



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

July - September 2018

AVVA Chapter 201 Wins First Place on Fourth of July

AVVA Chapter 201 President Cang Kim Dong reported that the chapter won First Place in this year's annual Rose, White and Blue parade in Santa Clara on the Fourth of July.



The parade, which has grown from a small street walk to become the largest July 4th parade in San Jose takes place in San Jose's Rose Garden area neighborhoods along The Alameda, which has a rich history of parades including the Carnival of Roses and the Fiesta De las Rosas. This year marked 12th Anniversary, making this the longest running parade in the history of The Alameda





Chapter 201 President Cang Kim Dong held a get-together on August 12th for friends to celebrate winning 1st place in the Rose White & Blue 4th of July parade. A great time, and excellent food.



AVVA Chapter 201 President Cang Kim Dong, Van Le, former 7th District Council candidate, Dung Ngo, victory gathering Master of Ceremonies, Steve Thompson, VVA Chapter 201 Secretary/Treasurer, Fran McVey, United Veterans Council President and Gene Fanucchi, VVA Chapter 201 Vice President

Adopt a Military Mom

Grace Witt thought of doing something for military moms after the 9/11 terrorist attack and on Mother's Day in 2014 she started the Adopt a Military Moms for Mother's Day program. Initially it was a small gathering at a cost of approximately \$500. Over the years this event has grown along with the setting and now costs approximately \$15,000. Grace relies on donations from various organizations and individuals and will fund the remainder out of pocket if enough donations are not received.

During the July 16th Chapter meeting Grace Witt provided a history and overview of the Adopt a Military Mom for Mother's Day program. Assisting her during the meeting were two Blue Star Moms, Gloria Cervantes and Jeanne MacDougall and one Gold Star Mom, Christine Ackerman. Following their presentation, and acknowledgment of the support provided by the chapter, they presented the gathering with a large Mrs. Fields Chocolate Chip cookie which was heartily received.



Adopt a Military Mom Gratitude for Chapter 201 Support

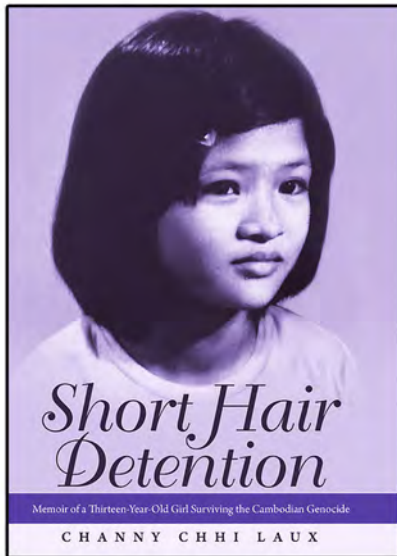
Chapter 201 Conducts Fundraiser

Chapter 201 held a fundraising event at the Moffett Field Commissary in Mountain View, California on August 11, 2018. The Chapter holds periodic fundraisers at the former Naval Base at Moffett Field to support Chapter events and activities such as BBQs at the local Veterans Administration hospitals. In addition to collecting contributions, the Chapter hands out Agent Orange poppies and provides information on Agent Orange. Chapter 201 Secretary/Treasurer Steve Thompson, Director Dennis Foggie, Past President Dave Sanders and Vice President Gene Fanucchi also handed out VVA and AVVA brochures to recruit new members as well as handed out educational brochures on Agent Orange.



Short Hair Detention Presentation

VVA Chapter 201 was honored with a presentation by Channy Chhi Laux during the August 20, 2018 Chapter meeting.



Channy Chhi Laux, author of the book *Short Hair Detention: Memoir of a Thirteen-Year-Old Girl Surviving the Cambodian Genocide*, is a survivor of the Khmer Rouge genocide in Cambodia. She was thirteen years old when the Khmer Rouge took over the country in 1975. In June of 1979, Channy arrived in Lincoln, Nebraska as a refugee. After four years of no school and not knowing a word of English, she attended Lincoln High School; went on to earn a Master of Science degree in Applied Mathematics from Santa Clara University and undergraduate degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Channy worked in Silicon Valley as an engineer in the Aerospace and Biotech industries for 30 years. She is the founder and chef of Angkor Cambodian Food <http://angkorfood.com/>.

Short Hair Detention is the personal memoir of Channy and how she survived the Cambodian genocide (1975-1979). Her story begins when the Communists took over Cambodia, progresses through extreme starvation, forced labor, multiple escape attempts and concludes with how freedom was regained. The book reveals intimate details of how daughter-mother love gave Channy the strength to survive year-round unforgiving conditions.



Following her presentation, Channy Chhi Laux was presented with a Chapter 201 Certificate of Appreciation by Chapter 201 President Warren Finch

Chapter 201 Participates in POW/MIA Ceremony

Members of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 201, and Associates, participated in a ceremony at the San Jose City Hall hosted by the United Veterans Council of Santa Clara County (UVC) and San Jose Councilman Johnny Khamis in recognition of POW/MIA Day on September 21, 2018.



Since World War I, over 142,000 Americans were captured during wars or conflicts. Over 125,000 Prisoners of War have been repatriated. 17,000 died while being a POW. The fate of the more than 88,000 Americans listed as unaccounted for, or Missing in Action, since the First World War remains unknown. As of 29 August 2018, 1,594 Americans remained unaccounted for in Vietnam.



Members of VVA-201 Associates, led by Associates Chapter 201 President, and former POW, Cang Kim Dong provided an Honor Guard for the Ceremony.



American Legion District 13 Honor Guard, led by Chapter 201 Vice President, and District 13 Adjutant, Gene Fanucchi raised the National Colors and POW/MIA Flag in front of the San Jose City Hall.



Darwin J. Thomas VVA Memorial Chapter 201 President Warren Finch, Master of Ceremonies, presided over the event while Chapter 201 Chaplain Randy Richmond provided the Invocation and Benediction and Chapter 201 Secretary/Treasurer Stephen Thompson led the Pledge of Allegiance.



The gathering was welcomed by San Jose Councilman Johnny Khamis and the Keynote speaker, Chapter 201 member, and President of the UVC, Fran McVey gave an emotional tribute to former POW the late Senator John McCain.

Chapter 201 Director and UVC Local Government Liaison Rose Herrera conducted the Missing Man Table Service with the assistance Chapter 201 Secretary/Treasurer Stephen Thompson. Chapter 201 Namesake, Darwin J. Thomas, is listed as Missing in Action following the crash of his Navy A1 Skyraider over North Vietnam in 1966.



Following the ceremony, Rose Herrera presented a single red rose to Gold Star Mother Cheryl Walsh. San Jose Council members Johnny Khamis, Tam Nguyen and Devora Davis presented proclamations to UVC President Fran McVey and Chapter 201 President Warren Finch. Additionally, Warren Finch accepted a commendation from the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors for the POW/MIA recognition Ceremony.

