The Vietnam 50th is Finally Here!

We are now fewer than 50 days away from the Vietnam 50th! The hard work and planning have resulted in an historic event which will not only honor and thank our Vietnam veterans but also remember our fallen warriors who did not return and their families whose lives have been forever altered by the Vietnam War. The Vietnam 50th will be open to the public on July 11 and 12, 2015 from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM at the Connecticut Air National Guard Base in East Granby, CT and the New England Air Museum in Windsor Locks, CT with events and activities planned for each day. All are invited to attend and honor our Vietnam veterans. Please visit the event website at www.ccsu.edu/vietnam for a schedule of events and details about exhibits and speakers as well as directions and information about parking.

In the course of preparing for this event over the past two years the sponsoring partners have overcome many logistical challenges and have succeeded in designing an impressive program. One can imagine the myriad details involved with planning an event to be attended by 20,000 people taking place at an operating military facility. What visitors will see throughout the weekend are static displays, educational exhibits, entertainment, food, national speakers, book signings, Vietnam era aircraft and ground vehicles, and much more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SATURDAY</th>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JULY 11, 2015</td>
<td>JULY 12, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHEDULE OF EVENTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>SCHEDULE OF EVENTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>DOORS OPEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>GUENON BOOK TALK &amp; SIGNING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>OPENING CEREMONY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:45 AM</td>
<td>HIGH SCHOOL CONTEST WINNERS AWARDED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>COAST GUARD BAND CONCERT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 PM</td>
<td>PAUL BUCHA SPEAKER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>EDWARD MECENBIER SPEAKER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL DAY</td>
<td>HUEY MEMBER FLIGHTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVER 20 AIRCRAFT ON DISPLAY!</td>
<td>ALL DAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>DOORS OPEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>JORDAN BOOK TALK &amp; SIGNING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>BILL BEGERT SPEAKER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>“BLIND BAT” PANEL AT THE C-130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>BEAMON BOOK TALK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:4 PM</td>
<td>DJ AND PHOTO BOOTH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>WIKNIK BOOK TALK &amp; SIGNING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>QUILT DRAWING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>CLOSING CEREMONY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL DAY</td>
<td>HUEY MEMBER FLIGHTS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- VIETNAM 50TH COMMEMORATION 1
- VIETNAM 50TH COMMEMORATION CONT'D. 2
- VOICES FROM VIETNAM 3
- HIGHLIGHTED VETERAN 4
- IN MEMORIAM 5-6
- VIETNAM 50TH COMMEMORATION EVENTS 7
- SPRING INTERNS 8

**VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT**

www.ccsu.edu/vhp
In addition to the machines of war, Vietnam veterans will be on hand to talk about their experiences and help educate a new generation of Americans about the Vietnam War. Aircrews flying in for the weekend will be on hand to talk about the B-52 Stratofortress, the AC-47 “John Levitow” “Spooky” gunship, the Collings Foundation Skyraider, the C-130 and other Vietnam era planes and helicopters. An interactive exhibit of “The Things They Carried” will allow visitors to experience first-hand the load and gear carried by servicemen in Vietnam.

A highlight of each day will be flights in the iconic Huey helicopter. American Huey 369 and her crew are looking forward to flying in for the weekend from the National American Huey History Museum in Indiana. Visitors who enroll to become a member of American Huey 369 ($100 tax deductible donation) will receive a complimentary ride aboard this famous helicopter. All other activities and events at the Air National Guard Base are free. Entrance to the New England Air Museum will be free for all veterans and the customary admittance fee for others, with $2 of every ticket sold benefitting the Vietnam 50th.

What visitors will not see is the tremendous amount of time and effort that have gone into planning this event or the behind the scenes security measures that have been implemented to insure the safety of the public. In the interests of safety and security there will be no backpacks, no weapons, no pets and no alcohol allowed on the Air Guard Base.

The primary parking facility for this event is UTAS (Hamilton Sundstrand), located at One Hamilton Road SOUTH, Windsor Locks. Shuttle buses will run during the event to transport guests from UTAS to the Air Guard Base and New England Air Museum and back to UTAS.

Still needed: Volunteers and Sponsors
If you would like to volunteer to help, please go to www.ccsu.edu/vietnam/Volunteers.html to register on-line. Financial support is also still needed. Donations of any amount can be made on-line. To stay tuned to most recent updates and schedules, follow us on Facebook at CCSU Veterans History Project for daily postings or visit our website at www.ccsu.edu/vietnam.

MILITARY HUMOR

http://www.swapmeetdave.com/Humor/MilJoke.htm

Communication Breakdown...

The reason the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines squabble among themselves is that they don't speak the same language. For example, take a simple phrase like, "Secure the building."

- The Army will put guards around the place.
- The Navy will turn out the lights and lock the doors.
- The Air Force will take out a 5-year lease with an option to buy.
- The Marines will kill everybody inside and make it a command post.
Using the vast archives of the CCSU Veterans History Project, the VHP staff parsed through hundreds of letters in an effort to design a wall of letters or “Voices from Vietnam” exhibit with samples of letters written by soldiers serving in Vietnam during the 1960s and early 1970s. The “Voices from Vietnam” exhibit will be on display at the Air National Guard Base during Connecticut’s Vietnam 50th Commemoration event July 11 and 12, 2015. The “Voices from Vietnam” exhibit reveals the hardships faced by our soldiers in Vietnam as well as the tremendous sacrifice that they made as part of their service. This exhibit reveals the humanity found in a war that was marred by controversy.

The exhibit was developed as a result of designs submitted by Central Connecticut State University students enrolled in Professor Leah Glaser’s Introduction to Public History Class. The names of those students are listed in the sample to the left of this column. Veterans History Project students, Austin Sullivan and Anthony Vinci added selected photographs and letters obtained from the Veterans History Project collections.

The letters displayed on the exhibit can also be heard through narration thanks to the Theater Department, under the guidance of Professor Jan Mason. We thank the following for their narration of the letters on the exhibit.

Patryk Mathieu
Professor Thom Delventhal
Chris Whitcomb
Kate Browne
Will Matus
Nick Carrano
Anthony Yovina
Luciani (Louis) James Urso, a 1965 graduate of New Britain Senior High School entered the U.S. Army on November 16, 1965. The next three years of Louis’s life were filled with combat lessons in survival during battles. Louis trained as a Field Artillery soldier. As a soldier in the Fire Direction Control Center, Louis was responsible for coordinating and directing the fires of his field artillery units. Like most young soldiers in the 1960s, Louis received orders for deployment to Vietnam.

Louis traveled to Vietnam on the General Nelson M. Walker, A U.S. Navy troop ship. Upon his arrival in Vietnam he was sent to “Bear Cat” a base camp for a brief stay and to receive in-country training. By the middle of November Louis was sent to take part in Operation Attleboro, an operation named after a Massachusetts town where the 196th Infantry Brigade (major unit in the operation) was formed. Louis also took part in Operation Cedar Falls, one of the first large unit operations in Vietnam. This operation took place near Saigon from January 8-28, 1967.

Louis next found himself participating in Operation Gadsen, near the Cambodian border and north of Saigon. This was an operation involving more than 8,000 troops and was an attempt to penetrate the headquarters of the liberation forces. The next operation that Louis took part in was known as Operation Junction City.

Operation Junction City began on February 22nd 1967. Louis’s involvement began on March 19th when three batteries of 105mm Howitzers and about 450 men were airlifted to a location near a former village known as Suoi Tre. Two of the helicopters were shot out of the sky in route. This new base named Fire Support Base Gold (FSB Gold) was supposed to be a relatively quiet area with no heavy enemy presence expected. Later they realized they were among more then 2,000 enemy soldiers. Louis was tasked as the Radio Operator in the Fire Direction Control Center. The unit spent two days digging themselves in. On March 21st Louis was on radio watch from 12 noon to midnight. Around 10 pm Louis received intelligence stating that three kilometers to the north was a grid of enemy campfires. This information did not get to the Battalion Commander who was John Vessey (Later became Joints Chief of Staff). Louis went to bed after his shift at radio watch.

Louis woke up at about 6:20 am to explosions in the NW corner of the Support Base. Upon running out of his sleeping area he was sent to a gun position. As he was running toward the gun position, it was hit and destroyed by an RPG. After that, Louis spent a good deal of time giving help to the wounded and moving them to safer locations. Louis spoke about seeing waves of enemy soldiers attacking the Fire Base. He stated that they just kept coming through the clearing with no fear of death, stepping over the bodies of previous waves. Louis stated that there were over 600 rounds of enemy artillery and 400 RPGs dropped on the Support Base.

At battle’s end Louis realized that at some point he had been hit in the knee. Eleven out of 18 guns were destroyed in the battle. His unit fired 2,200 rounds of Artillery during the four hour battle. Americans lost 39 soldiers and 190 wounded while 687 enemy soldiers were killed.

Louis ended his tour of duty on November 15th, 1968 when he returned to Connecticut. Among Louis’s military honors are a Bronze Star and The Purple Heart. His unit was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm. Louis is currently active with the VFW and is an official for youth sports. You can view Louis’s collection at the VHP website: www.ccsu.edu/vhp.
Francesco (Frank) Gozzo

passed away on Friday, February 7, 2014. Gozzo was born on January 21, 1920 in Hartford, CT and in 1938, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps. Gozzo, whose highest rank was Captain, joined because he wanted to fly. He was shy when he first became an instructor, but he was able to overcome his fear and become a successful educator. Gozzo would constantly ask to be sent abroad for combat, but he was such an effective teacher that they kept him state-side. He spent his army career in the U.S. educating a generation of cadets. Gozzo returned to Hartford on a Wednesday, was offered a job on Thursday, and started on Monday; he never took a day off between the service and his civilian job.

Eugene Wohl, passed away on January 16, 2015. Wohl, from Bridgeport, CT, was drafted into the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, where he rose to the rank of 1st Lieutenant. Wohl served in the European theater as a navigator on the B-17 and flew 35 missions. His service earned him the Air Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross. During his civilian career he worked for Sikorsky Aircraft as a technical writer and for Avco.

Manning J. Harvey Jr., born January 28, 1923, died on Thursday, May 15, 2014. Harvey was drafted and served with Company “A” 278th Engineer (C) Battalion Combat Engineers during World War II. Harvey saw combat in Rhineland, Ardennes, and Central Europe and was awarded three Bronze Stars. He returned home to begin a long career as an educator and coach.

Barnett “Barney” Laschever

Barney Laschever, born March 13, 1924, died on Thursday, May 22, 2014 in Simsbury, Connecticut. Laschever was at the University of Michigan when he heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor. He was drafted into the U.S. Army and worked for The Stars and Stripes newspaper. Laschever’s service took him to Los Angeles, Fort Knox, Italy, Pfungstadt, Germany, and Darmstadt, Germany. When he returned to Michigan on the GI Bill he met his wife and got a job with the Hartford Times.

Ralph Hann, of West Simsbury, died on Tuesday, April 28, 2015. Hann was born on June 20, 1926 in Plainfield, New Jersey. As soon as Hann turned 17 he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served on the U.S.S. Mazama. He participated in the battle of Leyte Gulf, the largest naval battle of the war. When his ship was torpedoed at Ulithi Atoll, Hann was seriously injured. His injuries kept him from the war for 18 months.

Donald A. Dugay, of Ware, MA, passed away on April 21, 2015. Dugay was a U.S. Marine during the Korean war, serving from 1949-1951. His service took him to Inchon, Seoul, and many other places on the peninsula, including the famous battle of the Chosin Reservoir. When his tour ended, he returned home on October 24, 1951. In his civilian life, Dugay worked for United Technologies until he retired. He was a member of the Elks, VFW, DAV, and the Chosin Few.

Lawrence “Mike” Busha passed away on October 18, 2014. Born on June 19, 1922 in Keeseville, New York, Busha served with the 29th Marine Regiment 6th Marine Division during World War II. Busha participated in the battle of Okinawa. Busha’s civilian life was focused on his activities in the labor movement.
James Lair, born on July 4, 1924 in Hilton, Oklahoma, died on October 28, 2014. Lair was a veteran of World War II where he served with Headquarters Co. 3rd Battalion, 32nd Armored Regiment. Lair landed on Omaha Beach during the invasion of Normandy and participated in the Battle of the Bulge. Upon returning to civilian life, Lair graduated from Texas A&M where he was recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency. In 1951, Lair went to Thailand to train the Border Patrol Police Service into special forces units. Lair later went to Laos, where his alliance with Vang Pao resulted in a force of 30,000 Hmong guerilla soldiers. After the Tonkin Gulf incident, operations against the Ho Chi Minh Trail increased. By the time Lair retired from the CIA, he had achieved the rank of GS-16. He continued to be a prominent figure in Hmong-American affairs for the rest of his life.

Mary Doyle Keefe, fondly known to many as "Rosie the Riveter," of Simsbury, passed away on April 21, 2015 at the age of 92. As a young lady, living in Arlington, she was asked to model for a painting. The person asking was Norman Rockwell, a well known artist known for depicting everyday life in a New England town. Mary was asked to pose with a rivet gun in her lap. This painting, like many of Norman Rockwell’s paintings was on the cover of the Saturday Evening Post dated May 29, 1943. Known as Rosie the Riveter she was a symbol of women in the workforce during World War II and the ability of the American woman to support the war front from back home in the USA. Mary was very proud of this honor and prestige. You can hear her story as told by her on the VHP Website.

Americo “Rico” Pace, born on November 21, 1921, passed away on Sunday, March 1, 2015. Born in Pratola Peligna, province of Aquila, Italy, he immigrated to the U.S. when he was an infant. He served with the U.S. Army during World War II and took part in the Invasion of Normandy as well as the Battle of the Bulge. Later, he was involved with the Italian-American Veterans organization as well as St. Anthony Catholic War Veterans. Rico was the Grand Marshal at the Connecticut Memorial Day Parade in 2011.

Robert “Bob” Pedro, of Coventry, Connecticut, died on Thursday, July 17, 2014. Pedro was a member of the 4th Marine Division, who fought in World War II’s Pacific Theater. He enlisted when he was 17 when he was living in Willimantic, CT. Pedro spent his 19th birthday offshore of Iwo Jima in preparation for the battle. Pedro achieved the rank of Corporal.

Jesse Harrison, of Rocky Hill, who was born on April 21, 1921 died on the same day 94 years later, April 21, 2015. Harrison enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corp and flew his first plane in the winter of 1942. Harrison flew missions over the Middle East, Africa, and Europe. He was part of the invasion of Normandy and was shot down over Holland. Upon returning home he participated in the Bennino-Beck VFW Post 2138 and the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 12.

Wallace Albert Kline, born February 24, 1920, died at the Masonic Home in Wallingford on Monday, January 14, 2013. Kline enlisted with the United States Marine Corps and worked on the gull winged F4U Corsair. Kline achieved the rank of Corporal and, after he returned from service on January 17, 1947, began working with Sikorsky. He was witness to the first helicopter test flights. He continued working in the field of aviation at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft until he retired.
VIETNAM 50th Celebration Weekend
Honor and Remember
July 11-12, 2015 (9:00 - 5:00)
CT Air National Guard Base, 100 Nicholson Rd, East Granby, CT and
New England Air Museum, 36 Perimeter Rd, Windsor Locks, CT

Become a member of American Huey 369 and get a complimentary “Member flight” in Huey 369.
www.americanhuey369.com

For more information visit: www.ccsu.edu/vietnam
or contact by email: hursteim@ccsu.edu
by phone: 860-832-2976

CCSU Veteran History Project

A TIME TO THANK OUR VIETNAM VETERANS!

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Paul Buche
MOH recipient

General Edward Mecham
Former POW

General William Bergert

AC-47 “SPOOKY”
Gunship

Collings Foundation
Skyraider

OH-6 LOH
Gun Truck

Military Police

General

F-100 Super Sabre

C-130

F-4 Phantom

B-52

A-26 Invader

AH-1 Cobra

Static Displays of Vietnam Era Aircraft and vehicles

The United States Coast Guard Band

Vietnam Era Military Vehicles

Concert July 11
1:00 pm

Events held at CT Air National Guard Base are free for all!
Entrance to the New England Air Museum is free for all
Veterans - others pay $12 (with $2 of each ticket benefitting the Vietnam 50th Weekend!)

SECURITY REQUIREMENTS:
NO BACKPACKS, NO PETS, NO WEAPONS, NO ALCOHOL

Contributing Sponsors:
CCSU Veterans History Project
CT Department of Veterans Affairs
United Technologies Corporation

Associate Sponsors:
CCSU Alumni Association
Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company
Trumbull Rotary Foundation Inc.

Cooperating Sponsors:
Raymond Baldwin
Farmington Bank
History Channel
Connecticare Inc.
Hughes & Cronin Public Affairs Strategies
Robert Plozzoli
SPRING INTERNS

From January 2015 to March 2015, Anthony Vinci interned for the Veterans History Project. Anthony is a senior at CCSU working towards a Bachelor of Arts in History with a minor in Public History. He has aspirations of continuing his education at CCSU for a Master’s degree in Public History. Anthony’s experience at the Veterans History Project was extremely positive. He states, “It was an honor to preserve the history of so many Connecticut veterans. Both of my grandfathers were veterans in World War II and the Korean War respectively. It was a tremendous honor to contribute back to those who carried themselves with such courageous valor and shared such fascinating stories with others.”

SPRING INTERNS

Sam Burns, a Bethel resident, started working for the Veterans History Project in January of this year. Sam is an undergraduate student at WCSU where he is pursuing a degree in Psychology with a minor in History. His goal is to become a licensed clinical counselor and one day help treat veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Sam is excited to have the opportunity to preserve the first-hand accounts of members of our armed forces.

Remember Our Heroes this Memorial Day.

CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY & SOCIAL RESEARCH AT CCSU

For more information or to participate please contact:

Eileen Hurst, VHP Director
Room 210 03
185 Main Street
New Britain, CT 06050

Phone: 860-832-2976
Fax: 860-832-2981
Email: hursteim@ccsu.edu

Visit the Veterans History Project!

Online at http://www.ccsu.edu/vhp
On YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/user/ccsuvhp
On Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/vhp.ccsu

heard so as to provide future generations with their knowledge and experiences, “It is important that we do not forget our past; knowing our past tells us a lot about who we are and helps us make better informed decisions that shape our future.”