



# THE OUTPOST

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 787, Tampa Fl.

In Service to America

**NATIONAL CHAPTER OF THE YEAR 2001, FLORIDA STATE COUNCIL,  
CHAPTER OF THE YEAR 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004  
FOR INFORMATION CALL (813) 597-1326, FAX: (813) 737-4929.  
WEB SITE: MEMBERS.AOL.COM/VVA787/INDEX.HTML**



## V.V.A. Chapter 787 and the Tampa Veterans Day Parade



Submitted By: Bob Silmser

**From the top, L to R:** Chapter President Jim (Rambo) LaGarde practicing his moves, VP Dale Wagner talking with member Kit Carson. The Chapter 787 Float. Dale Wagner with his lovely wife Beverly. Chapter 787 Banner.

Additional members attending were, Bob Silmser, Carl Harris, Ron Schott with wife Carmen and Mickey Taylor, Jim Byrd. AVVA member Eddy Ortel and two members from the St. Petersburg Chapter.



### Chapter Officers

President: Jim LaGarde  
Vice President: Dale Wagner  
Secretary: Bob Silmser  
Treasurer: Kevin Ruhl

### Board of Directors:

Ron Schott  
Carl Harris  
Tom Hall  
Jon Mueller

### State Council Delegate:

Kevin Ruhl

OUTPOST Publisher & Editor: Jon Mueller, E-mail: JonMue@aol.com

### Meetings

Chapter Meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each month.

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Brandon Veterans Hall, 115 W. Clay Brandon Fl. 33510. See Map on last page.

E-mail addresses are on the last page.

**This Month during the War in Vietnam**



**9th Infantry Division moves in!**

Activated 1 Feb 1966 for service in Vietnam and sent there Dec 1966 – Jan 1967. The division served in III and IV CTZ, and its 2nd Brigade was the Army component of the Mobile Riverine Force. Division headquarters was at Bear Cat Dec 1966 – Jul 1968 and Dong Tam Aug 1968 – Aug 1969. The 9th Infantry Division began withdrawing in summer 1969, leaving its 3rd Brigade behind as a separate unit (under command of 25th Infantry Division) until Oct 1970.

The division swept through Dinh Tuong Province 6 January-31 May 1967 in Operation PALM BEACH, spending February and March with South Vietnamese forces combating the enemy in Long An Province. Meanwhile one of it's brigades was selected to fulfill the concept of a Mobile Riverine Force created in 1967 And integrated with a Navy Task Force 117 at each level of it's brigade's command.

For the first time since the Civil War, when Union Army forces operated on the Mississippi, Cumberland and other rivers, the U.S. Army was utilizing an amphibious force operating entirely afloat. The force was a complete package, independent of fixed support embarked or in tow. The troops lived on barracks ships docked at the mobile riverine anchorage. On tactical operations Navy armored troop carrier boats, preceded by minesweeping craft and escorted by armored boats (monitors) transported the soldiers along the vast waterways in the Delta. The first element of the Mobile Riverine Force (2nd Brigade) arrived in Vietnam in January 1967 and after shakedown training in the Rung Sat swamps moved into a base near My Tho, which was named Dong Tam— a base on a 600-acre island created among inundated rice paddies by dredging earth from the bottom of the Mekong River.

In 1968 the 9th Infantry Division engaged in bitter fighting in the Saigon area, General Westmoreland stated after TET that the 9th Infantry Division and The Mobile Riverine Force saved the Delta.



**V.V.A. Chapter 787 T-shirts for sale, very cool!**

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**Contact Bob Silmser by e-mail: rafkirk64@verizon.net or phone: 813-685-3483, to order, or if you have questions.**



**3-1/2" Iron on Patches are \$5.00**



Do you have a family member currently serving in the US Military. We want to hear about them. Please send their name, rank, branch of service, duty station, etc., to Jon Mueller. E-mail: JonMue@aol.com. Please include pictures.

Submitted By: Bob Silmser

## Once again, we are there for Hurricane Relief. This time in Pahokee Fl.



**Top row L-R:** Chapter 787 members have lunch with Church volunteers, Chapter President Jim LaGarde, Chapter Secretary Bob Silmser unload trailer, & Board of Directors member Carl Harris takes charge of the hand truck.

**Bottom row L-R:** Carl Harris, Bob Silmser and Jim Amderman from the Zephyrhills

## Chapter 787 Honors Fallen Hero with Color Guard


Baldomero Lopez Elementary School  
Seffner, Fl.

November 4, 2005

Submitted By: Carl Harris



"Lopez Elementary Breakfast"

 The elementary school was named after Marine First Lieutenant Baldomero Lopez. Lt. Lopez earned the Korean War Congressional Medal of Honor for sacrificing his life to protect his men on September 15, 1950. At the age of 25, Lt. Lopez, already injured, covered a hand grenade with his body during the Inchon Red Beach sea-wall landing. In addition to the Medal of Honor, Lieutenant Lopez's decorations include the Purple Heart Medal, Presidential Unit Citation with one bronze star, the China Service Medal, and Korean Service Medal with two bronze stars. The nation also honored Lt. Lopez by placing his name on a 46,000-ton military freighter that moves supplies through the oceans of the world. He was born in Tampa, Florida on August 23rd, 1925. He graduated from Hillsborough High School in 1943.

When we got there we were welcomed by Alfred Dahma, Principal of the school. At that time we went into the cafeteria for a great breakfast. The table had place settings with our names on them for us to sit at. The place mats and programs were all made by the children at the school. On the back of each program was a saying by one of the kids at the school. Then there was a Salute to our "SPECIAL FORCES". They children put a lot of work into this program this year.

**Chapter 787 was invited to do the presenting of the colors for this great day at the Lopez School. Members that were there was Dale Wagner, Carl Harris, Eddy Ortelt for the Color Guard. Bud Ortelt was there as a Special Speaker on "A Veterans Plea". Dave Braun was also there for the American Flag Presentation.**

## **Back in Indian Country!**



Sgt. Zachary Mueller, son of chapter member and OUTPOST Editor/Publisher, Jon Mueller, is now back in Iraq for another 12 to 13 months. His first deployment was from April 2003 to March 2004 with the Army's 4th I.D. The above pictures were from that deployment. His current duties are with a 10 man (US) Military Training Team which will train a battalion size unit of Iraqis, mostly former Sunni Baathists. Zack is married to his high school sweetheart, Maegan Beery, and they just had a baby boy in June.

Ladies and gentlemen, believe me when I say that it is more stressful to be a parent of a son or daughter in our Military, who is serving in a war zone, then to be in the war yourself! I will not have a good nights sleep for a year or more.

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## **Please donate the following clothing items to our Military men and women in Afghanistan and Iraq.**

Reprinted from a Special Forces Association e-mail dated 11/15/05.

We are looking for shirts and pants (clothes). We run the theater 4-day R&R Pass Program for Iraq, AFG, HOA and Kuwait. Most of our Pass Program participants do not have civilian clothes to "decompress" or participate in "off-post" venues. My address is as follows.



**Major Ben H. Dennis, ASG-Qatar, Dir. MWR, Box 529, APO AE 09898.**

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## **Quote**

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

"Our country won't go on forever, if we stay soft as we are now. There won't be any America because some foreign soldiery will invade us and take our women and breed a hardier race!"

Lt. General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, USMC.



Submitted By: Bob Silmser

# Holiday Meals

Holiday Meals are now available to purchase thru the Chapter at \$18.00 per meal. We need to supply 80 meals for Thanksgiving and 80 meals for Christmas so please be generous this year.

Please make your check out to: **VVA Chapter 787 Holiday Meals 2005**

and forward your donation for Holiday Meals to the following address:



**Vietnam Veterans of America**

**Chapter 787 Attn: Bob Silmser**

**P.O. Box 89247**

**Tampa, FL 33689-0404**

**PLEASE SEND YOUR DONATIONS BY DECEMBER 21, 2005**

## Membership

**Vietnam Veterans of America**

Send to: VVA Chapter 787, P.O. Box 89247,  
Tampa Fl. 33689-0404

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Male: \_\_\_\_\_

Female: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work or Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter #787 Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ ID \_\_\_\_\_



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**Membership Type:**

Individual 1 year \_\_\_\_\_ \$20      3 years \_\_\_\_\_ \$50

Individual membership is open to all Vietnam Veterans who served on active duty for other than training purposes from 1/1/1959 to 5/7/1975. Individual members must submit a copy of their DD-214 with their application and payment.

Associate 1 year \_\_\_\_\_ \$20      3 years \_\_\_\_\_ \$50

Life Member \$250, payment plan, \$50 down, and 8 monthly installments of \$25.

Payment Method: Check \_\_\_\_\_ Money Order \_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_\_

If using a credit card: Card # \_\_\_\_\_

## Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq Connection

Submitted By: Jon Mueller

### 3rd Marines, Division, Regiment, & Air.



near  
be in-



The 3rd Marine Division arrives in Vietnam, March 1965 setting up it's base camp in I Corp, Chu Lai and immediately begins combat patrols. 3rd Marine Leathernecks would be involved in many combat operations like, Apache Snow, Beacon Hill, Beacon Star, Bear Claw, Dewey Canyon, Double Eagle, Harvest Moon and Prairie.

In September 1990, 1st Battalion, 3d Marines deployed to Saudi Arabia and participated in Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm and the Liberation of Kuwait. The battalion was deployed to Southwest Asia from September 1990 to April 1991 at which time 1st Battalion, 3d Marines returned to Kaneohe Bay.



During 2004 America's Battalion, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The Marines of America's Battalion implemented humanitarian assistance and civil affairs programs in their area of responsibility in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Their mission was insuring the uninterrupted development of a free and democratic society in Afghanistan. Marines from "America's Battalion," 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, operating near the Pakistan border, conducted a campaign to distribute much-needed school supplies to local children near one of the Battalion's forward operating bases. The coupling of Marine forces and US Army personnel was effective in realizing the humanitarian portion of the Marines' current mission to stabilize and support the democratic government of Afghanistan.



The Hawaii-based Marine unit that lost 26 Marines and one sailor from the 26 January 2005 helicopter crash that killed 31 troops in Iraq. Despite the crash, the cause of which was investigated, the battalion's Marines in Iraq remain busy doing their jobs two days before the Jan. 30 Iraqi elections. It was the single biggest loss of life in any one day since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The fallen Marines were assigned to Company C, Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 31st MEU and Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 361, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. The unit was traveling to help secure safe polling stations in the small town of Ak Ashat, in the western region of the Al Anbar province when their helicopter crashed.

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## Vietnam Veterans Needed

Submitted By: Tom Hall

With the new school year starting, the "History of the Vietnam War" classes will again be producing Volume VII, Oral Histories of Vietnam Veterans.

We are in need of Vietnam Veterans who are willing to share their experience in Vietnam with the students. The students will ask the questions. You will need to bring a photo of yourself in Vietnam so they may scan it for use in the book.

**All those interested, please contact Tom Hall as soon as possible at (813) 655-7129.**

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This newsletter is not the official publication of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 787, Tampa Bay Florida. All opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of Chapter 787, the VVA State Council, the VVA National or the Chapter members.

You can receive a copy of the OUTPOST each month at no cost. Contact Jon Mueller via e-mail at [JonMue@aol.com](mailto:JonMue@aol.com) and provide your e-mail address. You will need to have an Adobe Acrobat Reader on your PC to open the newsletter each month. You can also receive it by US mail. The cost is \$12 per year. Make your check payable to V.V.A. Chapter 787 and mail it to P.O. Box 89247, Tampa Fl. 33689-0404. Make sure you identify the payment for the OUTPOST.

Submitted By: Tom Hall

## Chapter 787 Donates Thanksgiving Meals



Each year, your chapter membership donates, time, energy and money to the less fortunate. Participants were, Chapter President Jim (Rambo) LaGarde, VP Dale Wagner, Secretary Bob Silmser, Board of Directors member Carl Harris, and Ron Schott, chapter 787 members Richard Nye, Don Wallick, Michael "Micky" Taylor, Herman Rainey, Luther Lassiter, AVVA member Eddy Ortelt, VVA State Council President, Craig Tonjes, and Director of the VA Women Veterans Homeless Program, Wendy Hellickson.



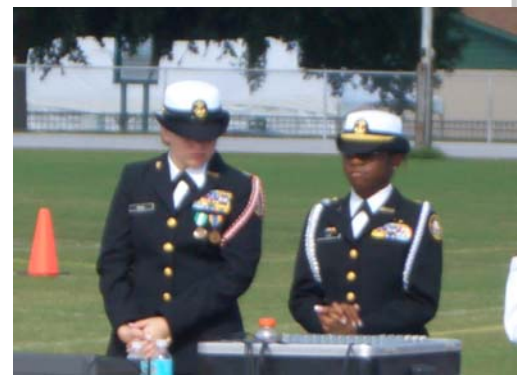
## Chapter 787 invited to Medal of Honor Ceremony

On November 5th 2005, your chapter was represented with a group of other VIPS to honor Sergeant First Class Paul Ray Smith who is a local graduate of Tampa Bay Technical High School and is currently the only Medal of Honor recipient in either of the two Iraq War's and the fighting in Afghanistan.

The Medal awarded "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty took place on 4 April 2003 during a fierce fire fight near the Baghdad International Airport where elements from the US Army's 3rd I.D. (Task Force 2-7 Infantry) had just passed through the Karbala Gap. SFC Smith's combat Engineers, were attacked by a company sized unit of the Iraqi Army. SFC Smith organized a hasty defense consisting of two platoons of soldiers, one Bradley and three APC's. As the fight developed SFC Smith braved hostile enemy fire to personally engage the enemy with hand grenades and anti-tank weapons and organized the evacuation of three wounded soldiers. Finally SFC Smith moved under withering enemy fire to man a .50 caliber machine gun mounted on a damaged APC. In total disregard for his own life, he maintained his exposed position in order to engage the attacking enemy force. During this action, he was mortally wounded.



Pictures Below from L to R: Tampa Bay Tech has made a courtyard within it's school in honor of SFC Smith. ROTC and JROTC cadets from around Hillsborough County march in parade formation just prior to the ceremonies. Presentation of colors was done by the Naval JROTC Color Guard. The bottom center picture shows Mrs. Birgit Smith with one of their two children. Principal speakers at the event were: The Honorable Candy Olson, Chair Schools Board of Hillsborough Cty, Mrs. Maryellen Elia, Superintendent of schools, The Honorable Ed Homan, Chairman Hillsborough County Legislative Delegation, Florida State Representative, district 60, The Honorable Trey Traviesa, Florida State Rep. dist. 56 and the Honorable Ken Littlefield, state rep. Col Jack G. Smith, US Army deputy assistant director for Afghanistan represented CenCom.





## Calendar of Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Event and Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
<u>December 2005</u>			
8th	Thursday	Chapter Christmas Party, Veterans Hall, Brandon	6:30 PM
<u>January 2006</u>			
12th	Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's house	6:30 PM
26th	Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Veterans Hall, Brandon	7:00 PM
<u>February 2006</u>			
9th	Thursday	Board of Directors Meeting, Jon's house	6:30PM
23rd	Thursday	Chapter Meeting, Veterans Hall, Brandon	7:30 PM

## Speakers Needed

Submitted By: Tom Hall

On June 8-9, 2005, ten high school teachers from the Hillsborough County School District went through a workshop training session conducted by Ron Dyches, Ross Webster, Bruce Burnham and Tom Hall on teaching the high school elective course "History of the Vietnam War."

Many of the teachers will be teaching the History of the Vietnam War course next year at their high school for the first time and adding to the growth of the number of high schools that will need speakers each week for their course.

With the increase in the number of high schools offering the course and the growth of class at existing schools **our Chapter's Speaker's Bureau is going to need additional speakers to meet the demand.**

Any member who is interested in becoming part of the Chapter's Speaker's Bureau should contact **Tom Hall as soon as possible at 655-7129**. This is a community service project that the Chapter has undertaken for over seven years and grows each year. If you are willing to share your personal experiences in Vietnam and how Vietnam affected your life, this is the opportunity to keep the legacy of Vietnam veterans alive through informing the students about the Vietnam War and its veterans.



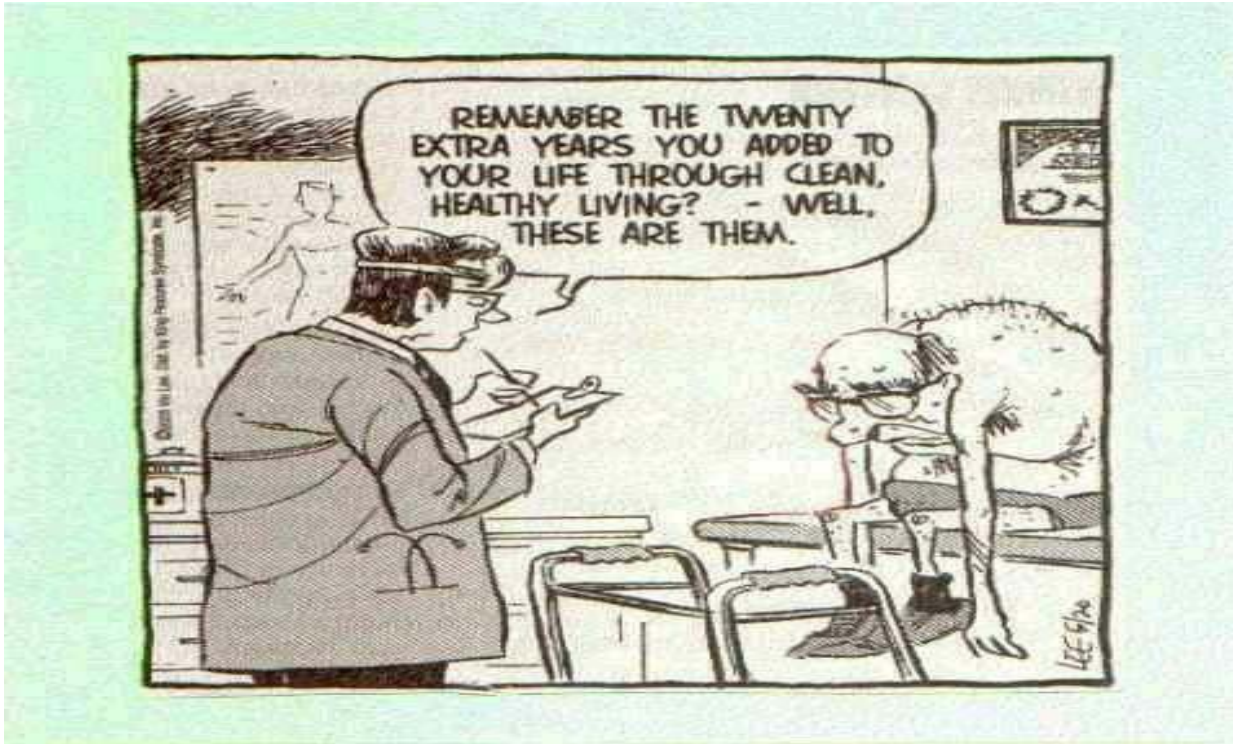
## *Hey! We Need Your Help.*

Submitted By: Bob Silmsner

The Chapter would like to start sending the monthly Regular Chapter meeting minutes to all members via E-mail. You may submit your e-mail address to the Chapter Secretary Bob Silmsner at [Rafkirk64@verizon.net](mailto:Rafkirk64@verizon.net).

All e-mail addresses will used for Chapter use only and will not be given out to anyone. This will keep you better informed on what is going on with-in your Chapter when you are not able to make the regular meetings. We hope by doing this that more of you will become involved in our activities on a regular basis.

This is our Chapter and we need for all of us to become more involved to relieve some of the pressure on the few who are always there to help when needed. We hold Poppy drives and other fund-raisers as needed and could use your support. **If you would indicate in your e-mail to Bob that you are available to help he will put you on our to call list for the next fund-raiser.**



## Chapter 787 Christmas Dinner



All members, family and friends are invited to share in our annual Christmas dinner to be held on Thursday December 8th at 6:30 PM at the Brandon Veterans Hall. Food and drinks are free so please make an effort to attend this very enjoyable event.

## Show that you Care!

When traveling, if you happen to spot a young man or women in a US military uniform, please take a moment to walk up, introduce yourself, shake their hand and thank them for their service. It only takes a few seconds and it will mean a lot to them! In return, you will get the biggest smile that you every saw.

Submitted by Tom Hall

## Important Phone Numbers

Tampa VA Hospital: (813) 972-2000  
 Eye Clinic (813) 972-7574  
 Dental Clinic (813) 972-7511  
 PTSD Clinic (813) 978-5866

Women's Clinic (813) 979-3678  
 Spinal Cord Center (813) 972-6770  
 Pharmacy (813) 903-4885  
 Scheduling 1-866-737-6843  
 Tampa Vet Center (813) 228-2621



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 teacher.

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 English, thank a  
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## THE OUTPOST

### Help Your Chapter Grow

Bring a New Member to the Next Chapter Meeting.

Come and Join Us. Give us your Ideas.

Chapter meetings are held at the Brandon Veterans Hall. 115 W. Clay Ave, Brandon Fl. See map below.

#### Contact E-mail Addresses:

President Jim LaGarde:

cLaGarde@tampabay.rr.com

VP Dale Wagner: g.gator2@verizon.net

Secretary Bob Silmser: rafkirk64@verizon.net

Treasurer Kevin Ruhl: MSgtMCRet@aol.com

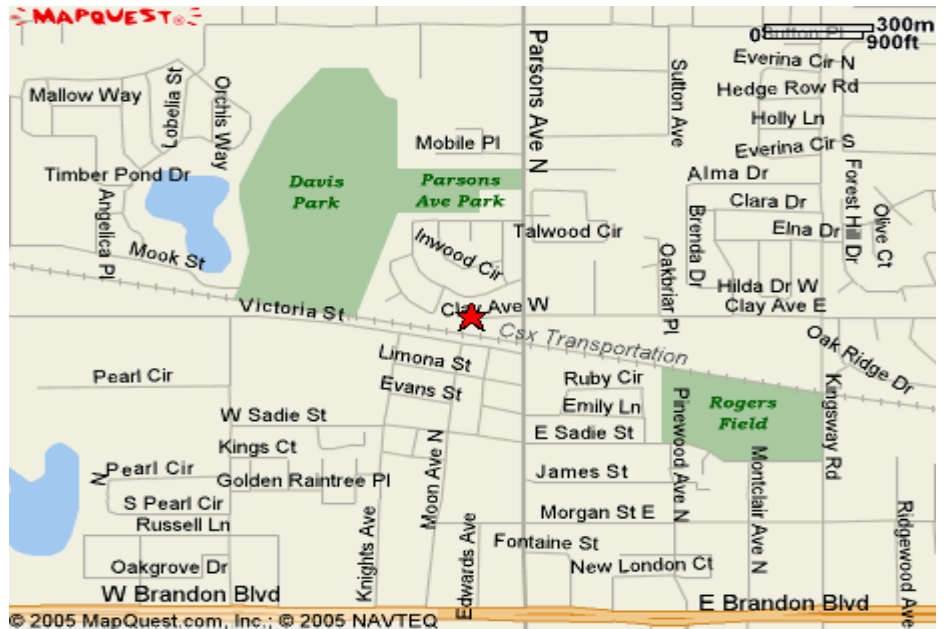
#### Board of Directors

Ron Schott: RonD1120@aol.com

Tom Hall: MarineDI@aol.com

Carl Harris: c\_e\_harris@ij.net

Jon Mueller: JonMue@aol.com



## Important Web Sites

Vietnam Veterans of American, Chapter 787, Tampa Bay Florida.....	<a href="http://members.aol.com/vva787/">http://members.aol.com/vva787/</a>
Vietnam War Statistics.....	<a href="http://my.eiis.net/cmart/vietwarstats.html">http://my.eiis.net/cmart/vietwarstats.html</a>
Vietnam, Yesterday & Today.....	<a href="http://servercc.oakton.edu/~wittman/chronol.htm">http://servercc.oakton.edu/~wittman/chronol.htm</a>
Vietnam Veterans Legacy Foundation.....	<a href="http://www.vvlf.org">www.vvlf.org</a>
National League of Families of American POW's/MIA's.....	<a href="http://www.pow-miafamilies.org">www.pow-miafamilies.org</a>
V.V.A. National Office on the World Wide Web.....	<a href="http://www.vva.org">www.vva.org</a>
U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs.....	<a href="http://www.va.gov">www.va.gov</a>
OPM Veterans Hiring Preference.....	<a href="http://www.opm.gov/veterans">www.opm.gov/veterans</a>
Uniformed Services Family Health Plan (USFHP).....	<a href="http://www.usfhp.com">www.usfhp.com</a>
U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.....	<a href="http://www.vetapp.uscourts.gov">www.vetapp.uscourts.gov</a>
Children of Vietnam Vets.....	<a href="http://www.geocities.com/pentagon/9125">www.geocities.com/pentagon/9125</a>
The Center for Women Veterans.....	<a href="http://www.va.gov/womenvet">www.va.gov/womenvet</a>
Vietnam Women Memorial Foundation, Inc (formerly "Project").....	<a href="http://www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org">www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org</a>
The Moving Wall—Vietnam Combat Veterans LTD.....	<a href="http://www.themovingwall.org">www.themovingwall.org</a>
The Virtual Wall.....	<a href="http://www.virtualwall.org">www.virtualwall.org</a>
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