



Veterans of Modern Warfare in their first Parade!

VA INFORMATION

If you have a VA Disability rating of 10% or more you are eligible to receive Hearing Aids and Eye Glasses at the VA Hospital. However, in certain circumstances you may still be eligible without a disability rating. **The Tioga County Veterans Service Agency number is: 607-687-8227**

33rd Anniversary of the Fall of Saigon!

Yesterday was the 33rd anniversary of the fall of Saigon. For weeks the posters have been up commemorating the event that changed the history of this country 33 years ago.

When the tanks rolled into the city along several different avenues of approach the locals knew that life would never be the same again. The new masters had rolled into town and the new regime was in charge. There were those who suddenly aligned themselves with their new masters as could be seen in the crowds of hangers on who were only too eager to pull down the statue of South Vietnamese soldier in front of the Opera House. In the Vietnamese National Banks the new bank managers from Hanoi arrived within hours of the fall of the city and called the frightened staff into a meeting... "You are still our enemies and we can have you killed if we want at any time" One of the new senior managers told them. They were then sent home and that night dozens of trucks pulled up outside the banks to

load the cash and gold and take it north. After the new masters were installed the residents of District 1 were ordered to billet 3 or 4 NVA soldiers in each house, they also had to supply the "Liberators" with food which was very difficult in a city where the daily way of life was in tatters. The police who came from the north were given summary powers of execution and there were a number of cases where these executions took place in the streets in front of a terrified public. As the weeks dragged on after the fall the soldiers were rounded up for reeducation which lasted from 12 months to 25 years. For the first year of this reeducation no one was allowed to visit them and for those in for long term re education it was often to be years before any of the family was allowed to visit. At the Bien Hoa Airbase one former South Vietnamese Air force pilot was ordered to show the Northern pilots how a particular jet was preflighted and serviced. He did the pre flight checks showing his "students" what needed to be done. He next told them he would show them how the jet started and how the engines should be tested. As the Northern trainee pilots looked on he fired up the jet... taxied and before they knew what was happening he was roaring down the runway and into the sky, heading towards Thailand and freedom. Occasionally the city reverberated with the sounds of distant and massive explosions...the new Northern masters were taking inventory of what they had captured and were also setting off booby traps left behind in the huge ammunition dumps around Bien Hoa and Long Binh...cause to smile for some who knew what was going on. Young Peoples Parties were formed...partly to report on anyone who they thought were not following the rules imposed by the north. They were also given the task of digging up many yards of the concrete footpaths through the area of District 1 and District 3 in order to plant sweet potato to help

feed the soldiers. Food rationing was introduced and this remained until 1989. If anyone was caught eating luxury foods like chickens they had to appear before the local Peoples Committee to confess their "crime". Forced relocation was introduced and many well off Southerners were stripped of all their assets and sent out to work in the new economic zones which was tracks of jungle in most cases. The old currencies of the South were ordered to be handed in... No matter how many thousands of Piasters were handed in everyone only got 200 Dong in return. Strange laws came into place...ball room dancing was banned because it was regarded as decadent. The beautiful Ao Dai was banned for the same reason and this was life under "Liberation". Anyway, yesterday was the 33rd anniversary of this sad day and it seemed rather fitting that the day dawned quiet and gray then the rain came down and fell all day long...no doubt matching the mood of those that saw this city and country fall a third of a century ago.

Regards

Garry Adams....In Saigon Garry Adams is a friend of mine that I met ten years ago. He is an Australia VietVet and now resides in Saigon.

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13th CATFISH DERBY

Our 13th Annual All Night Catfish Derby will be on June 7-8 of this year. So mark it on your calendar so that you can volunteer to help! This years Derby may well be our largest ever, due to the massive disqualifications last year. I sent out a letter explaining about the disqualifications to all 1800 plus people on our mailing list. Hopefully, it will help to bring back contestants that had previously stopped attending due to "Cheaters"! Their will also be many amendments and changes to cancel any and all loopholes in our rules. Time is getting short so Volunteer!

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At our May 6th meeting we will be accepting

nominations for all Chapter officers and will hold elections! So start thinking about anyone else who you may want to nominate! We need some of you other members to step up and take an office. Nominations for Officers were: President Jack Hartzel, VP Rick Deubler, Secretary Henry Murphy, Treasurer Ken Wolf. So if anyone would like to run for office there is still time!

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On August 23rd 1 pm we will be having our Annual Clam Bake at Pavilion II at Hickories Park. Please bring a dish to pass!

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While I have your attention, please start looking for and signing up new members!

[Remember, we are all Vietnam Era Veterans, Some of us served in Nam and some of us didn't! We All Served Honorably! So don't let the Veterans that weren't in Nam get away! They need our Camaraderie too! Sign Them Up!](#)

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Our next meeting will be on May 6th at 7pm at the Owego VFW Post 1371, Upstairs Hall! We have an average of 10 members attending every meeting. We have lots of smiling faces.....Hell, Bob Shuta even smiles once and a while. If you have a friend that's a Vietnam Era Vet please bring them!



This was my machinegun bunker at Camp Carroll in I Corps in 67! Dig the Mud! If one of you gentlemen have a picture that you'd like to share of your time in the service, e-mail it to me with a little info and I will insert it into our Newsletter!

Chapter Officers

www.vva480.org

President-Jack Hartzel	607-821-2912
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Treasurer-Ken Wolf	570-888-2376
Secretary-Rick Deubler	607-687-7531
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