



**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA  
Darwin J. Thomas Memorial Chapter 201  
San Jose, California**

**January - March 2018**

**Chapter 201 New Year Up Date**

2018 should be a busy year as the Chapter participates in numerous activities and several fund-raising events to support veterans and the community. Additionally, this year will see the biannual California State Council Convention in June.

**Schedule of Event for 2018**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>January</b>		
January 9	Board of Directors Meeting	Harry's Hof Brau 11:30am
January 15	Chapter Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
January 26-28	CSC Conference	Fresno, CA
<b>February</b>		
February 3	Four Chaplains Service	St. Frances Cabrini Church San Jose, CA 10:00AM
February 19	Presidents Day	Menlo Park VA 10:00 AM - 2:45 PM
February 19	Chapter Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm

<b>March</b>		
March 17	Zephyr Article Deadline	<i>(CSC April Conference)</i>
March 19	Chapter Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
March 24	Operation Eagle Visit Homecoming Parade	Downtown San Mateo, CA 11:00 AM
<b>April</b>		
April 7-8	Moffett Field Fundraiser <b>Canceled (weather)</b>	Moffett Field Commissary 9:00 AM
April 16	Annual Election Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
April 21-22	Moffett Field Fundraiser	Moffett Field Commissary 9:00 AM
April 27-29	CSC Conference	Fresno, CA
<b>May</b>	<b>Veteran Appreciation Month</b>	
May 12-13	Moffett Field Fundraiser	Moffett Field Commissary 9:00 AM
May 21	Chapter Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
May 28	Memorial Day	Oak Hill UVC Veterans Section & Field of Honor
<b>June</b>		
June 9	Flag Retirement	11:00am AL District 13 at Oak Hill
June 16	Zephyr Article Deadline	<i>(CSC July Zephyr)</i>
June 18	Chapter Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
June 21-24	CSC Convention	Fresno
<b>July</b>		
July 4	District 13 American Legion Independence Day	Menlo Park VA 9:00 AM

July 16	Chapter Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
July 24-28	National Leadership Conference	Palm Springs, CA
<b>August</b>		
August 20	Chapter Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
August 24-26	CSC Conference	Fresno
<b>September</b>		
September 17	Chapter Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
September 21	POW/MIA Day	<i>No activities planned</i>
September 22	Zephyr Article Deadline	<i>(CSC October Conference)</i>
<b>October</b>		
October 15	Chapter Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
October 26-28	CSC Conference	Fresno
October 28	UVC Flag Lowering	Oak Hill Veterans Section
<b>November</b>		
November 8	Veterans Recognition	Miller Middle School 6151 Rainbow Drive San Jose, CA
November 11	Veterans' Day	UVC Parade San Jose Honor on the Row Santana Row
November 19	Chapter Meeting	Holder's Country Inn Dinner at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
November 22	Thanksgiving	<i>No activities planned</i>
<b>December</b>		
December 16	Annual Chapter Holiday Luncheon	Harry's Hof Brau
December 25	Christmas	<i>No activities planned</i>

## Chapter 201 Four Chaplains Service

The four chaplains, of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faiths were aboard the troopship *Dorchester* in the North Atlantic, when on February 3, 1943, a torpedo struck at 2:00am. The ship sank within a very short period of time beneath the icy waters along with the majority of those aboard. Many of those who survived attributed their survival directly to the assistance and acts of compassion of the four chaplains aboard that night.

Chapter 201 Members John Hassenplug and Richard Francis participated in the American Legion District 13 Four Chaplains ceremony in San Jose on February 3th on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the sinking of troop ship *USAT Dorchester* sank during World War II after being torpedoed by a German submarine.



VVA-201 Members John Hassenplug & Richard Francis post  
Chapter 201 Colors during the American Legion  
District 13 Four Chaplains Service

The chaplains helped other soldiers board lifeboats and gave up their own life jackets when the supply ran out. They joined arms, said prayers, and sang hymns as they went down with the ship.

## Chapter 201 Operation Eagle Visit Parade

Between 23 and 25 March 2018, nine cities in the San Francisco Bay Area collaborated to honor the U.S. Army 101st Airborne Screaming Eagles on the 50th anniversary of the War in Vietnam. Dozens of active-duty troops and veterans attended the Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years celebration during the three-day event which included a homecoming parade in downtown San Mateo that attracted about 10,000 spectators.



On March 4, 1968, San Mateo City Council voted unanimously to adopt Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army in hopes of improving morale among the fighting troops during the Vietnam War. Support from the city, and its residents, was so strong that at the end of the Vietnam War, San Mateo held the only homecoming parade in the United States honoring returning Vietnam veterans.



**1972 San Mateo Welcome Home Parade**

The rain that Northern California had been experiencing for the past week came to an end in San Mateo about an hour before the start of the Operation Eagle Visit Homecoming Parade on Saturday, March 24th. The Operation Eagle Visit Homecoming Parade, celebrating 50 years of continued support honoring the men and women who have served in harm's way with Company A during the Vietnam War, included a contingent from the 101st Airborne Division from Kentucky.

Twelve members of VVA Chapter 201 braved the cold weather Saturday morning to participate, with Chapter 464, in the San Mateo Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years Parade in downtown San Mateo.



Chapter 201 members Mike Frangadakis, Steve Thompson (Secretary) Rose Herrera, Richard Paulson, Bob Kadlec, Warren Finch (President), Randy Richmond (Chaplain), Dennis Whittaker (Director) and Gene Fanucchi (Vice President) assemble before the parade.

Chapter 201 Members Rose Herrera and Randy Richmond carried the Vietnam War 50th anniversary banner at the head of the combined VVA Chapter 464, 201 and 201 Associates formation.



VVA-201 Members Rose Herrera & Randy Richmond Carry The Vietnam War 50th Anniversary Commemorative Banner

Chapter 464's color guard, which included the participation of CSC Central District Director Al Sickle, took the lead in the VVA formation followed by members of Chapter 201 and Chapter 201 Associates.



Chapter 464 Color Guard participates in the Operation Eagle Visit – Homecoming 50 Years Parade



VVA Central District Director Al Sickle in the Chapter 464 Dignitary Vehicle

Chapter 201 members carried the Chapter 201 banner and provided a color guard along with a large contingent of Chapter 201 VVA Associates.



VVA Chapter 201 Color Guard participates in Operation Eagle Visit Parade



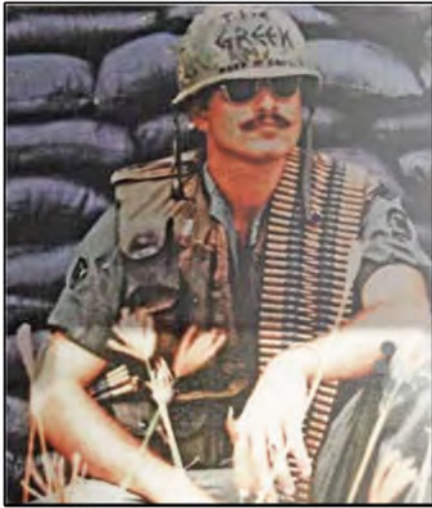
Chapter 201 Associates Color Guard participates in Operation Eagle Visit Parade

Following the parade, the City of San Mateo hosted a “Festival in Central Park” in downtown San Mateo. The family-friendly festival included food trucks, community booths, as well as music, bouncy houses, face painting, a magic show, balloon twister, arts and crafts table and photo booth.



## A Vietnam Veterans Experience A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW

By Mike Frangadakis, VVA Chapter 201



Mike Frangadakis on Guard Duty  
Nha Trang, Vietnam 1969

Since I returned from Vietnam in 1969, I have been hearing from my fellow Americans about how we shouldn't have been involved in that horrible war and why did 58,318 Americans have to perish? I served in that conflict from October 31, 1968 to October 1969. Even though I was attached to the 101st Airborne as a medic technician at a godforsaken location near the DMZ, I did not see what the American Public was watching every night on their local TV news stations. Things like burning villages, killing Vietnamese civilians and atrocities of war that did happen on rare occasions.

Recently Ken Burns, known as Americans Story Teller, produced a Documentary shown on PBS Stations around the country which portrayed more of the same. Less than 20 percent of all the military that served in Vietnam saw those horrors. I was in the 44th Medical Brigade dedicated to provide all military and civilians medical support as needed. It was very rewarding duty and opened my eyes at that time on how other people live in our world. As a young 21-year-old just out of tech college, it made me proud to be from this wonderful country where we are protected by the constitution and educated people who for the most part respect one another.

My unit was mobile, which means we would go where our troops needed medical and dental support. After treating our personnel using doctors, dentist and tech's like me, we would proceed to Vietnamese remote villages to help civilians with their issues. We had security forces to protect us since the enemy hated what we did and would have executed us in a heartbeat. We were winning the hearts and minds of the villagers with food and medicine. Interpreters would let the people know we were there to support and assist them for a better life. Every single person I came in contact with wanted what we had to offer in the States. They called it MEDCAP Missions-Medical Civil Action Patrol. I also saw nation building first hand and have the pictures to prove it. Roads, hospitals, schools, orphanages and infrastructure all provided for a country begging to be free of communism. I witnessed how horrible the communist were to their own people. It made me proud to be in the military and protect and serve those innocent helpless civilians.



Dental Care for Vietnamese 1969

We won every major battle including three major offenses the communist launched. No engagement with the enemy was reported as a victory back home, only how many people were killed or wounded. I agree that every casualty is horrible. As a military litter carrier and ambulance driver, I witnessed young men in peril. My point is that by turning the American public against the military objective, the one-sided news media prolonged the carnage on both sides. Ho Chi Minh, the enemy's leader was ready to have peace talks after our huge victory, the North Vietnamese Tet Offensive. When he heard about the rioting going on in the States,

because of horrible one-sided news coverage depicting terrible casualties, Ho Chi Minh got an idea. BY prolonging the suffering, we would pull out and act defeated. His strategy worked. Even though we won militarily, we lost the war. Did we really? Vietnam would look like Japan today if we could have finished our mission and objectives.

The main objective for our leader's involvement in that war, starting with President Truman, was not disclosed to the U.S. citizens in my humble opinion. The objective was a proxy conflict with the Russians and Chinese who provided the enemy's war machine. Vietnam avoided a direct confrontation and mutual mass destruction of us all. That war may have been the most important war in history to preserve the human race.