



Dear Fellow Veterans,

This year, Highlands County and the City of Sebring will be commemorating the Vietnam War 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on the Veterans Day Parade and Ceremony scheduled for Friday, November 10, 2017. At the ceremony to be held after the parade, we will be recognizing the Vietnam War veterans by presenting each one of them with a Commemorative Pin. We are reaching out to your organization for assistance in identifying Vietnam War era veterans that are eligible and provide us with their name. We are also asking your organization to identify veterans and family members of deceased veterans that qualify for the Certificate of Honor Program so that we may recognize them as well in the ceremony. The Certificate of Honor Program will be explained later in this letter.

The Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter # 1097 and the South Central Florida Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, both Sebring Veteran organizations, are jointly heading this effort to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Vietnam War in Highlands County. Both organizations are official Commemorative Partners of the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration, an office under the Department of Defense. The primary purpose of the ceremony on November 10 is to thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war, or listed as missing in action, for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans. Not only are those service members who were deployed to Vietnam are eligible for recognition but those individuals who served in the uniformed services from November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975 as well.

As mentioned above, the ceremony will take place in front of the Highlands County Courthouse after the veterans' parade. It will follow similar sequence as the 2016 recognition of World War II veterans. Lieutenant General Jay Garner, US Army (Ret.) will be the keynote speaker. General Gardner is a native of Arcadia, who started his service in the Army National Guard, then went on to serve as an enlisted man in the US Marine Corps, then later commissioned in the US Army. He served two tours in Vietnam and served with distinction in several key command and staff assignments, to include Iraq. His last assignment with the United States Army was as the Assistant Vice Chief of Staff of the Army.

As mentioned at the beginning of this letter, in addition to the recognition of the Vietnam veterans, we are recognizing the following individuals with a Certificate of Honor and lapel pins:

- "Former POW" certificate and lapel pin for former, Living American POW
- "Unaccounted For" certificate and lapel pin for the immediate family members
- "In Memory Of" certificate and lapel pin for the immediate family members of a veteran who is listed in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.
- "Deceased Vietnam Veteran's Surviving Spouse" certificate and lapel pin for the surviving spouse at the time of death for a veteran who served from November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of location.

( Cont. )

Specifically, this is what we need from you by **September 1** – two lists:

1. A list of all veterans that served between November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of location, who wish to receive a Vietnam Service Pin at the November 10 ceremony. No other information or documentation is needed for this list. You may include rank and uniformed service if you like.
2. For the Certificate of Honor Program, the information required is more detailed. Attached is a list of requirements for this special category.

Please mail the list(s) to one of the following addresses (again please provide it by September 1 to have sufficient lead time to order the pins and certificates): Or Fill out the form on our website <http://vva1097.com> by Sept.1 as well.

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1097 6223 Highway 27N (PMB22) Sebring, FL 33872

or

South Central Florida Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America PO Box 7841 Sebring, FL 33872

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## CERTIFICATE OF HONORS PROGRAM

Information Required:

**1. Former, living American military Vietnam POWs from the Vietnam War as listed by the Department of Defense:**

Name, branch of Service, and retired rank (includes a medical retirement) of the former Vietnam POW to be placed on the certificate. If not in retired status, no rank will be placed on the certificate.

**2. Immediate family members (parents, children, siblings, spouse,) of American military personnel who are listed as missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War by the Department of Defense:**

- a. Name, branch of Service, and rank of missing and unaccounted for military personnel.
- b. Name of family member to be placed on certificate.
- c. Relationship of the family member to the missing and unaccounted for [widow (remarried or not), each parent (mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, mother through adoption, father through adoption, and foster parents who stood in loco parentis), each child, each brother, each sister, each half- brother, each half-sister, each stepchild, and each adopted child of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces]. If no immediate family member remains, please provide the Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) to be recognized.
- d. Date of incident.

**3. Immediate family members (parents, children, siblings, spouse) of a veteran who is listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. and who is not listed as missing or unaccounted for by the Department of Defense:**

- a. Name, rank, date of death, and branch of Service of deceased military member.
- b. Name of family member to be placed on the certificate.
- c. Relationship of the family member to the military member [widow (remarried or not), each parent (mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, mother through adoption, father through adoption, and foster parents who stood in loco parentis), each child, each brother, each sister, each half-brother, each half-sister, each stepchild, and each adopted child of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces].

**4. Surviving spouse, at time of death, of a veteran who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time during the period 1 November 1955-15 May 1975 regardless of location of service.**