

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE 1/29/24

Before I get started, I hope that you all had a great holiday and want to wish you all the best in this new year.

I am hoping that this year is not as bad as 2023 since we lost a lot of brothers. I cannot talk about the new year without mentioning these beloved brothers: Vincent Little, James Wright, Kenneth Klingele, Danny Ingellis, and, my very close friend, Richard Martin. I guess even though they all came home from the jungle, Nam would not let go. I along with you salute them all and give them a final “WELCOME HOME”.

Looking forward to this year, let’s look at what we have on schedule and what we hope to accomplish.

Our main events for the year are:

At our February, March, and April meetings we have our Chapter elections. Nominations take place at all three meetings with elections take place at the April meeting. All executive positions and board positions will be up for election.

As we do every year, on the second Sunday in June, we will be honoring our fallen 85 with A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE ceremony at our Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park. We have done this for 32 years, and the attendance keeps growing. What is impressive now is that, as we get older, the families of our brothers are bringing their young ones to this event. Nothing fills my heart more than the gratitude that the families show us and how the participation of our Honor Guard stays strong in making sure that our brothers are always remembered.

On the third Sunday in September our Honor Guard will commemorate POW/MIA Recognition Week by hosting our annual POW/MIA ceremony at our Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park. As in the past, hundreds will undoubtedly attend.

The following month on October 3, at the Silver Lake Golf Course, we have our annual golf outing. Information for golfers and sponsors will follow.

Our Veterans Day Welcome Home celebration at the Memorial in November is the newest addition to our calendar. Last year, on Veterans Day, we had our first Welcome Home celebration. Because of the growing concern of the difficulty to get to the city on that day I decided to try a Welcome Home gathering at the memorial. Nothing special, had some pizza delivered and we just got together. The turnout was unbelievable. So, we will be doing this celebration from now on instead of going to the city.

Then, to finish off the year, in the first week of December, a group of us place a wreath at every high school on Staten Island that has a memorial for those that went to that school and were killed in Vietnam.

Finally, Dec. 8th is our tree trimming event at the Memorial where all are invited to honor our 85 for the holiday season.

That is it for the year and I hope I did not miss anything.

On a final note, all these events are out there for all. We send out email reminders and post them all on the website.

Please come out and enjoy and commemorate these events, especially the Day of Remembrance and the POW/MIA ceremonies when we honor our fallen brothers. **THEY WERE AND STILL ARE OUR BROTHERS**

God bless and stay safe.

Your Brother, Gene