

AVEL VIETNAM

Newsletter - June 2017

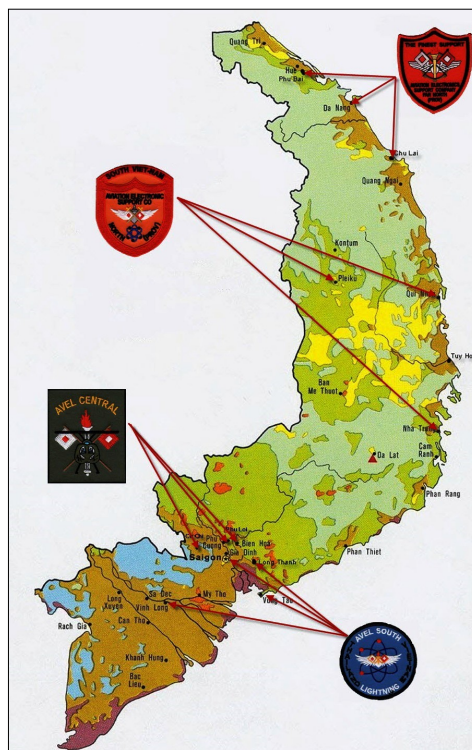
Celebrity Vietnam Vets

Tucker Smallwood

Born in Washington, D.C. in 1944, his childhood included two years in Salonica, Greece and two years as a college student in Munich, Germany. He graduated from the University of Maryland in 1967 with a minor in German and a major in Speech/Television Production. After graduation Tucker began directing television for WBAL in Baltimore but in late spring of 1967, he was drafted into the Army.

Following basic training he was accepted for Officer Candidate School where he was commissioned as an Infantry Officer. After he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant he spent six months as an Infantry Tac Officer at Ft. Benning, he attended Jump School, Special Warfare School at Ft. Bragg and Vietnamese Language School at Ft. Bliss.

Tucker was sent to Vietnam and assigned to a 5-man Advisory Team (MAT-36, Advisory Team 44) to Vietnamese Regional Force troops in the Mekong Delta. He managed to set a new indoor record for individual command longevity at MAT-36 – twenty-two weeks.



His command was cut short when he was seriously wounded by a piece of shrapnel in the neck. He was pronounced dead but one doctor would not give up and continued to work on him and brought him back to the light.

Following months of hospitalization, surgeries and recovery, he extended his Army commitment for three more months to teach patrolling and counter-insurgency tactics to Engineer Officer Candidates at Ft. Belvoir, in Virginia. In September of 1970, Tucker resigned his commission and moved to New York to study acting.

Tucker became a successful actor whose films include *The Cotton Club* (1984), *Contact* (1997), *Deep Impact* (1998), *Larry David's Sour Grapes* (1998), *Traffic* (2000), *Quigley* (2003) and *Spectres* (2004).

On television, he has been a regular and made guest appearances on many series, including *Space: Above and Beyond*, *Millennium*, *Babylon 5*, *The X-Files*, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *Seinfeld*, *Murphy Brown*, *Star Trek: Voyager*, *Star Trek: Enterprise*, *Friends* and *The Sarah Silverman Program*.

He often plays military characters, and as a science fiction fan, he always longed to play a *Star Trek* alien. He came close on *Voyager* when he played the human form of a disguised alien, but it was not until *Enterprise* that he played a fully alien character, a sympathetic Xindi, for several episodes.

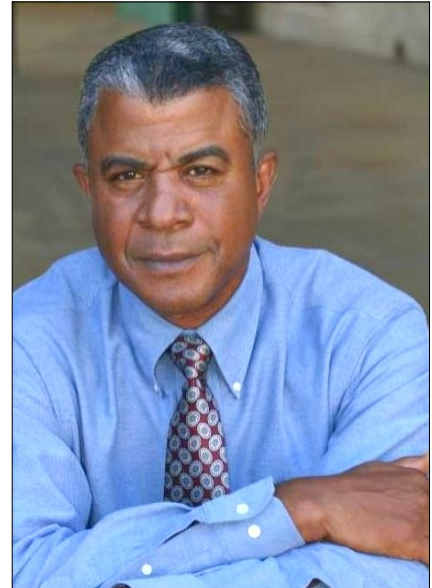


Don't forget to join us on Facebook. Search for the group: AVEL Vietnam.



In 1979 or 1980 he began a descent into depression. In 1988 he was persuaded to seek help and was diagnosed and began treatment for PTSD. He became an advocate for veteran treatment and continues to champion veteran issues. Tucker is a Life Member of VVA, Counterparts, DAV and American Legion Post #43 in Los Angeles. Vietnam remains the defining experience of his life.

Tucker returned to Vietnam in 2004. He is the author of Return To Eden, anthology of 33 personal essays describing his tour of duty in Vietnam, his life as performer and his return to Vietnam. Some of these essays previously appeared in magazines. In 2006, the mp3 version of Return to Eden was first runner-up in the audio/spoken word category at the Fifth Annual DIY Book Festival, which celebrates independent authors and publishers.



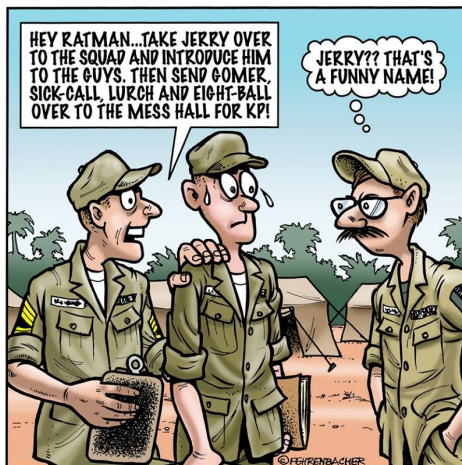
Welcome Home Tucker

Dallas, North Carolina Vietnam Memorial

I came across this Vietnam Memorial from a story in the local Gaston Gazette newspaper. I figured it was worth a visit and I wasn't disappointed. It is dedicated to the nine local citizens that died in Vietnam.



IN-COUNTRY



NICKNAMES? DON'T WORRY JERRY, YOU'LL GET YOURS!

IN-COUNTRY



HOW TO CURE A BASHFUL BLADDER!

AVEL “Gathering”, Charleston 2017

We are having a Gathering of AVEL Vietnam vets in Charleston this October. We are not having a formal Reunion this year but will have a much more relaxed, informal get together. We will have a Hospitality Room as a meeting place to talk, share a cocktail and look at the slide show to bring back all those fond (for the most part) memories.

There will be NO Reunion cost. There will be no banquet or guest speaker. Just enjoy each others company and the beautiful city of Charleston. You will pay for your own room, meals and libations. We will most likely have a group dinner for those interested.

PLEASE REGISTER ON THE WEBSITE! There is no obligation but if you think you are coming **PLEASE REGISTER** so we have an idea of the size of the crowd.

Go to www.avelvietnam.com website to register.

RESERVE YOUR ROOM! We have a room block which can be increased so **PLEASE RESERVE YOUR ROOM IF YOU THINK YOU ARE COMING!** You can cancel your room until a week before the Gathering so..... If you even **THINK** you are coming please reserve your room!!

Dates: 9 October - 12 October 2017

Room Rates: \$101.00/night. We have a rate for the weekend before and after the Gathering at \$139.00/night.

Location: Town & Country Inn and Suites
2008 Savannah Highway
Charleston, SC 29407

Reservations: Call the hotel at 800-334-6660. Tell them you are with the **AVEL Group** and quote the rate. If you have any problems call Stephen Clarke at 843-329-3304

I hope you can make it! Looking forward to seeing you in October!

Vietnam Education Center gets \$10 million grant from the Lilly Endowment



The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund has received a \$10 million grant for its proposed education center adjacent to its famous memorial on the Mall in Washington. The fund said the grant from the Lilly Endowment is the largest single cash donation in the fund’s 37-year history.

The fund has been trying to raise money to build the underground Education Center at the Wall since 2003. With the Lilly donation, the fund said it now has \$42.5 million of the \$130 million it needs to raise. The center will be a 25,000-square-foot building displaying thousands of artifacts left at the memorial over the years, first-person accounts of veterans and citizens, and a two-story wall showing the faces of the 58,000 people whose names are etched on the memorial.

A ceremonial groundbreaking was held in 2012, but costs and expenditures have risen and fundraising had been slow. “It’s in-cred-ibly encouraging that an organization like the Lilly Endowment, that is so well known and so well respected in philanthropic circles, sees the value and has confidence in this project,” said Jim Knotts, president of the fund. “I think that there are a lot of people or corporations that have been interested in this project in the past and they have been sitting on the sidelines,” he said.

“We still have a long way to go, and the project is not certain,” he said in a telephone interview last week. “But I think receiving this kind of commitment from Lilly really indicates to others that this project is a real project, that we’re making great progress, that it will happen with the support of others.”

Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the war’s landmark Tet Offensive by the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong, Knotts said.



In addition, he noted, this September filmmaker Ken Burns is set to release a 10-part documentary about the war on public television stations. Knotts said he has seen six of the episodes. “I truly believe it will restart a conversation in this country to remember and honor our Vietnam veterans in a way nothing ever has,” he said.

Have any stories you would like to submit?

Any photos of veteran activities or memorials to submit?

Send them to me!

Jack McCabe

2120 Augusta National Dr.

Denver, NC 28037

jmccabe51@gmail.com



AVEL
VIETNAM



June 2017 Newsletter