



For Immediate Release
March 20, 2013

Vietnam Commemoration is Next Week

Ohio's four-day commemoration of Vietnam Veterans Day from March 26-29 kicks off Tuesday with a 10 a.m. opening ceremony at the Ohio History Center. That's followed by an 11 a.m. panel discussion by Vietnam veterans at the History Center, and the opportunity there at 1 p.m. to record their recollections of the war for a living history project.

The four days of the commemoration are filled with special ceremonies and exhibits both at the Ohio History Center, at I-71 and 17th Avenue, and the Statehouse. The centerpiece of the commemoration is The Wall That Heals, the premier Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall, from Washington, D.C. It will be on free exhibit at the Ohio History Center following the opening ceremony on Tuesday through midnight Friday.

The Wall That Heals will arrive at the Ohio History Center on Sunday at approximately 2 p.m. Although it is not available for public viewing until after the opening ceremony on Tuesday, it will arrive on-site escorted by the Patriot Guard Riders, Rolling Thunder, and members of local law enforcement. The Wall will have journeyed that day from the Ohio-Indiana border at Interstate 74 and then up Interstates 275 and 71 to Columbus.

Besides the opening events Tuesday, other major free events during the week are:

Wednesday: 10 a.m. panel discussion by former POWs at the History Center; 12:30 p.m. panel discussion by women Vietnam veterans, Living History interviews from 1 to 4 p.m., both at the History Center; special exhibits at the History Center and the Statehouse.

Thursday: 10 a.m. panel discussion by veterans on the aftermath of Vietnam; 3 p.m. closing ceremony at the Statehouse Atrium; special exhibits at the History Center and the Statehouse.

Friday: 4 p.m. at The Wall That Heals, Wall Retirement and Remembrance ceremony.

This year is the first state-level commemoration of the day enacted by the Ohio General Assembly and signed by Governor John Kasich last year to officially designate March 30 as Vietnam Veterans Day. Due to the Easter holiday, events are being held from March 26-29.

The state commemoration also marks the 40th anniversary of the end of America's role in the Vietnam War. The date of March 30 signifies the first date that troops would have returned home from Vietnam after leaving the country on March 29, 1973. The theme of the commemoration, expressed in the event's logo, is to finally welcome home and honor all those who served there, and to remember those who didn't make it back.

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services (ODVS) and the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), Buckeye State Council, are joining together to sponsor the commemoration. A volunteer committee of veterans' organizations and local officials has been working the past few months to make the event a reality. The Ohio Veterans and Fraternal Charitable Coalition has also graciously underwritten a significant portion of the costs of the event.

"It's important that we establish Vietnam Veteran's Day so that the people of Ohio can unite in one voice and say that they are grateful and proud of the veterans of that conflict," Director Moe said. "It is a voice that is finally saying to them, 'welcome home.' "

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services' web site contains a special section with a complete schedule of events and other details of the commemoration at:

http://dvs.ohio.gov/home/vietnam_veterans_commemoration.aspx

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