



## 187th AHC Association Newsletter February 2018

**This newsletter is provided to keep you informed of association activities and other topics of interest.**

**2018 Reunion.** This year's reunion will be hosted by Ken and Ben Smet in St Pete Beach, Florida at the Sirata Beach Resort, 9-12 November. It is a great venue, right on the beach, with many amenities and activities. Available information is posted on the 187th web site, and a mailing in the near future will include registration forms, schedule and other details. Keep in mind that for members who require financial assistance in order to attend the reunion, the Steiger Fund may be able to help. The program is confidential; Jimmy Strait is the administrator for the Steiger Fund and he is the only person who knows who uses the fund. If you need assistance or know of anyone who needs assistance, email Jimmy at [jlstrait@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jlstrait@sbcglobal.net) or call direct **214-680-8327**.

**Vietnam Helicopter Pilots and Crewmembers Monument.** The monument dedication will take place at Arlington National Cemetery on 18 April at 1600 EDT, and will be followed by a reception. If you are interested in attending, please contact Jim Henry at 703.303.7773, [jim951@gmail.com](mailto:jim951@gmail.com) so that we can attend as a group. Jim will provide details to those planning to attend.



**National Archives Exhibit.** For those attending the monument dedication described above, or for anyone visiting Washington, DC, you may want to visit the National Archives to see their exhibit "**Remembering Vietnam - Twelve Critical Episodes in the Vietnam War**". Open in Washington, D.C. November 10, 2017–January 6, 2019. This exhibition presents both iconic and recently discovered National Archives records related to 12 critical episodes in the Vietnam War. They trace the policies and decisions made by the architects of the conflict and help untangle why the United States became involved in Vietnam, why it went on so long, and why it was so divisive for American society.

**Reunion Survey Results.** Fewer than 16% of members responded to the survey. To those who did respond, Thanks Very Much. You have given the BoD and future reunion hosts valuable input. Here are the reunion activities/factors ranked in order of their importance, based on your responses.

1. Memorial Ceremony
2. Banquet
3. Business Meeting
4. Silent & Live Auctions
5. Cost (hotel, travel, banquet, etc.) and Ladies Luncheon (tie for rank #5))
6. Access to Air Transportation
7. Frequency (annual, semi-annual, other) and Local Event Participation (tie for rank #7)
8. Access to extracurricular activities
9. Date/Timeframe (Veterans Day vs Other)
10. Hospitality Room w/BYOB
11. Use of 3rd Party reunion planner, e.g. Armed Forces Reunions
12. Climate
13. Geographic Area (East/West Coast, etc.)

Comments were few and varied widely, but there was general support for using a 3rd party planning organization. The complete results will be posted on the web site.

**Veterans ID Card.** VA has announced that the application process for the national Veterans Identification Card (VIC) is now available for Veterans — yet another action honoring their service Only those Veterans with honorable service will be able to apply for the ID card, which will provide proof of military service, and may be accepted by retailers in lieu of the standard DD-214 form to obtain promotional discounts and other services where offered to Veterans.

The VIC provides a more portable and secure alternative for those who served the minimum obligated time in service, but did not meet the retirement or medical discharge threshold. Veterans who served in the armed forces, including the reserve components, and who have a discharge of honorable or general (under honorable conditions) can request a VIC.

To request a VIC, Veterans must visit [vets.gov](https://www.vets.gov), click on “Sign In” in the top right hand corner and establish an ID.me account. Once the Veteran verifies their identity they may request to “Apply for the Veteran ID Card”. Veterans who apply for a card should receive it within 60 days and can check delivery status of their cards at [vets.gov](https://www.vets.gov). A digital version of the VIC will be available online soon.

**Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) On Line.** Veterans are now able to purchase items through the exchange service on-line. Some 18.5 million honorably discharged veterans now have a lifetime benefit enabling them to shop online at [ShopMyExchange.com](https://www.shopmyexchange.com), marking the first expansion of military exchange privileges since 1990. "The Exchange is honored to open its virtual doors to millions of deserving veterans," said Tom Shull, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service's director and CEO, a Vietnam-era Army veteran. To verify eligibility and begin shopping, Veterans can visit [ShopMyExchange.com](https://www.shopmyexchange.com).

**Agent Orange Registry.** If you have not already done so, you are encouraged to enroll in the Agent Orange Registry. The VA is collecting registry data to better understand and respond to health problems related to Agent Orange. Registering consists of a comprehensive health exam including medical history, exposure history, physical exam, and any tests, if needed. It is free to eligible veterans.

It is NOT a disability compensation exam. Contact your local VA Environmental Health Coordinator.  
<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/benefits/registry-exam.asp>

**Million Veterans Program.** The VA's Million Veteran Program (MVP) is seeking Veterans to help transform healthcare for future generations. More than 600,000 Veterans have already volunteered. Participation includes providing a blood specimen and completing a series of surveys. The program will help promote advancements in health care by studying how genes affect diseases such as cancer, heart disease, PTSD, traumatic brain injury and other health conditions. Contact your local VA office to participate.

**Veterans Suicide Prevention.** More than 20 Veterans commit suicide each day. The suicide rate among Veterans is 22% higher than those who have not served. You can make a difference. If you know of a veteran in crisis, contact the Veterans Crisis Line

- **800.273.8255** and press 1
- Chat online at **VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat**
- Text to **838255**

**Vietnam Helicopter Nose Art Book.** The Association isn't in the business of promoting books, but in case you're interested, John Brennan's latest aviation book documents Vietnam helicopter nose art. It's nicely organized by aircraft type and/or function. 187th members provided many stories and photos. featured in the book. Order this keepsake from: "Amazon / books / John Brennan", or from your favorite book store.

