



**Salmon Creek Heights
American Legion Post #176**

P.O. Box 626 • Vancouver, WA 98666
(206) 573-2331 • Fax (206) 573-1475

OPENING SPEECH---VETERAN'S DAY PARADE, 1993
by Michael Harding, Commander, Post#176

Welcome,

Before we continue our ceremony there are many people to thank for creating this memorial. Without their hours of hard work it would not be done. John Wulle and Royce Pollard, Larry Smith and Mayor Bruce Hagensen all helped acquire the Huey before you. Their behind-the-scenes work made this all possible. Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 512, led by Greg Whitson sparked and pushed the program while Post#176 of the American Legion organized it's location and purpose. So many persons touched this bullet-filled war bird that I can't mention all of them here. There are, however, two persons who deserve great credit and applause; Crew Chief Gary Klein and Historian Jim Babcock whose physical efforts resulted in what you see here today--a full dress Medevac Helicopter that served three combat tours in Vietnam and fittingly served with the Army, Navy and Marines. This 1963 bird came home to continue serving, like most veterans during peacetime.

We are here today to honor all veterans, God has smiled on us again with sunshine and a good crowd.

Our purpose is to dedicate this memorial in front of me to the memory of all U.S.Servicemen and women who have died in service to our country and to all those veterans who served and came home after facing the risk of death.

Nothing I say here can change your lives but those who are represented here already have....

Beginning with non-uniformed revolutionaries throwing snow balls at British troops in Boston Square to Trenton and Breed's Hill. To the Battle of New Orleans, then Gettysburg, on to the Phillipines and Cuba. Fighting and dying on land and in the air over France, the Ardennes Forest and in rat infested, muddy trenches; taking back the Free World in places like Tarawa, Bougainville, Casino, Adak, the Bulge; joining with the rest of the Free World at Pusan, the Yalu River and "Frozen Chosin" Reservoir; stopping the overrunning of Asia in places like



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Kontum, Dak To, Khe Sanh and Hue; Preventing takeovers of free governments as in San Salvador, Grenada and Panama; then drawing the line and stopping punk dictators like the Persian Gulf conflict. Aiding the sick and starving in places such as Somalia----Those are the people who have changed your lives. They have made you able to breathe free air and make your opinions known without being oppressed or repressed.

No, this freedom didn't come free and some say, it's flavor tastes better to those of us who fought for it. But that's not the point today----the point is----That we are here to dedicate and consecrate this war bird as a memorial to all those veterans of the United States of America of whom it can be said

ALL GAVE SOME-----SOME GAVE ALL

Michael Harding, Post Commander

Veterans Day Parade, 6 November 1993