall, she turns to look at me with a small bitter-sweet smile on her face. Then softly she starts to speak...

As she begins, she puts her hand to her mouth, I notice the slight tremble as she catches her breath and I listen as she speaks with emotion of the dear brother she has lost in this tragic war. I watch as that same single tear again escapes and runs down her cheek. Together we stand in silence ... then she turns and walks away.

Yes they all have stories, all these 58,219 names on the wall, they were people, they have faces and they have families. If you stand close enough to the "Wall" you can hear the voices too.

Most important you hear the love and the pride of those names on the "Wall", listen closely to the voices of the living and the dead ... they each have a story to tell.

## Stolen and Recovered: Michigan Traveling Vietnam Memorial



A trailer containing a Vietnam War memorial that was stolen in Macomb County has been found in Detroit, according to a group of very relieved veterans.

"We're ecstatic that we've got the wall back. ... It's a little Christmas miracle for us," said Steve Bago, president of Chapter 154 of the Vietnam Veterans of America.

The 16-foot trailer and the Ford F-250 truck that pulled it to cities and towns across Michigan went missing from the chapter's headquarters in Clinton Township earlier this week.

The memorial is composed of five large panels embossed with the names of the 2,654 Michigan residents who died serving in the Vietnam War. It was created in 2005 in preparation for a military air show at Selfridge Air National Guard Base and then given to Chapter 154.

For the past several years, members have driven the memorial, which is 25 feet long when assembled, to car shows, military tributes and community events. They often meet relatives of the people whose names are on it.

"It's (an) absolute honor to take this around. ... They paid the ultimate sacrifice, and we don't ever want them to be forgotten," Mike Schneider, chairman of the Michigan Vietnam Veteran Traveling Memorial and secretary of Chapter 154, said.



Chapter members were heartsick when they realized the truck and trailer were missing. Schneider said he believes it was stolen sometime between Sunday and Monday from outside the chapter's Veteran's Support Center on 15 Mile Road in Clinton Township.

### IN-COUNTRY



END OF THE LINE...MAKE IT HAPPEN!  
(S\_\_T ROLLS DOWNHILL!)



### IN-COUNTRY



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## NEW AVEL, AVIONICS AND VIETNAM VETERANS REGISTERED

**Wilson, Fred (SP/5)**

7614 Montgomery Ave.

Elkins Park, PA 19027

317th Maint. Co. (LEM), 3rd Platoon. 611th  
Transportation Company, Vinh Long: 9 Nov.

1969 - 16 Oct. 1971

[fwilson@kelshwilson.com](mailto:fwilson@kelshwilson.com)

MOS: 35L20

Also assigned to: 458th Signal Detachment

**Vaughn, James D. (SGT)**

347 Summit Dr

Medina, Tennessee 38355

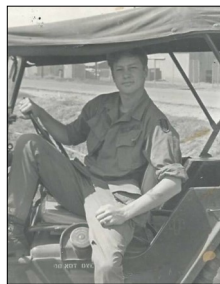
573-718-2454

Avel Central, Phu Loi: Aug 71 to April 72

[jdv35671@gmail.com](mailto:jdv35671@gmail.com)

MOS: 35L20

**AGENT ORANGE**



### TAPS

**Joe Kilrain**

Avel North, 1970-1971

Joe died on 8 January 2019. He was recovery from hip replacement surgery when he suddenly passed away. Joe attended the reunion in Washington DC in 2013

He was 68 years old.

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### PHOTOS

None Submitted

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### CHANGE OF ADDRESS/EMAIL/PHONE

Rodney Young (Avel South) has a new phone: 651-272-9216

Nick Montecinos (Avel Central) has a new phone: 847-436-9624

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### ALL AVEL REUNION/GATHERING 2019

**Join us at LZ Tucson!**

Thursday September 26th to Sunday September 29th 2019

Homewood Suites by Hilton

St. Philip's Plaza

4250 N. Campbell

Tucson, AZ 85718

*Details and reservation info to follow*



**AVEL  
VIETNAM**



**January 2019 Newsletter**