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We Report, You Decide



Happy Easter!



Today's RNL issue
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Vietnam Veterans, spouses, and members of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Rochelle Chapter gathered at the recognition Thursday afternoon at Roberts Armory. Pictured (in no particular order) is Veterans Ronald Dean, Robert Garland, Gerald Hansen, Marvin Jenner; Dave Lowrey, Gaylon Powell, Steve Strang, along with Bobbie Powell, Lydia Roberts, Chuck Roberts, Eileen silver, Mary Lou Kator, Laurie Perry, Carol Lyons, and Pauline Cultra. (Photo by Lori Hammelman)

Vietnam vets honored

BY LORI HAMMELMAN
Staff Writer

SEVERAL local Vietnam Veterans were given special recognition at the Roberts Armory Thursday as part of National Vietnam Veterans Day.

The event serves to thank and honor the veterans of the Vietnam War and all who served in the U.S. Armed Forces during the 20-year period from 1955 to 1975. Last year President Trump signed the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017 into law designating March 29 as "National Vietnam Veterans Day. March 29, 1975 was the final day U.S. troops were in Vietnam.

The Rochelle Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution hosted the veterans, presenting them with a certificate and lapel pin.

"The pin you are going to receive today was initiated and made because our Vietnam Veterans came back unannounced and unwelcomed. There were no ticker tape parades back then," said Mary Lou Kator, NSDAR chairperson. "We wanted as a nation to recognize your service to our country.

We want to honor you by giving you this pin."

Kator explained the symbolism behind the lapel pin, designed specifically to represent many things as well as to provide a lasting memento of the nation's thanks — from the eagle that is included on several military insignias, to the colors, the wreath, and to the stars and stripes.

"A Grateful Nation Thanks and Honors You" is the message emblazoned on the back of the lapel pin. The placement is intended to be closest to the heart of the wearer.

Receiving recognition Thursday were Veterans Ronald Dean, Robert Garland, Gerald Hansen, Marvin Jenner, Dave Lowrey, Gaylon Powell, and Steve Strang.

Missing man

To signify the many who did not return home from Vietnam, the NSDAR held a moment of quiet reflection. At the head of the table where the guests sat, an empty place setting with both American and P.O.W. Flags were placed.

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VETS: Special ceremony held at Roberts Armory

From page 1

A placard of the names of the troops from Illinois that remain missing was displayed there as well.

The Vietnam War was undoubtedly a time filled with strife, controversy, and opposition from the public. Those that did return were met with protestors. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, DC honors the men and women who served and sacrificed their lives in the Vietnam War or remain missing, inscribed with more than 58,000 names.

Presentation

Lydia Roberts, Regent for NSDAR, personally handed the veterans their certificates, shaking their hand and extending a heartfelt thank you. Kator attached the lapel pin and also expressed gratitude to



Rochelle Mayor Chet Olson presented a proclamation to NSDAR Regent Lydia Roberts during last Monday's City Council meeting. The proclamation declared March 29 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

veterans that were willing to serve their country and put their lives on the line that were met with criticism upon returning home for doing so.

"It's our honor and privilege for the Chapter to recognize the Vietnam-

era Veterans for their service," Roberts said.

Bobbie Powell, spouse of Gaylon Powell, received a special recognition from the NSDAR for her "support of a U.S. serviceman who served during the Vietnam War."

Following the presentations, American Legion Commander Steve Korth spoke on his service during the war. After his discharge in 1969, Korth returned to the U.S., attended school, began working, and started a family.

"There wasn't a lot of fanfare when I got out of the service," Korth said. "Serving during that time wasn't so much where you were, but that you were willing to serve."

History

In 2011, the Department of Defense (DOD) announced its program to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the war with the intent to "thank and honor veterans of the



NSDAR Regent Lydia Roberts presents Marvin Jenner with the certificate honoring his service during the Vietnam War era.

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 U.S. and to thank and honor the families of these veterans."

The official news release from the DOD dated Jan. 14, 2011 also specified that the commemoration program will "highlight the service of the armed forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental agencies; pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the U.S. during the Vietnam War; highlight advances in technology, science, and medicine related to the military research conducted during the Vietnam War; recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the U.S. during the Vietnam War.

Individual Daughters



NSDAR Chairperson Mary Lou Kator secures a lapel pin on David Lawrence. While presenting the certificates and during the pinning, both Kator and Roberts extended a heartfelt thanks to the veterans who served their country.

of American Revolution chapters were encouraged to join in the commemorations and in 2014 NSDAR voted to become a commemorative partner. As

part of becoming a partner, the NSDAR had to conduct at least two events each year during the two-year commemorative period of 2015 to 2017.



NSDAR Regent Lydia Roberts presented a certificate to Bobbie Powell, wife of Gaylon Powell, for her support during her husband's service during the Vietnam War.