



# THE FWCA/VHPA NEWSLETTER

## FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER - VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

An independent organization not under control nor authorized to act as an agent or representative of the VHPA.

June, 2016

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### President's Blurb: What is Memorial Day?

As we all get older we'd like to think that we are also getting wiser, right? Well then, here is an attempt to get a little wiser. When we were kids growing up our family all piled into the car at about this time every year and drove to the local cemetery to watch the parade. A little later my sister and I would get to march in the parade as scouts. It was a wonderful experience and we thoroughly enjoyed the feel of the big bass drum vibrating our stomachs as we moved along the gravel road. After the parade they made us stand still and be quiet while some folks did speeches and placed funny-looking wreaths at the monument in the middle of the cemetery. Then some men would shoot at something and some guy would play a horn for a while. Not nearly as exciting as the parade. It took me many years to absorb the facts and appreciate just what was happening.

Memorial Day began in both the North and the South in 1866 after the Civil War, making this year the 150<sup>th</sup> that we have honored those who gave their lives in war. First known as Decoration Day, from the custom of placing flowers on the graves of the dead, Memorial Day is now the day intended to remember all of America's uniformed loss of lives during war, including those from small and lesser known overseas actions. According to an article published in the May, 2016, edition of the *Veterans of Foreign Wars Magazine*, these losses include over 660 thousand deaths due to hostile action from the Revolutionary War through the Afghanistan War.

For the last several years I've made it a habit to take a drive around town on Memorial Day morning just to see what evidence I can find that folks might be remembering. It has been a very disappointing trip and getting worse each year. The Monday holiday law of 1971 and the ensuing holiday sales and celebrations could be blamed for a lot of this but many people are just simply not aware of what Memorial Day should be. Above all else it is NOT a day to celebrate, but to pause and remember. Our flag should be lowered to half-staff at sunrise to honor the dead and raised again at noon to recognize veterans who are still with us and to symbolize the persistence of our nation in the face of loss.

On another issue, we are trying to move from printed newsletter to e-mailed newsletter to save trees and money. Please contact the president to let him know which version you would like.

#### Notes from the Vice President

Nothing this time.

#### Secretary Stuff

For questions or actions about membership, dues, change of address and email issues, contact Jerry Barnes at [baron67@verizon.net](mailto:baron67@verizon.net) or 214-212-0761.

You can update your contact info with VHPA on-line at <https://directory.vhpa.org/login.php>. Log in and click on "Update My Information."

#### Treasurer's Report

Instead of the old here's what we have this time, I want to thank the following people: . Rick Couch, Ed Faught, Gary Fowler, Jim

Hart, Bill Kane, Tom Lawrence, Jack Lowey, Phil McMillen, Jim Messinger, Bob Poland, Gary Salisbury, Adam Steczko, Herb Koenig, and Gerald Brazell.

These 14 people donated \$1,000 each so that the chapter name will be in the museum as a member of the Builders Club. We went a little over the top on that and now, if we can get another 11 people to donate, the chapter can get credit for the OH-23 display that will be in the museum...can I have 11 more? Please?

**VHPA 2016 REUNION**

**33rd Reunion will be at the  
Peppermill Hotel, Reno, NV  
6 - 10 July 2016**

Reunion details are available on the VHPA website - <http://www.vhpa.org/news.htm>. The registration webpage is <https://reunion.vhpa.org/>

It's not too late to register for the Reunion, but some events have sold out.

**PAY YOUR CHAPTER DUES!**

**Now \$20 per year - (still cheap)!**

The number after your name on the address page of your mailed copy is the year that your membership expires. Pay in person to the secretary or treasurer or mail to the return address shown on this Newsletter. The expiration date is January, regardless of the year. Send more money (\$20 per year) and you can extend your membership for as many years as you like. If the date is 2016 or lower, you have expired. Well, maybe not *YOU*, but your membership has.

**The National Vietnam War Museum, Inc.**  
See the Museum website, <http://www.nationalvnmuseum.org> for details of the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Honoring of the Wall at the Museum site

on June 4, 2016. A complete agenda flyer is available on the website. Our chapter meeting will be at this event. See later article below.

**Current Chapter Officers**

	Ed Faught	President
	Don Ancelin	Vice President
A	Adam Steczko	Imed. Past President
	Rick Couch	Sr. Member-at-Large
C	John Grow	Midterm Member-at-Large
	Pat Richardson	Jr. Member-at-Large
	Jerry Barnes	Secretary
J	Jim Messinger	Treasurer

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For Chapter info, rattle these cages. Someone will eventually answer. Landline - 940-325-8427 or Fax - 9 940-325-4009

**MEETING NOTICE**

**The next Quarterly Meeting will be on Saturday, June 4, 2016 at the National Vietnam War Museum site one mile east of Mineral Wells on US 180. The Chapter meeting will be held immediately after the annual updating of the Vietnam Wall ceremony which starts at 9:45 a.m. The ceremony should be complete around 12:02 p.m. The chapter meeting will start whenever a few members wander around and find the big tree under which we have met in the past. Spouses and guests are welcome. Usually, "someone" arranges for a catered BBQ meal for the usual \$20. The meeting is typically very informal and a good time will be had by all.**

Editor's Note: I landed a Huey on a moving gunboat in the Mekong. I was also able to takeoff and return to base. I believe I had as much training on landing on moving objects as the jet jockey in this picture. Looking the right wing, I think my Huey landing was more successful.



# PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

You Never Know For Sure Until You Try

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That's a -30- for this edition. Had some major glitches due, I believe, old software dating back to at least whenever the current masthead started which was before I joined the chapter. I'll be looking into some better formatting and more user friendly publication methods for the September edition.

Memo to the EC and anyone who wants to write an article: The deadline to have your comments, articles, etc. to the editor is 5 pm, Friday, July 29, 2016. Email to me at [iflewinnam@earthlink.net](mailto:iflewinnam@earthlink.net) .

See you at the Wall Updating and Chapter meeting.

Pat Richardson, Editor

## **Here's some info Adam Steczko found about Texas license plates with military awards.**

Veterans may get two sets of special plates without paying the specialty fees. Begin the process at the TX DOT web site, shown below.

<http://www.txdmv.gov/motorists/license-plates/specialty-license-plates>

Once you select the plate version, when you click on the ORDER button, it will present the order form (Form VTR-421 Rev 01/16) You may also have your Handi-capped plate added to these plates by submitting the appropriate forms.

### **The details:**

There is no registration fee for the first set of plates. There is also no specialty plate fee. If you order additional sets of plates, your annual registration fee must be paid to your local county tax assessor-collector. Plates may be personalized for an additional \$40 fee, make your selection on page 2 of the form. Do not mail cash with your application. Personalization fees will not be refunded once application is submitted. Contact Special Plates Branch (SPB) at 512-374-5010 if you have any questions.

All plates below are available for passenger cars, trucks (up to 18,000 lbs.), and motorcycles/mopeds.

The following awards are available, with the appropriate documentation. [Editor's note: This list is not in military order of precedence. The DMV is a civilian organization.]

- Air Force Cross
- Distinguished Service Medal, Air Force
- Air Medal
- Air Medal with Valor
- Army Distinguished Service Cross
- Distinguished Service Medal, Army
- Bronze Star
- Bronze Star with Valor
- Distinguished Service Medal, Coast Guard
- Distinguished Service Medal, Department of Defense
- Distinguished Flying Cross
- Legion of Merit
- Navy Cross
- Distinguished Service Medal, Navy

Silver Star  
Surviving Spouse  
Defense Superior Service Medal  
Meritorious Service Medal  
Navy and Marine Corps Medal  
Prisoner of War Medal  
Airman's Medal  
Distinguished Service Medal, Department of Homeland Security  
Distinguished Service Medal, Department of Transportation  
Coast Guard Medal  
Soldier's Medal  
Defense Meritorious Service Medal

## Eligibility Requirements

- Proof that you are an active member of the United States Armed Forces, and proof (such as an Officer Record Brief (ORB) or Enlisted Record Brief (ERB) and copy of your military ID) or a former member with proof of honorable discharge, and proof (such as a DD-214) that you are the recipient of one of the medals above
- Prisoner of War Medal: Official U.S. Government document or certification from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs certifying or identifying the applicant as a former prisoner of war.
- -As an unmarried, surviving spouse of a veteran who had Meritorious Service license plates, you are eligible to register your vehicle with a plate featuring the same military emblem. To apply, you must complete this form, enclose a written statement that you are unmarried and provide proof that your spouse had this plate and is now deceased. A new plate will be issued with the same emblem, with a new plate number.