



NEWS AND VIEWS

VVA REDWOOD EMPIRE CHAPTER 223



Happy
Valentine's
Day

VOLUME 20

ISSUE 1 February 2018

PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH OTHER VETERANS



2017 Outreach and Assistance Review Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 223

by Bill Burke, Treasurer



As we roll into 2018 it might be valuable to look back on 2017 and review our accomplishments. Through hard work and determination we were able to fund our various programs and give away over \$61,000. Most of that was due to the horrific Northern California Wildfires.

We started working the day after the Northern California Wildfires in October broke out and when the Red Cross was overwhelmed, VVA Chapter 223 along with Amvets Post 40 and Windsor, CA VFW Post 768 took over the responsibility to ensure that all those in need were supplied with food, clothing, water, and valuable gift cards. To date, we have supplied close to \$27,000 in assistance. We continue to seek out those in need and make sure they are taken care of. It was also very apparent that in a crisis you want people that are use to operating in a stressful environment. Our veteran community took the needed leadership role and worked together assisting all who came to the Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building Evacuation Center.

The packing was completed with the help of about 100 volunteers on January 25, 2017 at St. Johns Church, as we again partnered with Healdsburg SOS (Serving Our Soldiers – a grass roots organization dedicated to ensuring that our service men and women are not forgotten). VVA Chapter 223 has paid the postage to ship 218 “care” packages to the recently deployed troops of the 4th Infantry Division out of Fort Carson, Colorado. With some substantial postage fee increases this year it cost \$4,021.00 to ship all the boxes. January also saw us receiving a grant from the California State Council of the Vietnam Veterans of America. We turned that grant back to the CA State Council to help pay for the various Veterans Service Officers around the state.

March 2017 saw us assisting a woman veteran with housing and food as she tried to find shelter this rainy season. We were also able to assist this same veteran repair her car so she could remain mobile. We made a donation to the Veterans Resource Center as part of their Dancing with the Stars and Stripes fundraising efforts.

April has seen us make a contribution to the Avon 39 Walk Against Breast Cancer.

During May we once again were able to hand out education scholarships totaling \$3,000 to 6 deserving graduating high school seniors. The chapter provided funds to purchase a new Ice Machine for the Santa Rosa Veterans Building along with a spare set of flags to replace the ones stolen earlier in the year. We also were able to assist a disabled Marine Corp Afghan vet pay his household expenses and provide a Safeway gift card for food. We sponsored a town hall meeting with the Veterans Administration to discuss issues with medical care and procedures.

June saw us assist the Veterans Group of San Quentin Prison in paying for incidentals for their July 2017 awards banquet. Chapter 223 manages the money the vets raise through their in-prison food sales.

July had us providing assistance to another homeless Air Force veteran by providing lodging, food, gas, and clothing assistance while he looked for a job.

August saw us make a donation to Catholic Charities to assist them in their homeless programs including the Safe Parking Lot program.

September started by assisting the family of one of our recently deceased chapter members by paying for having their 2016 income taxes completed.

November has seen us provide construction services on the home of one of our deceased Chapter members resulting from a building contractor providing sub-standard work resulting in building code violations.

Continued on page 5

Vietnam Veterans of America Redwood Empire Chapter 223

Santa Rosa, California

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Clinic Coffee Cart: Lou Nuñez

Color Guard:

Dinner/Dance: Lou Nuñez

Education: John McGivney

Finance: Pat Christen

Food Distribution: John McGivney

Legislation: Ken Holybee

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Newsletter: Ken & Sonja

Scholarship Fund: Sunny Campbell

UVC: Ken Holybee

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Website: Bill Burke

If you would like to purchase a Business Card sized **sponsorship** to put in our NEWSLETTER, Please call the chapter office. Phone number is: 707-526-4218

Contributors to the News and Views: Ken Holybee, Kate O'Hare-Palmer, Bill Burke, and Whitt Patterson. Thanks to all. Would like to see more articles next month. Support the chapter. I don't write articles, I just put it together. There are a lot of interesting stories out there, send them to Ken and he will forward them to me.

NOTICE

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Presidents Message
Ken Holybee

VA Health Care and Agent Orange

There have been some comments and questionable responses to the care we get at the VA. First, let be clear, I get all my health care at the VA. This means nothing to others that may get better or worse care than I get. I have heard that with the current changes in law the Veterans are getting better care and the VA is better able to fire people that do not preform to high standards. The new law that gives the leadership the ability to fire employees dose very little to address the problem of poor performance. The only change from before is that they now only have six months to appeal their firing and they are still at full pay while this is happening. The biggest changes that have taken place are in the health care. There is now less medical personal working for the VA. It takes almost a year to get a job with the VA and most people do not want to wait that long for a low paying job. Most positions in the VA pay less than the same job in civilian work. The current push for "Veterans Choice" is to privatize the VA. They do this by not having the services available in your area a telling you to find someone on the outside. By the way, you need to see your doctor to get the referral to go to an outside doctor. The government this year made the choice program a permanent program. They did not increase the VA budget to do this, but they did cut funding to approximately 32 programs to move five hundred million dollars to the program. Secretary Shulkin was just about to make an announcement on November 1st regarding the recommendation from the Institute on Medicines recommendation to add three illnesses to the presumptive status for Agent Orange. At the last minute he was told by the Office of Budget Management that there was no funding for these illnesses, so he could not elevate them. In this line they also informed us that congress refuses to fund the Blue Water Navy,

C 123 Aircrews or any other project or program regarding Agent Orange. The VA also refuses to make any decisions president setting so everyone must fight them separately. Just over a year ago the congress passed, and the President signed the Toxic Exposure Research Act. To date there as been no noticeable action on the Law. This is to look at the research into the illnesses and birth defects that affect the children of Veterans. There is also concern over the handling of the claims that have been sent in by our children. Secretary Shulkin is trying but his hands seem to be tied when it comes to working with congress. We are not getting clear answers that can be given to our membership. At this time only sixty percent of positions in the VA are filled. There is no Undersecretary for Health or Undersecretary for Benefits. The forty percent that is unfilled is in every area and every job, including doctors, nurses and all other medical areas. As veterans we need to keep our congressmembers aware of the fact that we know what is happening. I always try to encourage our members to contact their legislators as much as possible. We also need to keep our local and state representatives up to date on the problems with the VA. As an individual we can only do so much, but as a group and talking to our local representatives we can carry a lot of power. Getting the state on our side can make a difference in when trying to make a point in congress. Today's administration and congress does not care about veterans but wants to increase funding for military equipment. They can all make money from war, but veterans are just a drain to them. Contrary to what the government is saying there are no positive results to the issues we keep bringing up.

Sent to News and Views by:

Kate O'Hare-Palmer by way of a nurse friend of Kate's, Patricia A Ehline

5 Reasons Monsanto's 'Science' Doesn't Add Up

By Ronnie Cummins and Katherine Paul

To hear the pesticide and junk food marketers of the world tell it, anyone who questions the value, legitimacy or safety of GMO (genetically modified organisms) crops is naïve, anti-science and irrational to the point of hysteria. But how long can Monsanto ignore the mounting actual scientific evidence that their technology is not only failing to live up to its promises, it's putting

public health at risk? How long can Monsanto ignore the mounting actual scientific evidence that their technology is not only failing to live up to its promises, it's putting public health at risk?

Jim Goodman, farmer, activist and member of the Organic Consumers Association policy advisory board, recently wrote about Monsanto's deceptive use of the expression "sound science." But, 'sound science' has no scientific definition. It does not mean peer reviewed, or well documented research. 'Sound science' is only a term, an ideological term, used to support a particular point of view, policy statement or a technology. 'Sound science' is little more than the opinions of so-called "experts" representing corporate interests. Simply put, 'sound science' always supports the position of industry over people, corporate profit over food safety, the environment and public health. Here are five new reports and studies, published in the last two months, that blow huge holes in Monsanto's "sound science" story. Reports of everything from Monsanto's Roundup causing fatal, chronic kidney disease to how, contrary to industry claims, Roundup persists for years, contaminating soil, air and water. And oh-by-the-way, no, GMO crops will not feed the world, nor have they reduced the use of herbicides and pesticides.

Monsanto's Roundup linked to fatal, chronic kidney disease.

Article in *Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, February 2014

What happens when you mix glyphosate, the key active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup, with "hard" water? That is, water that contains metals, such as calcium, magnesium, strontium and iron, either found naturally in the soil, or resulting from the use of chemical fertilizers? The glyphosate becomes "extremely toxic" to the kidneys. That's the theory

put forth by researchers trying to uncover the mystery of thousands of deaths from chronic kidney disease among people in farming areas of Sri Lanka, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

2. Monsanto's Roundup persists in soil and water. U.S. Geological Survey report in *Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry*, February 2014

Monsanto has always insisted (despite evidence to the contrary) that its Roundup herbicide is benign, that its toxicity doesn't persist. But that's only half the story, according to a study published this month in *Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry*. Researchers now say that if you study only the key active ingredient, glyphosate, you might, as Monsanto claims, determine that Roundup is benign. But there are other ingredients in Roundup, including one called Aminomethylphosphonic acid, or AMPA. The study, called "Pesticides in Mississippi air and rain: A comparison between 1995 and 2007," found that glyphosate and its still-toxic byproduct, AMPA, were found in over 75 percent of the air and rain samples tested from Mississippi in 2007. What does that mean for you? According to one analysis, "if you were breathing in the sampled air you would be inhaling approximately 2.5 nanograms of glyphosate per cubic meter of air. It has been estimated the average adult inhales approximately 388 cubic feet or 11 cubic meters of air per day, which would equal to 27.5 nanograms (billionths of a gram) of glyphosate a day." Gasp.

3. GMO crops have led to an increase in use of pesticides and herbicides. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) report, February 2014

The USDA, which gauging from its track record has never met a GMO crop it didn't like, published a report substantiating what responsible, independent scientists have been saying along. Genetic engineering does not result in increased yields (as industry would have us believe)—but it has led to the increased (not decreased, as industry claims) use of pesticides and herbicides. To be fair, the report gives overall favorable reviews to GMO crops. Not surprising, given the agency's cozy relationship with Monsanto. But that makes it all the more telling that the once staunch-defender of GMO crops is now raising questions about industry's long-term, decidedly unproven and unscientific, claims that biotechnology is the best thing since sliced (GMO wheat) bread. Sustainable Pulse does a good job of sifting through the USDA's report to reveal the agency's criticisms of GMO crops.

4. Pesticides are more dangerous than we thought. Article in *BioMed Research International*, February 2014

More bad news on pesticides. A study published in BioMed Research International this month says that it's not just the toxic chemicals we need to worry about in pesticides. It's the inert ingredients, and how they interact with the active, toxic ingredients. Typically, studies conducted to determine the safety of pesticides focus exclusively on the active ingredients. But scientists at the University of Caen tested eight commercial products, including Roundup, and found that nine of them were hundreds of times more toxic than their active ingredient alone. Which product won the "Most Toxic" award? Monsanto's Roundup, which was found to be "by far the most toxic of the herbicides and insecticides tested," according to the study.

5. Small-Scale, organic farming needed to feed the world. U.N. Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Wake Up Before It Is Too Late, December 2013

In December 2013, the U.N. Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) released the results of a lengthy, in-depth study that blows a huge hole in one of Monsanto's favorite claims, that we need GMOs to feed the world. The study, entitled, Wake Up Before it is Too Late, concluded with this warning: Small-scale organic farming is the only way to feed the world. According to an analysis by one of the report's contributors, the report contains in-depth sections on the shift toward more sustainable, resilient agriculture; livestock production and climate change; the importance of research and extension; the role of land use; and the role of reforming global trade rules. More than 60 experts from around the world contributed to the report. Clearly the evidence—real, scientific evidence—against GMO crops is mounting, when five new anti-GMO studies and reports surface in a matter of a couple of months. How much more will it take before the USDA, U.S. Food & Drug Administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency stop supporting an industry under attack from the scientific community? And start putting public health before corporate profits? In December, more than 200 scientists, physicians, and experts from relevant fields, signed a statement declaring that the biotech industry is deceiving the public when it claims that GMOs are safe. There is, the group said, no "scientific consensus" to support industry's claims that GMOs are safe. But as new studies surface every day, it's become increasingly clear that among credible physicians and scientists, the consensus is that we'd better wake up, soon, to

the risks and threats posed by a reckless technology that has been allowed to dominate our food and farm-

Continued from page 1 "Year in Review"

We were also able to sign an agreement with the Redwood Empire Food Bank to be able to purchase food directly from the food bank for veterans in need at savings of up to 90%.

November and December has seen us continue to provide assistance to veterans impacted by the wild-fires. We have been providing soft goods along with gift cards to help the displaced families and multiple agencies begin their recovery process.

We continue to provide free coffee and donuts at the Santa Rosa VA Clinic each weekday morning. We also sponsor a community food distribution program in conjunction with Redwood Empire Food Bank to over 400 family members in need each month. We continue to work the Santa Rosa Quilters Guild to provide blankets to our wheelchair bound veterans. Over the past couple of years we have provided over 1600 quilt blankets to our wheelchair bound veterans.

Thank you to all of our volunteers and our generous donors for making 2017 a huge success.

Scholarship information

May be found on VVA 223 Website

WEB: www.vva-223.org



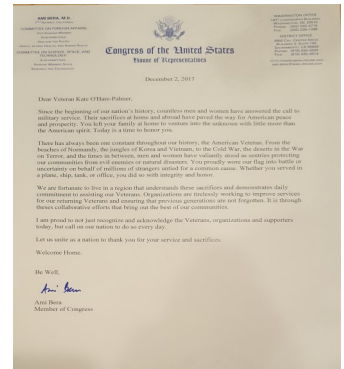
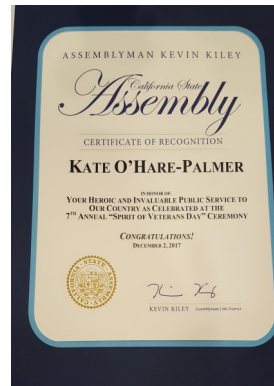


Ken was presented this award at the Oct. Board meeting.

←
Sonja photo



VVA National was presented with this award on 1/13/18.



Helping with Vet Connect Christmas give-a-way . Bottom 3 photos Pictures by Kate

All photos by Kate unless otherwise noted



Kate was presented this award and letter from Congressman Kevin Kiley. On December 2, 2017

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Committee reports review from Board of Director Meetings. Silver Springs, Md. January 2018

Submitted by Kate O'Hare-Palmer

Homeless Committee.

Sandy Miller, Committee Ch., and Sharon Hodge, VVA Deputy Dir., met with Mr. Radcliffe, Assistant Secretary Commissioner of Planning and Development. They discussed the changes in case management for various homeless programs. The changes of trying to do away with case management for the HUDVASH program wouldn't help the program. Many of these changes require more veteran service officers in order to fulfill the paperwork. Those veterans that wash out of HUDVASH are not considered homeless and, yet, they have to wait a year before reapplying. The mixing of various program veterans in one building shows the inconsistency of treatment plans. Those veterans that are waiting for housing within 30 days don't have to comply with the guidelines that other veterans have: such as no alcohol or drug use or following meeting requirements for staying on site. This creates tension and problems within the sites. They also discussed the point-in-time counts that are done every January. The question of the severe weather and not being able to get an accurate count for homeless per state suggests that the count should be completed in the spring or summer. The difficulty of finding qualified staff to work in these programs for the low salaries due to non-profit financial status continues to be a problem.

PTSD and Substance Abuse Committee.

Mental Health first aid is still at crisis level in many VA hospitals and clinics due to the long wait times. We must continue to complain to the directors of the hospital and clinics to effect change. There is such a shortage of Doctors and Psychology staff because of the lengthy vetting process. The committee discussed the need for training of VA staff on the military culture. Their understanding of the language of the veterans is key in working with them. There also was discussion on the problem with veterans with bad paper discharges not being eligible for suicide prevention therapy or VA health care. The number of bad paper discharges in all the military related to moving active duty out of the military when they most likely have PTSD rather than giving them treatment was reviewed. The committee also reviewed the policy of veterans going in for normal treatment in the clinics and filling out a survey on their "current" mental health or "how are you feeling?" status. It is important for veterans to be honest and not just cover up your feelings by saying that all is "OK." Some veterans have been reported to have done this and then later found that their compensation percentage has been dropped due to improvement in their status. Lastly, we discussed the use of medications made in other countries or the use of mail order meds. Dr. Berger told of these drugs not having good standards of purity; especially those from Honduras and India. Just beware.

Women Veteran Committee.

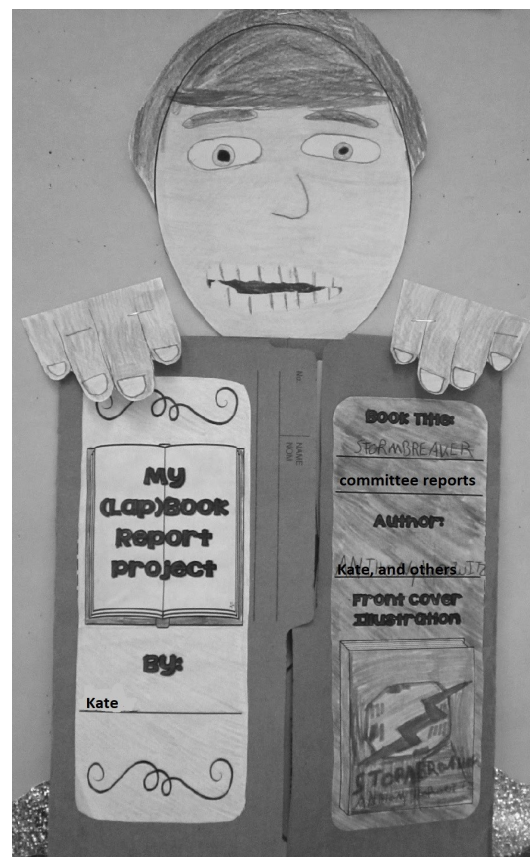
The Military Justice Improvement Act was reinstated by Sen. Gillibrand last month. The SAPRO report (Sexual Assault Prevention Program) results for 2017 were published. The percentages of number of assaults within the military has not decreased significantly. The continued problem within the DoD is that MST is not

considered a crime like it is in the civilian sector. The judicial consequences for predators within the military is not as severe as civilian sector. For this reason, there is a high incidence of retribution, harassment, and retaliation for the persons that come forward to report the assault. It is discouraging.

The MJIA had as part of the bill, a section to remove the chain of command within the judicial process. It is still being shown that the control by senior commanders within this process hampers non-bias judicial process for the survivor. The NIMBY overshadows and skews the percentages in many of these cases. The incidence of suicide for those survivors has not been studied. The creation of a MST resources list to be put on our website and handouts was discussed. VVA has joined with SWAN in support of the #MeToo campaign. There was a rally held at the Pentagon Metro Station on January 8, 2018..the kickoff for the campaign. Some members of the military who have survived sexual trauma were there to tell their stories. They are joining the women around the world that are involved in this campaign. The SAPRO statistics also show the percentage of men that are included in these assaults within the active duty area. These numbers have risen and disturbing.

Our committee also discussed the difficulty on our national VVA webpage for finding committee reports and information for chapter members on what is happening at our local levels. Many discussed the inability to navigate within the pages and would like this to be brought up to the board.

The 25th Anniversary of the VN Womens Memorial will be next November, 2018. We hope that many of our members will be able to go to DC for this event. There will be a Candlelight Ceremony on November 10th and special ceremony at the Wall on Veterans Day. Our VVA will be hosting a reception for our members-Place and time TBA.



Push back on Disrespect of Anthem, Flag & Veterans

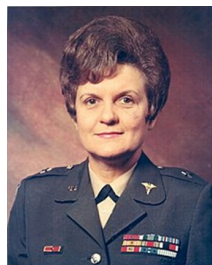
By Whit Patterson

Like most American men (and some, I don't know the percentage, women), love to watch football. The NFL and its players have enjoyed record viewing over the years, but since the beginning of the player's disrespectful kneeling during the anthem last year, many Americans have tuned out. The lack of TV viewer has grabbed the attention of the NFL and the advertisers (not the players apparently), but they have yet addressed the issue.

Let us remember that the players have every right to protest what and when they want. They believe they have legitimate grievances that have not been addressed. The right to protest is guaranteed in our Constitution and that is what all veterans have sworn protect. When the players first started this disrespectful action, I don't think many of them knew the anthem and flag stood for the respect and recognition of all who sacrificed so much to create this country and to defend her. They now know but, apparently don't care. What did we, as veterans, have to do with the injustice(s) they are addressing: Nothing! It has also become clear that the NFL owners care more about protecting their money than those who have served to protect them. The NFL has done nothing to stop this misguided and disrespectful action. It looks like they will continue this protest against us we have one option to let them know they are wrong, and that is to tune them out, as some veterans have done all year.

The NFL season is down to its final weekend and the NFL is going all out to get stop the low rating and get people to watch their gala event. The Super Bowl is the player's and the league's crown jewel. What better way to tell them how we feel than to tune out their biggest game of the year and hopefully lower its viewership even more. It will probably hurt us more not to get to watch the game than what it takes the players to kneel, but the importance in the long run could change their minds. On the bright side, neither of the teams is from ANYWHERE near the West Coast, or even west of the Mississippi. Enjoy your day, void of the NFL.

this was a great lady...our chief nurse in Vietnam....later to become the first woman general. She was a wonderful woman..and a great leader. Kate



Anna Mae Violet McCabe Hays (February 16, 1920 – January 7, 2018) was an American military officer who served as the 13th chief of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. She was the first woman in the U.S. Armed Forces to be promoted to a General Officer rank; in 1970, she was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General.^[2]

Born Anna Mae Violet McCabe^[1]

February 16, 1920

Buffalo, New York, U.S.

Died January 7, 2018 (aged 97)

Washington, D.C., U.S.

Cause of death Complications from a heart attack

Burial place Grandview Cemetery

Occupation Army nurse

Spouse(s) William Hays (until 1962; his death)^[1]

Military career**Military career**

Allegiance  United States of America

Service/branch  United States Army

Years of service 1942–1971

Rank  Brigadier General

Commands held Army Nurse Corps

Battles/wars World War II
Korean War

Awards Legion of Merit (2)

February 2018

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1	2	3 Poker set up at 4:00 1943 SS Dorchester torpedoed 4 Chaplains go down with Ship
4	5	6 1962—MACV established	7	8	9	10 AMVETS VALENTINES DANCE Vets Building Doors open at 5 PM
V	12	13 Boar Meeting 1:00 PM	14 Valentines Day/ Ash Wednesday	15	16	17
18	19	20 General Meeting 6 PM potluck 7 PM meeting	21	22 1967—Operation Junction City begins	23	24 Newsletter articles Due
25	26 Copy Newsletter	27 Food Distribution 7 am set up	28 Fold Newsletter at 10 AM UVC 7 PM			

March 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 AVVA nominations open, turn paperwork if wishing to run to Sonja	2	3 Poker set up at 4 PM
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Board Meeting 1 PM	14	15	16	17
18 1969—Operation Dewey Canyon ends	19 2003 Iraq War begins	20 General Meeting 6 PM potluck —7PM meeting Nominations for officers begin	21	22	23 153 Battle of Pork Chop Hill	24 newsletter articles due
25	26 copy newsletter	27 Food distribution, set up at 7 am	28 UVC meeting at 7 PM	29 Fold newsletter at 10 am 1973 -- US involvement in Vietnam Ends	30 Good Friday/ Passover begins at sundown	31

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Chapter Email: vva223vva@gmail.com

Vietnam Veterans of America of Member-
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Membership is open to US armed forces veterans who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961 and May 7, 1975, or in any duty location between August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975.

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