

Press Release

Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Event: Vietnam: In Their Own Words – Memorial Day
Story Telling at the Vietnam Women's Memorial Statue
Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington D.C.

Date of Event: Memorial Day, May 25, 2015

Time of Event: Event commences at 9:00 a.m. and will conclude at 12:15 p.m. followed by the ceremony at The Wall from 12:30-2:15 p.m. Storytelling will resume at 2:30 and conclude at 3:30 p.m.

Contact Person: Dr. Marsha A. Guenzler-Stevens, Ph.D.
Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation Board
Chair of the Education Committee and Vice President of the Board
Phone: 301-314-8505
FAX: 301-314-7026
Cell: 301-580-7608
e-mail: mguenzle@umd.edu
(For information or to arrange interviews)

Description of the Event:

In November of 2013 we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the dedication of the Vietnam Women's Memorial. There were many ceremonies and events all designed to help the nation remember and celebrate the contributions of civilian and military women who served during the Vietnam era. From the reading of the names of women who died during the Vietnam war through today, the Candlelight Vigil at the site of the Vietnam Women's Memorial, and the powerful day of Storytelling; veterans of the Vietnam era as well as their friends and family and the broader community shared their memories of Vietnam and the stories of life lessons learned since that era.

This year we celebrate another milestone of the Vietnam Women's Memorial as we pass the baton for management of the Vietnam Women's Memorial to Eastern National, an association recognized by Congress to promote the educational and interpretive mission of the National Park Service. As Eastern National CEO George Minnucci shared, "We are honored by the Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation Board's decision to entrust its mission to Eastern National, and we humbly accept this responsibility. We will always be mindful of the commitment the Foundation has shown in their efforts to preserve and promote the legacy of the military and civilian women who demonstrated selfless dedication to duty during the Vietnam era."

Memorial Day Storytelling will feature the memories of the members of the Board of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation as they reflect on their own memories of the Vietnam War and as they share stories of 20 years of the Vietnam Women's Memorial. Each member will share beautiful stories including how miracles happen every day at the Vietnam Women's Memorial. Built and dedicated as a monument to the bravery and contributions of more than a quarter million women who served during the Vietnam era, this beautiful bronze statue is a tribute to the unsung heroines of the Vietnam War, including among others nurses, Red Cross Workers, journalists, military women and civilians. The Memorial is also a place of healing and remembrance. Board Members will recall how in the past 20 years we have been honored to the "Keepers of the Stories."

Each Veterans Day and Memorial Day people gather to tell their stories. This Memorial Day, May 25, 2015 will showcase some of those brave tales. The stories of the women cast in bronze will come to life as Vietnam era veterans, and the people touched by that war speak “in their own voices” about their experiences. The lessons learned in the past of bravery, the desire for peace, courage, and sacrifice will be reflected in the stories of the people who have served on the Board for the Vietnam Women’s Memorial Foundation. Stories from individuals who served in Vietnam and those that served at home will be linked to the stories of individuals who have served in more recent conflicts. We will hear from family members of Vietnam Veterans – including the daughter of a father lost at war. We will hear from scholars and others who have helped craft opportunities for Vietnam era women to share their stories. All of these individuals will reflect on how the sacred space that is the Vietnam Women’s Memorial has helped to unleash stories and support healing. A complete list of storytelling participants is attached.

People joining for Storytelling at the Vietnam Women’s Memorial will be able to participate in the 1:00 ceremony at The Wall. The Vietnam Women’s Memorial Foundation board members will serve as hosts at this event along with board members of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and National Park Service and colleagues from Eastern National. Among the speakers at the 1:00 ceremony at The Wall will be Diane Carlson Evans who served as a young Registered Nurse in the United States Army Nurse Corps and served in Vietnam in 1968-1969. Founder and President of the Board of the Vietnam Women’s Memorial Foundation, Diane was the visionary who dreamed of the Vietnam Women’s Memorial as a place to honor those women – military and civilian -- who served during the Vietnam era. Coalescing friends across the country, Diane worked tirelessly to conduct design competitions, to secure Congressional support, and to champion the need for a monument honoring women with the arts community. The Vietnam Women’s Memorial joined the campus of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and was the first monument honoring women on the National Mall. Diane has been featured on *60 Minutes* and in films, television shows and news programs that have showcased women’s service during the Vietnam War.

For Additional Information:

The Vietnam Women’s Memorial Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to honoring women who served during the Vietnam era. For additional information on the Memorial or its projects including educational programs, you are invited to call Stacy Madalena, Regional Manager, National Capital Region for Eastern National at 703-837-0746 or via email at stacym@easternnational.org. You may also contact the Foundation’s Founder and Advisory Board Chair, Ms. Diane Carlson Evans at vietnamwomensmemorial@easternnational.org. Additional information is available on the Foundation’s web site www.VietnamWomensMemorial.org. The Vietnam Women’s Memorial accepts donations, which are tax deductible, to cover the costs of these and other programs. To donate to the Vietnam Women’s Memorial, please write to the Vietnam Women’s Memorial Fund, c/o Eastern National, 470 Maryland Drive, Suite 1, Fort Washington, PA 19034 or via email at veitnamwomensmemorial@easternnational.org.