



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION



“SITREP” 2023 – Issue 5

Wednesday, April 5

Dear Commemorative Partners,



Today, on [Gold Star Wives Day](#), we pause to remember and honor the loss and sacrifice that our Nation’s Gold Star spouses have borne. This year’s [congressional resolution](#) not only designates April 5 as Gold Star Wives Day, but it also “recognizes the contributions of the members of the Gold Star Wives of America, Inc., and their dedication to the members and veterans of the Armed Forces.”

Last year on [National Vietnam War Veterans Day](#), Gold Star wives Mrs. Carol Ellinger, widow of Staff Sgt. Franklin Max Ellinger, U.S. Marine Corps, and Mrs. Ann Smith, widow of Lt. Cmdr. James Andrew Smith, U.S. Navy, joined with military leaders participating in the national joint wreath-laying ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, in Washington, D.C., along with one Gold Star mother, one Gold Star brother and five Gold Star children. This year, nine children of those whose names are deeply etched in the black granite of “The Wall” represented their respective parents in a [special ceremony](#).

As we recall all of the endeavors leading up to and including [29 March](#), these *highlights* stand out ...

- President Biden’s [tweet](#) garnered the most engagement, with **1 million views**.
- The Vietnam Veterans of America [post](#) reached potentially **146 thousand**.
- The Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum Vietnam veterans monument [unveiling](#), where the 10th Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) Robert L. Wilke presented at least **125 Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pins**, had the highest audience reach at **185 million** by traditional media.
- [Ring](#)ing the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) on Monday, April 3 (at right), second longest-held POW in U.S. history and former advisor to our Commemoration, was retired U.S. Navy Commander Everett Alvarez, Jr., accompanied by members of our staff.



Commander Everett Alvarez, Jr., U.S. Navy (Ret.) rings the NYSE closing bell in honor of National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

Additional noteworthy mentions include a [video message](#) by VA Secretary Denis R. McDonough, and a [special pinning ceremony](#) by the New England Patriots at Gillette Stadium! All of these combined efforts since 2011, have resulted in **3.6 million** Vietnam veterans and their families being publicly and individually thanked and honored during **25 thousand** ceremonies and events hosted by more than **13 thousand** Commemorative Partner organizations!

Finally, are you joining us **May 11-13** in our Nation’s Capital for [Welcome Home! A Nation Honors our Vietnam Veterans and Their Families](#), or hosting a watch party? More than **90 organizations** are participating in this once-in-a-lifetime event! Discover the full list at the bottom of our [Welcome Home](#) page, and *stay tuned* as new details are revealed in the coming weeks on our website and social media!

~ The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration Staff ~

Join the Nation ... thank a Vietnam veteran!