



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION



“SITREP” 2023 – Issue 7

Wednesday, May 24

Dear Commemorative Partners,

Thank you for joining us in our Nation’s capital for [Welcome Home! A Nation Honors our Vietnam Veterans and their Families!](#)



Medal of Honor Recipient and Vietnam Veteran Brian M. Thacker

U.S. Senator and Vietnam Veteran Tom Carper of Delaware

We are pleased to share with you some standout moments from this historic event in Washington, D.C. on May 11-13.

Thursday, May 11 the [Opening Ceremony](#) on the JFK Hockey Fields formally kicked off *Camp Legacy*.

Highlights from the live-streamed ceremony include an *impressive flyover* above the parade ground by four

Vietnam War period Hueys in four-ship formation during the singing of the national anthem. Special remarks were delivered by Medal of Honor recipient and Vietnam veteran [Brian M. Thacker](#), the Secretary of the Navy [Carlos Del Toro](#), U.S. Senator and Vietnam veteran [Thomas R. Carper](#) (DE), and our very own Director U.S. Army Maj. Gen. [Edward J. Chrystal, Jr.](#)

An emotional [Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pin](#) presentation to two Vietnam veterans was delivered (at left) by U.S. Representative [Madeleine Dean](#) (PA-04), followed by the ceremony emcee’s resounding rallying cry for *all Americans* to thank and honor our Nation’s Vietnam veterans and welcome them home!



Medal of Honor Recipient Melvin Morris and wife Mary sit among guests at the Opening Ceremony.

Attending this milestone three-day weekend were five Vietnam War *Medal of Honor* recipients (in order of appearance: [Brian M. Thacker](#), [Melvin Morris](#), [James C. McCloughan](#), [Robert M. Patterson](#) and [Paris D. Davis](#)) along with myriad distinguished guests and visitors. Our distinct honorees—our Vietnam veterans—were impacted the most as more than 2,700 *Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pins* were presented throughout the weekend by many of our Nation’s military leaders as a humble thanks for their service to our country.



The *Camp Legacy* immersive experience included daily precision parachute drops by the U.S. Army Golden Knights team (at right), as well as other outdoor entertainment with various performances by musicians such as The Angel Force Band and high school JROTC bands, as well as military bands and drill teams from all service branches.



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North Carolina Helicopter Pilots Association members stand in front of one of the static Hueys.

Four static Huey Vietnam period helicopters (one shown at left), were showcased, along with two armored vehicles, as well as dozens of exhibitor tents and mobile units representing more than 90 participating organizations!

Some of the eight different panel discussions included one **Friday, May 12** featuring **five retired 4-star flag officers** who served during the Vietnam War period (below left). Additional panels covered military nurses, and an

informative discussion by **Stars and Stripes** on the difficulties telling the Vietnam War story.



Participating Exhibitors Native American Percy Warcloud Edwards stands between members of the Defense Commissary Agency.



The Washington Nationals paid special tribute at their stadium before, during and after their evening game, where many Vietnam veterans were recognized on and off the field (at right)!



Outdoor activities on **Saturday, May 13** kicked off with a “wearblue” **Circle of Remembrance and Run** (below left) also on the parade ground of the JFK Hockey Fields to honor the memory of the 58,281 whose names are deeply etched on the [Vietnam Veterans Memorial](#).



Saturday’s two-hour live-streamed **Welcome Home Celebration** (below) kicked off with another impressive Huey flyover! NFL legend and broadcaster Joe Theismann, as well as Miss America 1985 and former ESPN reporter Sharlene Wells Hawkes co-hosted the show.



This **powerful honor concert and multimedia production** brought the **memories** and **legacy** of the Vietnam War period to life through music, vivid imagery and storytelling, including from Vietnam veterans themselves. Other special participating musical guests included Broadway talent Jon Hacker, T.V. star Lauren B. Martin, The New York Tenors, 2023 Miss America’s Outstanding Teen Morgan



Greco, the United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own,” and ensembles from every single one of our military service bands. Vietnam War Medal of Honor recipient [James C. McCloughan](#) shared, while two other recipients present in the audience, [Robert M. Patterson](#) and [Paris D. Davis](#) looked on.



Special video messages were also recorded and played specifically for this once-in-a-lifetime **Welcome Home Celebration**, from both [President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.](#) and [Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III.](#)



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In addition to the President's message, and in partnership with our [Welcome Home](#) event, the White House also hosted 300 Vietnam veterans, their family members, caregivers, and survivors for an Open House on Thursday, May 11.



An American flag stands at the end of the East Colonnade alongside our Vietnam War Commemoration flag.

The Open House included a guided tour of the White House and featured a series of portraits of Vietnam veterans displayed in the East Colonnade created in cooperation with the Department of Veterans Affairs, and music by the United States Marine Band, "President's Own."



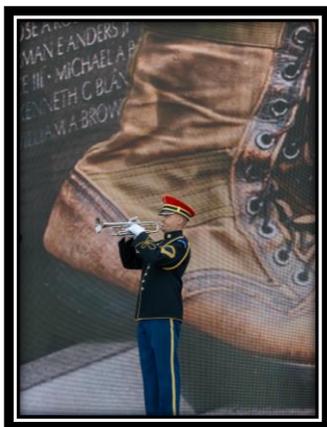
Portraits of Vietnam veterans line the East Colonnade of the White House.

Lastly, for those who contributed photos for our Vietnam veteran photo montage video for this event, *thank you!* A [sample](#) is shown below of one of the videos revealed during the three-day weekend.

Did you attend [Welcome Home](#) or host any of your own watch parties? We want to hear from you! Share your experiences along with any photos or videos you may have captured at your event via social media by tagging us or simply using [#WelcomeHome2023](#) or [#VWCWelcomeHome23](#). If you missed any of the live-streamed events, you can watch the [Opening Ceremony](#) and [Welcome Home Celebration](#) as well as access all of the resources, including our very own *Welcome Home jingle* on our [resources page!](#)



Also, *stay tuned*, as we will be sharing the plethora of memorable and meaningful moments in the days and weeks ahead on our [website](#), [Welcome Home page](#) and throughout our [social media](#) platforms.



Finally, approaching *Memorial Day*, we pay special tribute to the service and sacrifice of our uniformed men and women who never came home—especially our Vietnam veterans—as well as to the *Gold Star families* for the immense sacrifice and loss they have borne.

Each year, America takes time to honor all its fallen service members with a *National Moment of Remembrance*. Join us and the rest of the Nation on **May 29 at 3 p.m. local time**—wherever you are—to pause in a moment of silence and remember those who gave their lives defending the freedoms we cherish today.

~ *The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration* ~

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