

National Vietnam War Veterans Day 2023

March 29 is National Vietnam War Veterans Day, a day meant to pay tribute to Veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were prisoners of war or who were listed as missing in action.

Many times you may hear someone say to a Vietnam Veteran, “Welcome Home”, it is because when they returned home from the war many of them were not welcomed. They were spit upon at the airports and called names, treated as harmful criminals, when all they did was answer the call of our United States. After being treated so harshly, many Veterans took off their uniforms and threw them in the trash and put on civilian clothing so they would not be harassed anymore. Many Americans were against the war, and they were against our service members as well. Some of them volunteered, but also many were drafted. They answered the call to support and defend our country, they never knew what they would return home to.

According to federal law, the United States' military involvement in the Vietnam War began in February 1961 and lasted until May 1975. Approximately 2.7 million American men and women served in Vietnam. During the war, more than 58,000 servicemen and women lost their lives. Vietnam Veterans represent the largest cohort of American Veterans in terms of service era.

Vietnam Veterans were stereotyped and demonized to such a great extent that even the widows of deceased servicemen received late-night harassing phone calls. It has been said by some that at no point in our country's history have our Veterans been hurt more by our own countrymen than by the enemy. For many Veterans, the homecoming was often a powerful first encounter that made their adjustment to civilian society more difficult.

The sacrifices that were made.....

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC is inscribed with the names of 58,279 Service Members who died in theater from 1957 to 1975 . Over 47,000 lost their lives in combat and nearly 11,000 died from other causes.

More than 300,000 were also wounded during the war. Over 153,000 of the wounded required hospitalization and another 150,000 suffered other injuries.

The youngest Vietnam Veteran was Dan Bullock (December 21, 1953 – June 7, 1969) he was a United States Marine and the youngest U.S. serviceman killed in action during the Vietnam War, dying at the age of 15.

More than 700 Americans were taken prisoner during the Vietnam War. 37 of them escaped from captivity and another 684 returned alive, including 591 who were freed in 1973 as a result of the Paris Peace Accords. According to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, 2,646 Americans went missing in action. Since the end of the war, the remains of 1,062 have been repatriated, but 1,584 are still unaccounted for as of 2022. Although these servicemembers remain missing, they are not forgotten.

262 Servicemembers from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force received the Congressional Medal of Honor. Many thousands more were recipients of other military awards in recognition of their heroism in battle.

The very last American troop departed from Vietnam on March 29, 1973.

On Memorial Day 2012, President Barack Obama launched a Vietnam War Commemoration to remember the Vietnam War 50th anniversary over a 13-year period. During this time, the federal government pledged to partner with local communities and private organizations to honor and recognize more than 58,000 patriots who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation, the 150,000 who were wounded, and to do everything possible to bring home more than 1,700 service members who are listed as missing in action. The 13-year commemoration will conclude on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2025.

Vietnam War Remembered Prayer

Almighty God, we are here today to pay tribute to brave men and women, living and dead, who have gone to a distant land called Vietnam. Accept our thanksgiving for their sacrifices and the sacrifices of their families. Cause us to never take for granted their devotion to liberty. Grant, we pray, joy and fulfillment to those still living; and for those who are at rest, remember them, O Lord, in Your mercy, and have compassion on us. Make us a generation of wisdom, discipline, and good faith. Amen.



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