



Family Freedom Festival at the VFW
Photo courtesy of Cathy Brya-Rotta

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Welcome Home!

"Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another"

President's Corner

We're getting an early taste of fall in the air, although the forecast says warmer weather is on the way—good news for the upcoming Fall Festival!

We still need volunteers for the parking lot on September 11, 12, and 13. Sign-up sheets are available on the bulletin board near the entrance of the Post.

Unfortunately, the Veterans Tent (Beer Tent) sign-up sheet from our August 10 general membership meeting appears to have been misplaced. We need to create a new list for those willing to work on Friday, September 11, and Saturday, September 12. If you can help, please email me at bdew99@gmail.com or text 734-968-3267 with your name and the night you are available to work.

We also need volunteers to assist with clean-up and tear-down following the Rib Dinner on Friday, September 11, from 6:45 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The Fall Festival weekend is typically our largest fundraiser of the year. If you can help, please consider volunteering. With your support—and a little cooperation from Mother Nature—we can make this another successful and enjoyable weekend for our chapter.



Bob Dew, Sgt.
Marine Corps Supply
H&MS 11, MAG 11,
1st MAW
DaNang Airbase 1969





Digger's Desk

LOUNGE & AREA EVENTS

Euchre will switch from Thursday to Wednesday at 7:00PM beginning September 9.

Pinochle will continue on Friday at 2:00PM throughout the year.

Call in and come on down to the Post for a bite to eat and a beer. Specials vary daily. Be wise, stay safe.

RECENTLY AND UPCOMING

The Car Shows will finish on September 2. Come on down for the big finale.

The annual BBQ rib dinner and Fall Fest will prompt the need for many volunteers so, when publicized, step up and lend a hand.

The next general membership meeting will be on Monday September 14 at 7:00PM. See you there. Bring a buddy. It's a great time to be an American, Veteran and member of Chapter 528.

Kokomo: The week of September 14 will usher in the Howard County Vietnam and all Veterans Organization's Reunion east of Kokomo, Indiana. If you have never attended, give yourself a treat and attend this year. In attending, it makes no difference where you served in the military. There are literally thousands of Veterans in attendance. Bands will take the stage around 2:00PM each day, playing different genres of music until 11:00PM. There are many military displays, vendors and of course, you just might run into someone you served with. This will be my 33rd year in a row attending what I consider to be the culmination of the year's Veteran events and the premier Veterans Reunion in the entire country.

Until Valhalla to all who have gone before us.



Don Dignan
D/2/16 "Rangers"
1st Inf. Div.
1967-1968



In Memoriam

Iver Heikkinen

1943 - 2019

Army April 1967-September 1972

IN-COUNTRY



...there is no other shelter hereabouts: misery acquaints a man with strange bed-fellows - Wm Shakespeare

Cartoon courtesy of Jim Hodgson



Odds & Ends

Membership

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of our good friend, Mike Steffes. Mike was a dedicated member of the chapter who was willing to help out wherever he could. He was also a past chapter president who will be missed.

There were no applications for membership this month. Our current membership stands at 304 VVA and 79 AVVA members. Of these, we have 78 life AVVA members.

Lapsed Members: As of August 25, 2026, the following individuals have not renewed their membership: Leroy Griffin

Dropped from Roster: Larry Snowden

September AVVA Renewals: none

If you have already renewed, thank you. If you have not, please do so before the end of the month to keep your membership current.

National Membership Report

The latest report shows VVA continues to grow nationally and is now at 93,908, an increase of 700 over last year. AVVA stands at 11,741. Michigan remains the 5th largest state in total VVA membership with 4,909 members, while AVVA membership remains third with 865. Chapter 154 in Clinton Twp. remains the 5th largest in the country at 803. Chapter 1036 in Florida is the largest with 1,067 members. Our 304 members put us well behind the chapter in 25th place at 356. The average chapter size nationwide is 129.

VFW Golf Outing

There is still time to sign up for the VFW golf outing on September 26 at Hickory Creek. The sign-up sheet is available in the post lounge. Cost is \$85 per person or \$340 per team. Payment must be made by September 15. Make all checks out to: VFW 6695.

I am still looking for donations of new golf balls or other small items I can put in the goody bags. Please get them to me ASAP.

VFW Classic Car Show

The last car show of the summer will be on September 2. The weather this year has been a little better than last year, but we have still had our share of cancellations. A big thank you to Dave Henwood and his crew for heading up this project.

Fall Festival

Lots of help is still needed for the Fall Festival on September 11-13, with prep work for the rib dinner being done on the 10th. Contact Bob Dew at 734-968-3267 or bdew99@gmail.com to sign up.

HVAC Update

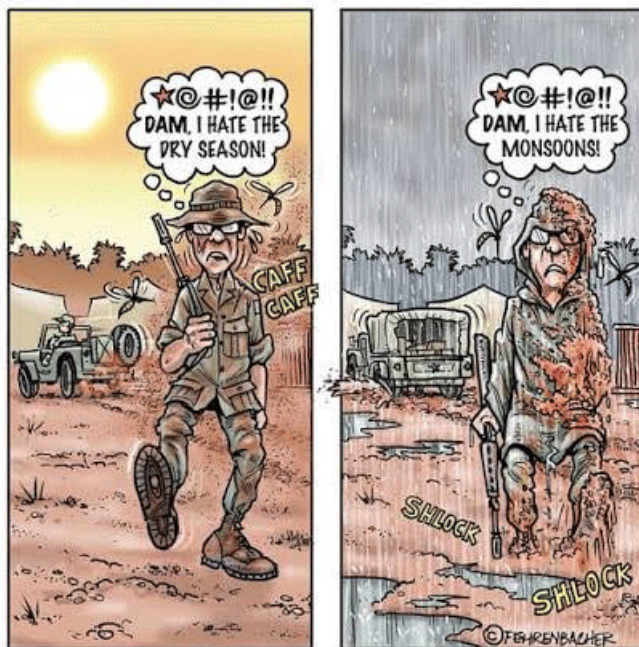
As I stated last month, dealing with the insurance company has moved at a snail's pace, but a settlement has finally been reached, and a check is on its way to us. As soon as I receive it, we can get the units repaired and be back in business.



Bob Lamoureux
Co. C, 3/47, 9th Inf. Div.
"Mobile Riverines"



IN-COUNTRY



LATERITE...a pain-in-the-ass, for **ALL** seasons!!



Chaplain's Corner

Rescued From Powerful Enemies

By Winn Collier
from Our Daily Bread

In 2010, at the age of ninety-four, George Vujnovich was awarded the Bronze Star for organizing what the New York Times called “one of the greatest rescue efforts of World War II. Vujnovich, son of Serbian immigrants to the US, had joined the US Army. When word arrived that rebels in Yugoslavia were protecting downed American airmen, Vujnovich returned to his family’s homeland, parachuting into the forest to locate the pilots. Dividing the soldiers into small groups, he taught them how to blend in with the Serbs (wearing Serbian clothes and eating Serbian food). Then, over months, he walked each small group out one at a time to C-47 transport planes waiting at a landing strip they’d cut out of the woods. Vujnovich rescued 512 elated, joyful men.

David described the elation of being rescued by God from enemies who’d hemmed him in with no escape. God “reached down from on high and took hold of me,” David said, “he drew me out of deep waters” (2 Samuel 22:17). King Saul, enraged with jealousy, hounded David, ruthlessly seeking blood. But God had other plans. “He rescued me from my powerful enemy,” David recounted, “from my foes, who were too strong for me” (V.18).

God rescued David from Saul. He rescued Israel from Egypt. And in Jesus, God came to rescue all of us. Jesus rescues us from sin, evil, and death. He’s greater than every powerful enemy.

Chaplain's Corner. Keep Mike Steffes’ wife Sue in your prayers



Rich Whipple
Chaplain (Certified)
(A sinner saved by God’s Grace)

Cell: 734-751-2992
rekjwhipple@yahoo.com
HHHC/2/503rd Infantry
173rd Airborne Brigade
1968 - 1969



Congratulations Skip!

Chapter 528 member **Skip Davison** is also a proud member of Milford American Legion Post 216. He was recently recognized by his Post for his outstanding dedication and service to the community. Skip’s efforts reflect positively on both organizations and exemplify veterans’ commitment to supporting and encouraging future generations. Congratulations to Skip on this well-deserved recognition.

-Article suggested by Gene Spurgess

“American Legion Post 216 would like to offer our thanks and sincere gratitude to Skip Davison, Jr., for serving as the Post Scholarship Committee Chair for over 25 years, helping the post fulfill its mission in support of youth, education, and Americanism. Skip was instrumental in working with Milford and Lakeland High Schools, helping to identify candidates and arranging for the student and family to attend our Post meeting to read their essay to our membership and receive their scholarship. Thank you, Skip!”

VVA VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA **CHAPTER 528**

RIB DINNER FUNDRAISER

HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED.
SUPPORTING THOSE WHO CONTINUE.

Plymouth FALL FESTIVAL

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11
3:30 - 6:30 PM

BEHIND E.G. NICKS
500 FOREST - PLYMOUTH, MI

Dine In:
E.G. NICK'S TENT!
OR CARRY OUT!

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★ COLESLAW
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★ DESSERT

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Courtesy of Cathy Brya-Rotta

In Memoriam



Michael "Mike" Dennis Steffes

January 14, 1946 - August 6, 2026

A memorial written by Mike's wife:

Well, I suppose he's setting up a tailgate up there, with plenty of baked beans, brats, and brownies, and maize and blue flags flying, ready to cheer the Michigan Wolverines to another victory.

Michigan football was just one of his loves, along with his family (first and foremost), his veterans groups, and his church.

And talking. That should definitely be on there, too. He had a love of talking. Striking up a conversation with whoever happened to be standing in line with him at K-Mart (back in the day) or Meijer. On the phone with a random stranger, he would ask how the weather was there and maybe begin telling his life story. Stopping to chat with people after church, while I (his wife) was ready to go and waiting in the car. Calling friends on the phone even if he talked to them the day before.

He loved family get-togethers. For Christmas or Easter or any holiday requiring a ham, he would sit down and make the phone call at least a month ahead to Stan's meat department. "I want a Dearborn spiral-sliced ham. The biggest one you have!" (Sounding like Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas morning shouting to the boy to buy the turkey as big as him!) Sometimes he would say, "Give me two hams!" He loved telling the grandchildren about Thanksgiving and Christmas and what we'd be eating for dinner. One of my favorite memories is when he would say to Gage, "Gage! Do you know what tomorrow is?" And Gage would invariably, even though he's an extremely bright boy, say "Christmas?" Even if it were the middle of July. And we'd laugh and laugh.

The grandchildren were a joy to him. He loved when we would take them on "field trips." His favorites were the Sea Life Aquarium with the obligatory lunch afterward at the Rainforest Cafe, with stops at both gift shops. He loved taking them to Cabela's. He'd say "They love Cabela's!" when I think he loved it the most. Swinging in the backyard has its own chapter in the book of life. The grandchildren would

swing on the little tots swing set, even when they'd outgrown it, and we would sit in lawn chairs and sing and play circus and airplane and talk about what birthday was coming up and what they wanted to be for Halloween. That is a forever memory.

His veteran's groups were especially important to him; the Plymouth Canton Vietnam Veterans and the Vets for Christ Bible study group. He would always call one of his friends and say "Who's preaching tonight?" Even after he could no longer drive and couldn't attend. But they were like brothers to him. And they would come to visit him in the hospital or wherever he was.

And the church. All through his life, the church was woven into it. The church was our family, our social life, our inspiration. He enjoyed the visits from Pastor Jim and others, and also Pastor Wayne from Ward Church.

Mike was born on January 14, 1946, to Robert Leo Steffes and Charlotte Jane (Van Kuiken) Steffes (both deceased). He has a sister, Karen Steffes (Frigon), and a brother, Douglas Steffes.

He graduated from Redford High School in 1964, then left for boot camp for the National Guard the next day. Mike worked at Flint Ink in Redford, then for GM until he retired. We met at homecoming at Judson College in Elgin, Illinois, where we each had attended for a time, but different years.

We were married on June 7, 1969, in the First Baptist Church of Plymouth. We lived in a little house in Garden City. Son Robert was born, then son David. Then the move to our house in Livonia, and in time our daughter Krista was born. This house has seen us move in with two small boys, bring home a baby girl, celebrate fifty+ Christmases, Easters, Halloweens, and Thanksgivings. Thirty-six first days of school. Too many birthdays to count. Three high school graduations. Rooms changing over the years as children left home, then grandchildren came, with toys and porta cribs, and swingsets appearing in the backyard. It has seen us through the circle of life. Birth, giving birth, death. A time to be born and a time to die.

He will be missed by many people. His wife Susanne (Davis) Steffes; son Robert Steffes; son David Steffes (and Holly); daughter Krista (Steffes) Graham (and Garrett, who is like a son to him); granddaughter Avery Graham; grandson Gage Graham; sister Karen (Steffes) Frigon, brother Douglas Steffes; uncle Roger Steffes; sister-in-law Kay (Davis) Westwood; and many nieces and nephews and great nieces and nephews. His fellow veterans from the Plymouth Canton Vietnam Veterans and the Vets for Christ Bible Study group, who were like brothers to him. And his church family. He passed away at eighty years old after many years of health challenges, but lived a life full of love and generosity, and he is forever in our hearts and memories.



September 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 AUX MEET 6:30	2 LAST CAR SHOW	3 EUCHRE 7	4 PINOCHLE 2 FALL FEST	5
6	7 Labor Day	8 VFW MEET 7	9 EUCHRE 7	10	11 PINOCHLE 2 RIB DINNER FALL FEST	12 FALL FEST
13 FALL FEST	14 GOLF VVA MEET 7	15 HOUSE COMM MEET 7	16 EUCHRE 7	17 KOKOMO	18 PINOCHLE 2 KOKOMO	19 KOKOMO
20 KOKOMO	21 GOLF	22 VVA BOARD MEET 7	23 EUCHRE 7	24	25 PINOCHLE 2	26
27	28 GOLF	29	30 EUCHRE 7			



September Birthdays

David Baringer, Roger Bebow, Daniel Bowe, Leon Carter, Timothy Chan, Kenneth Currie, Timothy Dunatchik, Thomas Forster, Pete Glasgow, James Grant, David Henwood, John Heraghty, Stewart Israel, Donald Koehler, Ron Little, Victor Lukasiak, Timothy Moore, Charles Neal, Dave Nowicki, Don Petrere, Thomas Shipley, Al Sneath, Robert "Bobby" Somerville, and John Spencer

Calendar by
Nancy Dignan

"IT'S OUR DUTY. IT'S OUR OBLIGATION TO THEM AND THEIR FAMILIES"

CALVIN MURPHY



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CEREMONY**

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**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2026
6:00 P.M.**

**"MICHIGAN REMEMBERS" POW/MIA MEMORIAL
OAKLAND HILLS MEMORIAL GARDENS
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My Remembrance of Mike Steffes

Mike and I shared activities over the years. He joined me on a couple of walleye fishing trips on my boat to Lake Erie, and we also attended several Detroit Tigers games together. However, the passion we shared most was Michigan football.

One game in particular stands out in my memory. It was September 3, 2011, when Michigan hosted Western Michigan at the Big House—I had to look up the date and who we played. The temperature was close to 100 degrees, and we were buying bottles of water not only to drink but to pour over ourselves in an effort to stay cool. The heat was intense, and even members of the Michigan Marching Band during halftime were affected by the extreme conditions.

As if the heat wasn't enough, severe weather moved into the area. Play was stopped twice because of lightning. After a very long delay, the game resumed briefly, but another storm was approaching. With Michigan leading 34–10 late in the third quarter, officials and both teams agreed to end the game early, and Michigan was awarded the victory.

It was an unforgettable day—one of those experiences made even more meaningful because Mike and I shared it. More than the game itself, I remember the friendship, the conversations, and our shared love of Michigan football.

Tom Brown

IN-COUNTRY



THE DOWNSIDE OF CAPTURING "THE MOMENT!"

IN-COUNTRY

Cartoons courtesy of Jim Hodgson



I'M SURE THEY'LL BE UNDERSTANDING STATESIDE!!

2026 Plymouth Fall Fest Rib Dinner Sign-Up				
Date	Time	Task	Volunteer	Phone #
Thursday, Sept 10	1 pm - 4 pm	Bathe the ribs	1 Al Sneath 2 Bob Dew 3 Bob Genna 4 Don Dignan 5 Ron Thomey	734-968-3267 734-981-7948 734-525-0157 734-536-7800
	1 pm - 4 pm	Box Makers	1 Ruth Bryan 2 Bob Bryan 3 Shirley Caldwell 4 Bob Caldwell	734-771-0177 734-892-4717 248-508-0234 248-508-0232
	1 pm - 4 pm	Food Prep (cole slaw)	1 Irish Gallo 2 Sue McMullen 3 Ruth Lamoureux	734-507-1619 734-502-7899 734-397-8389
Friday, Sept 11	2 pm - 3 pm	Set up tables & chairs	1 Mark Galo 2 Dan Hickey 3 PARSEL DASHMUN BON KING	734-377-5337
	2:30 - 6:30	Cooks	1 Al Sneath 2 Bob Nicosia 3 Bob Dew	734-377-5337 734-612-1666 734-968-3267
	3 pm - 6:30 pm	Prep, serve meals	1 Irish Gallo 2 Sue McMullen 3 Katie Sneath	734-507-1619 734-502-7899 734-377-5337
	3 pm - 6:30 pm	Take out runner, tent	1 Vicki Sneath 2 Hannah Sneath	734-377-5337 734-377-5337
	3 pm - 6:30 pm	Cashier/Ticket Sales	1 Bryan Bentley 2 Gene Spurgess	
	3 pm - 6:30 pm	Order Taker	1 Hanna 2	734-377-5337
	6 pm - 7pm	Clean up	1 Mark Gallo 2 Dan Hickey 3	734-377-5337

FALL FESTIVAL - PARKING LOT SIGNUP

PLEASE RESPOND TO _____ OR email _____

FRIDAY SEPT 11

TIME

7AM UNTIL 9AM Bob Lamoureux John Stephens _____

Vendors \$30.00 if Parking Row King Rick Adis _____

9AM UNTIL 11AM MARKS GALLO John McClure Don Dignan _____

2 HOURS Vendors \$30.00 if Parking AL SNEATH Larry Thompson _____

11M UNTIL 1PM TOM FEDELA MIKE HUBAL _____
LARRY EICHSTADT TIM MAKINS _____

2 HOURS Event Parking \$10.00 12:00 Noon on - Vendors parking \$30.00



Chapter Officers

President	Bob Dew	734-968-3267
1st Vice President	Joe Tebor	734-377-8329
2nd Vice President	Rick Waling	425-591-6153
Secretary	Harley Waling	734-837-6704
Treasurer	John Fleming	734-421-0149

Board of Directors

Don Petrere	734-595-1422	Don Dignan	734-377-5337
Al Sneath	734-377-5337	Leo Ksiazek	734-464-2870
Jerry Thomason	734-895-5257	Gary Estermyer	313-283-6943
Tom Fedewa	734-404-6598	Darrell Bazman	734-207-3197

Committees

A.O./Health Care	Bob Dew	734-421-1805
Agent Orange Events	Bob Dew	734-421-18
AVVA Representative	Norma Demerly	734-347-6622
By-Laws	Jim Hodgson	734-416-5159
Chaplain	Rich Whipple	734-751-2992
Chapter Historian	Dave Banks	734-765-2145
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Homeless Veterans	John Fleming	734-421-0149
Membership	Bob Lamoureux	734-397-8389

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POW/MIA		
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State Alt. Delegate	Terry Wells	734-776-1891
State Alt. Delegate	Ron King	734-454-4522
VAVS Deputy	Ron King	734-454-4522
Vietnam War 50th Com.	Ron King	734-454-4522
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	Bryan Bentley	734-604-6066
	Dennis Ridolfi	734-635-6469
	Dennis Bielskis	248-767-1654
	Tom Brown	313-320-5775

Chapter 528 VVA Service Officer (VSO)

Rich LeGault	734-800-9399
Canton CBOC (Tues. & Fri.)	
RLEGAULT.VSO@outlook.com	

Editor's Note and Disclaimer

Articles, columns, flyers, calendar items, event announcements, and photos must be submitted by the 25th of the month to be considered for publication in the Chapter newsletter. Send the article, flyer, or photo to Tom Brown, 17730 Snow Ave, Dearborn, MI 48124, or email to **tombrown1949@gmail.com**. Unless otherwise noted, all published material becomes the property of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 528 and may not be reproduced without the Chapter's permission. Chapter 528 reserves the right to edit for clarity, content, style, and available space. The views and opinions expressed in articles and advertisements are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of VVA Chapter 528, its editors, or the National Vietnam Veterans of America organization. **Mayflower Lt. Gamble VFW Post 6695 (734-459-6700)**.

Chapter 528 Website:

www.vva528.org

Chapter 528 Travel Site

www.travelvva528.com

Advertising Rates: 1 year \$60; 6 mos. \$45; 1 issue \$15

Our Service Photos

VVA Chapter 528 has 168 VVA members' service photos and 3 AVVA members' service photos displayed on our website and in our display case at the Post. I'm sure most members have a photo of themselves lying around somewhere. When you find your photo, you can either mail it to Tom Brown @ 17730 Snow Ave. Dearborn, MI 48124, scan it and send it to: tombrown1949@gmail.com as a JPG, send a text message to my phone 313-320-5775, or bring it to our general membership meetings and give it to Jim Hodgson or Ron King. Include your name, branch of service, and the year the photo was taken. Don Petrere will place the copied service photo in our display case.



Tom Brown, Editor/Publisher
2nd Missile Battalion
44th Artillery Pershing
Ft. Sill, OK 1st year
HHD III Corps
Ft. Sill, OK 2nd year



Veterans Crisis Centers - 313-381-1370

Dearborn Crisis Center - 313-584-7800

VA Medical Center Detroit - 313-576-1000

VA Medical Center Detroit - 313-576-1000

VA Medical Center Ann Arbor Health Care System - 313-769-7100

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The 528 Homefront



September 2026



12

Vietnam Veterans of America

VVA membership is open to U.S. armed forces veterans who served on active duty (a minimum of 180 days) in the Republic of Vietnam between November 1, 1955 and May 7, 1975, or in any other duty location between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975.

Name _____ email _____

Phone _____

Present Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Branch of Service _____

Date of Birth _____ Today's Date _____

_____ I am a Vietnam Era Veteran and would like to be a member. Enclosed is a copy of my DD 214 and \$50 Lifetime Membership fee _____

_____ I am not a Vietnam Era Veteran, but would like to be an Associate Member. One may become an Associate Member (AVVA) for _____ 1 year \$20 _____ Life membership (\$100). Current VVA members can support the AVVA by purchasing a life membership in AVVA for only \$50.

Return this form to:
Vietnam Veterans of America
Plymouth/Canton Chapter 528
P.O. Box 6319
Plymouth, MI 48170-0473



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Homefront
Vietnam Veterans of America
Plymouth-Canton Chapter 528
P.O. Box 6319
Plymouth MI 48170-0473