

# AVEL VIETNAM NEWSLETTER

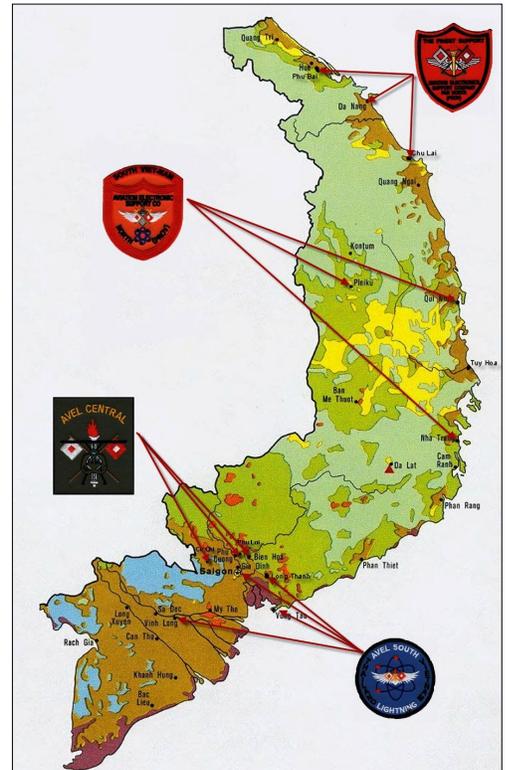
November 2014

## HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO ALL VIETNAM VETERANS AND YOUR FAMILIES!

This is a time of year to enjoy the company of our families and friends. It is a time to thank God for all we have in life. We are the lucky ones, the ones who came home. The ones who have not succumbed to the ravages of Agent Orange related illnesses. At least not yet.

So, as you sit around the table and overeat and maybe overdrink be sure to look around at the family you have and thank them. Thank them for understanding your ups and downs and ins and outs. They are the ones who provide us with strength, clarity and love.

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**



**Christmas is coming!**

**Do you remember those fun Christmas days and nights in beautiful Southeast Asia?**



**Of course you do!** How could you forget those happy, fun filled days? So..... tell us about them!

No matter where you were stationed or when you were there **PLEASE** email me your stories and photos of Christmas in Vietnam. We did this on the website last year and it was a lot of fun.

I need your stories and photos of **your** Christmas in Vietnam! Where were? What did you do to celebrate? How was the chow? (Same as usual? C-rats?)

Hopefully the December Newsletter will be filled with stories of happiness and joy. **But YOU need to contribute!** Send your photos and stories to [jmccabe51@gmail.com](mailto:jmccabe51@gmail.com).

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



## THEN and NOW



Greg Garrison and John Veers in Phu Loi, 1971 and in Georgia, 2014

*Do you have "THEN and NOW" photos? Email them both to Jack McCabe at [jmccabe51@gmail.com](mailto:jmccabe51@gmail.com)*

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## WORLD WAR 2 MARINE COMES HOME



**ROSS TOWNSHIP, MICH.** — Seven decades after a teenage U.S. Marine fell in combat in World War II, the Detroit native finally is back home, thanks to scientific advancements that made identifying his remains possible.

A burial ceremony with full military honors took place Monday for Robert McConachie at Fort Custer National Cemetery, west of Battle Creek in Kalamazoo County's Ross Township.

"Growing up I knew a little of my uncle," his nephew, Col. Andrew McConachie, told WWMT-TV. "But today allows us to know him better."

Robert McConachie, 18, fell in heavy fighting on the Japanese island of Okinawa. He was reported killed in action in June 14, 1945, during a battle on Kunishi Ridge.

His remains were brought in 1987 to the Army's Central Identification Laboratory at Hawaii's Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. They remained unidentified for decades, but developments in testing using mitochondrial DNA recently helped the Pentagon link them to his brother.

Besides the strands of DNA within a cell nucleus, genetic material also is found within cell structures known as mitochondria. That material can be used to make family connections.

"The case was re-examined in 2010 by ... analysts to identify possible individuals who were unaccounted for from this battle and to facilitate family reference sample collection," according to the Department of Defense's Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office. The DNA, plus dental records, then made a positive ID possible, the Pentagon said.

McConachie was only 17 when he enlisted in the Marines in 1944, and James McConachie had to sign a waiver for his son because of his age.

"Today's service was more than just family and friends remembering my uncle," Andrew McConachie said. "It was really the nation honoring the fallen."

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## NEW AVEL VETERANS FOUND

**Bailey, Jesse F. (SP/5)**

745 PERKINS ROAD  
PIKEVILLE, NC 27863  
919-922-5977

128TH, 195TH, 117TH, 120TH, AHC, Phu Loi, Long Binh:

1968-1969 & 1970-1972

[jessebailey608@gmail.com](mailto:jessebailey608@gmail.com)

MOS: 67N20

Army Retired: S/Sgt

**AGENT ORANGE**

**Morkert, Dennis E. (SP/5)**

9591 Ladyslipper Lane Missoula, MT, 59808 STRATCOM to  
255th Sig. Det., Tan Son Nhut, Dian, Tay Ninh, Soui Da:

July 1966-May 1967

[dennis\\_morkert@hotmail.com](mailto:dennis_morkert@hotmail.com)

MOS: 35K20

Other units where you served in Vietnam: 3rd/17th Air  
Cav Oct67 to Aug68

Comments: USASESCS Honor Graduate Jun66

**AGENT ORANGE**

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## TAPS

No deaths reported

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## PHOTOS

None submitted

**What makes Vietnam Veterans  
different from veterans  
of any other war?**

Anyone fighting in a War it is always horrible, dangerous and many are killed.  
But the Vietnam Veterans never received a Welcome Home.  
They were also spit on in the streets and in the airports, called all kinds of names.  
They were called up or either signed up.  
Some even fled the Country to leave from going.  
They were all called baby killers, and other horrible names. Uncalled for.  
This is one of the reasons the war was different.  
The Home Coming!

Marilyn Rose

## ***Coming Home From Vietnam, a book by Jack McCabe***

The coming home experience for Vietnam vets was very different that that of their World war 2 counterparts. For the most part World War 2 troops went overseas as complete units and came home as such. This wasn't the case for the Vietnam Soldier, Sailor, Marine or Airman. Many were out in the field one day and 5 days or less were back home. Only, for most there were no parades, bands, free drinks or even welcomes. We came home individually in a plane full of strangers. All veterans but none known to us. When we arrived in the States we all went our separate ways. Many were met by a hostile public and many more were met with indifference. I can only speak for myself as far as how I was treated and it wasn't very warm and fuzzy. But, this book isn't about me. It is about my brothers and sisters who served in Vietnam.

The story of Vietnam Veterans and their homecoming wasn't always bad. Many came home without trouble, protests or problems. But, all were changed forever by their experience with war. While many were not met with hostility, few were welcomed. Many Vietnam Veterans were asked by the airlines **NOT** to wear their uniforms as it would provoke protests. Many Vietnam Veterans were not welcomed at organizations like the VFW. The question now is "How are we, as aging Vietnam Veterans doing today?" Are we still suffering the effects of that war? Have we moved on like so many people tell us? Or, are we still angry and hurt by the way our peers, the public and our government treated us.

On a personal level, I would have to say that I guess I never felt the same after coming home. I was angry and bitter. I was not a grunt. Did not beat the bush and engage in heavy combat. But still, when I came home I felt distant from my friends and family. My friends told me that they decided to give me a year to get back to normal. Normal? What was normal? How long should I give them? Things went downhill from there. I haven't seen any of them for many, many years, nor do I ever wish to.

I came to find out that many veterans felt the same way to one degree or another. We all had our problems adjusting. For us all there was no closure. Just - well here are your orders. You can go home now. People tell us "put it behind you", "forget about it, it was a long time ago", "get over it". We don't seem to be able to do that. Unless you have experienced Vietnam you may never understand.

**I want you to share your story with me. Interviews are done on the phone and have been taking about an hour. Call me if you are interested.**

***Jack McCabe 847-778-3473***



# AVEL VIETNAM



November 2014 Newsletter



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**FIRST CLASS MAIL**

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