



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Vietnam Center and Archive

# FRIENDS OF THE VIETNAM CENTER



Spring 2011 Vol. 18 No. 2

## 7th Triennial Vietnam Symposium



Artwork by Vietnam Veterans was on display at the 7th Triennial Vietnam Symposium in Lubbock. The Symposium featured presenters from around the US and overseas. This painting was one of many put on exhibit by members of the Department of Defense 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration Program Office.

### Ron Milam, Ph.D.

Texas Tech University Department of History

On March 10, 2011, scholars from around the world gathered in Lubbock, Texas to discuss divergent views of several aspects of the Vietnam War. This year's agenda was unique in that many of our presenters represented the next generation of researchers who are examining ideas and concepts of the war not previously dealt with by those who fought in, or lived through the Vietnam War era.

We were fortunate to welcome Adrian Cronauer of "Good Morning, Vietnam" fame to our symposium. He not only offered his journalist's view of

the war, influenced by his having served in Saigon in the early days of the ground forces build-up, but he also participated in many of the sessions. He displayed knowledge of the war and its political implications on today's military, and many panels were able to improve on the breadth of the information provided due to Adrian's insightful questions.

The Vietnam Center and Archive is fortunate to be the repository for the papers and artifacts of Dr. Gerald Hickey, the world renowned expert on ethnic minorities in Vietnam. We were honored to present a memorial plenary session of anthropologists that included Jarai tribesman Lap Siu's perspective

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### What's Inside...



Remembering DaNita Buckley, 1970 - 2011



2011 VNCA Guest Lecture Series



Techsians in the Vietnam War



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# Letter from the Director



**Stephen F. Maxner, Ph.D.**

Director  
The Vietnam Center and Archive

The winter and spring of 2010-2011 has been a time of excitement, challenge, accomplishment, and sadness at the Vietnam Center and Archive. We were very pleased with the success of our National Security Colloquium, which we co-hosted with the Political Science Department at Texas Tech and the Strategic Studies Institute at the US Army War College. We also enjoyed an exciting visit with the University of Technical Education, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, whose delegation attended numerous workshops on US Higher Education Management hosted by various departments and colleges across our campus. We remain convinced that such international engagement and cooperation is essential for the future of our university and contributes to the overall mission of our nations to reconcile our wartime past.

Regarding some of our recent challenges, as some of you might already know; after having done a superb job of protecting State revenues and institutional budgets over the past few years, the State of Texas has more recently been affected by the international financial crisis. Subsequently, the State legislature has been forced to request State agencies to return some funds to the treasury in order to maintain a balanced budget. What this meant for the Vietnam Center and Archive and for Texas Tech University as a whole was a series of budget reductions in our current fis-

cal year budgets. Due to excellent and creative leadership at Texas Tech University, we have been very fortunate that the overall impact of these current reductions has been relatively modest. However, the Texas State Legislature is now in session and has the very difficult task of passing a biennial budget that must remain balanced at a time when our State is expecting a rather substantial reduction in revenues over the next two years. The current implications of this on the Vietnam Center and Archive are a 30% reduction in our State budget line. As this funds our operations, salaries, travel, and archive management and support, the impact of such a significant reduction will likely be profound. We will be sure to keep you updated as we learn more about the State of Texas Budget. I would also like to add that, regardless of these budgetary challenges, we all consider the Vietnam Center and Archive extremely fortunate to have such strong support from the State of Texas and from the leadership of Texas Tech University. With their continuing support we know we will be able to weather this storm and emerge stronger than ever.

The New Year brought with it some of the saddest days we have ever experienced. DaNita Buckley died rather suddenly in early February of this year after being hospitalized for a fever of unknown origin. She was a very important member of our team, managed all of our budgets and administration, and did it all with a grace and efficiency I have rarely witnessed in anyone. We miss her terribly and we know many of our Friends do as well. We appreciate all of your sympathies during that time and will always remember DaNita as a remarkable and wonderful friend, colleague, and person.

Our hectic schedule this spring has not afforded us much free time. The 7th Triennial Vietnam Symposium was excellent and featured more graduate student presentations than we have ever experienced. Dr. Ron Milam will provide

more analysis of the event in an article featured in this issue of our Newsletter. We were all very pleased by the attendance and participation which included presenters and guests from throughout the US, Europe, Vietnam, Japan, and Australia.

The 7th Triennial Symposium also provided the launch for a new program; the Vietnam Center and Archive Guest Lecture Series. This series, which is supported by a very generous grant from the Helen Jones Foundation, will allow us to bring to Texas Tech a total of five speakers. Our first speaker was Mr. Adrian Cronauer, who most of you know from the film *Good Morning, Vietnam!* in which Robin Williams plays Adrian. His excellent and entertaining presentation to a standing room only audience was a fitting commencement to our series. Since then, we have hosted Mrs. Kim Phuc and Mrs. LeAnn Thiemann and our next speakers include Kara Dixon Vuic and Dave Carey. You can learn more about this series, our speakers, and the dates, times, and locations of future presentations on our website. Special recognition needs to go to Mary Saffell, Amy Mondt, and the Vietnam Center and Archive staff for doing such a superb job of organizing this excellent series.

The summer and fall of this year will undoubtedly bring equal excitement and challenges. In July, we will host our Studies Abroad in Southeast Asia. This program is supported by the Lee Roy Herron Scholarship and will allow us to take seven TTU students on a tour through Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand. Look for our fall newsletter to feature a story about that life-changing and exhilarating trip.

As always, we want to thank all of you, the Friends of the Vietnam Center, for your ongoing assistance and support. Please keep in touch and feel free to share your thoughts regarding our projects and programs. We wish you all a restful and relaxing summer and look forward to visiting with you again after the summer. ★

# Remembering DaNita

**Katrina Jackson**

Assistant Archivist



When asked to describe Ms. DaNita Suzette Buckley, it is difficult to think of one all encompassing word to fully articulate her vivid character. Struggling through my own personal cache of adjectives, I found that compassionate, witty, intense, capable and efficient all came to mind, but hardly do her memory the justice it truly deserves. Those of us who were lucky enough to work and interact with her on an almost daily basis observed these traits in her speech, mannerisms, and the ways in which she accomplished her work. As the Associate Director of Administration and Finance for the Vietnam Center and Archive, DaNita managed the Center's numerous financial accounts, planned staff travel, controlled conference registration and event facility planning, administered all personnel issues, and completed payroll, to name only a few of her daily tasks. Needless to say, after ten years of continuous employment at Texas Tech, her presence has certainly been missed on multiple levels and by many individuals across the TTU campus.

DaNita was born March 30, 1970 and attended school in Lubbock, Texas. Although she was a devoted and caring mother and aunt, she also found time to dedicate herself and her scarce free time to her church, Bethel Baptist in Abernathy, Texas, as well as to effectively administer a catering service, which benefitted from her personal recipes and experienced hand. DaNita was also im-

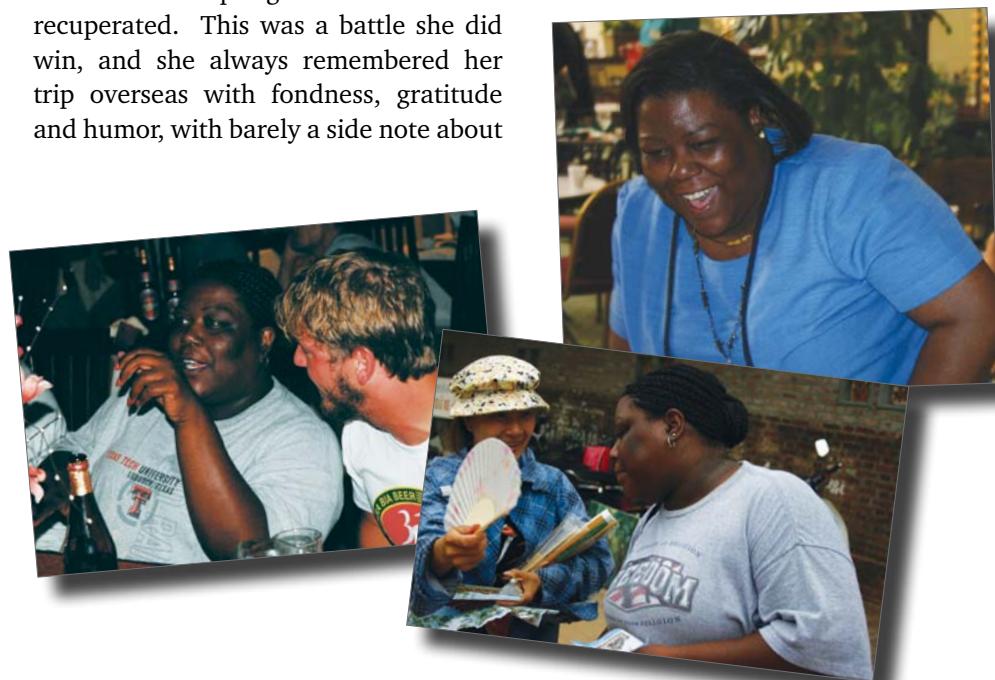
mersed in her work at the Center and Archive, and managed to stay abreast of changes and training while tending to her other various duties. Being the altruistic person that she was, DaNita encouraged her coworkers to give annually to the State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC), a cause she fully supported and worked hard to ensure that all of us were aware of our opportunities to give back to the state of Texas and to charities. To add to this already impressive list, DaNita had just begun working with the local branch of the Court Appointed Special Advocate Association (CASA) shortly before she passed away, in an attempt to further the reach of her caring and benevolent endeavors.

As the forefront of the Center and Archive's finances and administration, DaNita never let illness or personal life interfere with her care for others or her vocation. Even when she herself was ill, DaNita worried about her work duties being maintained effectively and the well being of her coworkers. In 2006 DaNita served as an adult mentor for students enrolled in the Center's summer study abroad course offered in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand. However, six weeks prior to this event, she was in the process of overcoming cancer, all the while attempting to work while she recuperated. This was a battle she did win, and she always remembered her trip overseas with fondness, gratitude and humor, with barely a side note about



her health issues at the time.

It was difficult for all of us here at the Center and Archive to come to terms with the passing of this loving and diligent individual who made our work and personal lives much easier with her expertise and affection. As a way to acknowledge this, the staff and some others who worked closely with DaNita during her time at the Center collectively raised \$611.00 to donate to her church's scholarship fund, for which she held fund raisers twice yearly. This impact was displayed at DaNita's funeral service as well, where almost the entire church sanctuary was filled with friends, family and fellow mourners. The ceremony was both uplifting and cheerful, which helped me personally say farewell to someone I considered a close friend without so many tears.



# 2011 Guest Lecture Series

## Mary Saffell

Archivist, Associate Director

The mission of the Vietnam Center and Archive Guest Speaker Series is to enrich the intellectual and cultural life of students, faculty and the community at large by bringing distinguished individuals to campus for presentations on specific aspects of the Vietnam War, its lasting impact on American politics, society and culture, and on contemporary issues in Southeast Asia.

With the generous support of the Helen Jones Foundation, the Vietnam Center and Archive has brought three speakers to Texas Tech, Adrian Cronauer, Phan Thi Kim Phuc, and LeAnn Thieman. In October, the series returns with Kara Dixon Vuic and Dave Carey.

In March, Adrian Cronauer, the real life radio DJ portrayed by Robin Williams in the film *Good Morning Vietnam*

## Techsans in the Vietnam War

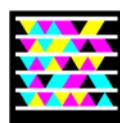
We are proud to announce our new online exhibit "Techsans in the Vietnam War," a program to honor graduates of Texas Tech who served in Vietnam and Southeast Asia.

To qualify for this project, the nominated individual must have served in Southeast Asia between 1960-1975 and to have graduated from Texas Tech anytime before or after their service. Participants may be living or deceased.

The exhibit launches on Memorial Day with three people: Louis K. Breuer, Samuel B. Cornelius, and Lee Roy Herron. To nominate, use the submission form on our website, and please include digital copies of images or other materials. We encourage donation of the physical items to the Archive as well. See the website for more information. ☆

Learn more at

[www.vietnam.ttu.edu/exhibits](http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/exhibits)



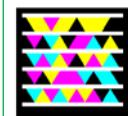
LeAnn Thieman signs copies of her book *This Must Be My Brother* following her lecture in May at the TTU School of Law.

nam, kicked off the series with a rousing talk at the Lanier Auditorium at the Texas Tech School of Law. He discussed his experiences as a disc jockey in Vietnam and the role of journalism during wartime. Cronauer also described how his story came to be a feature film, and how filmmakers took some creative license with his story. He ended his talk with his now famous catchphrase from his "Dawn Buster" radio show, "good morning, Vietnam!"

In April, the Center and Archive was honored to host Phan Thi Kim Phuc, known by many as "The Girl in the Picture." In 1972, when she was nine years old, Kim Phuc was photographed running down Highway 1, naked and burned, after a napalm strike on her village in Tay Ninh Province. That photograph instantly became one of the most iconic images of the war and won photographer Nick Ut a Pulitzer Prize. Few, however, knew what happened to the girl in the picture. During her presentation, Kim Phuc described the grueling burn treatments and therapy she endured for 14 months in a Saigon hospital. After her physical injuries healed, it took years for her to recover from the emotional pain of her experiences. Through her faith, she was able to forgive and move on with her life. Kim Phuc discussed her unwilling role as a propaganda tool for the government of Vietnam, her eventual defection to Canada with her husband, her mission as a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassa-

dor, and her efforts to provide help and support to children in war torn areas of the world through the Kim Foundation (<http://www.kimfoundation.com>). Her talk was both educational and inspiring.

To coincide with National Nurses Week (May 9-12), the Center and Archive was proud to host LeAnn Thieman, one of the nurses involved in Operation Babylift, a daring mission to evacuate over 300 Vietnamese babies from war-torn South Vietnam before it fell to communist troops. LeAnn spoke about her experiences up to and during Operation Babylift, and how they dramatically affected her family and the course of her life. She is a frequent contributor to the popular Chicken Soup book series and uses her experiences to teach people to



Watch the Cronauer Lecture at  
[www.vietnam.ttu.edu/GLS](http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/GLS)

balance their lives, truly live their priorities, and make a difference in the world.

The next speaker in the series will be Dr. Kara Dixon Vuic. Dr. Vuic holds a Ph.D. in History from Indiana University, where she teaches courses on U.S. history, women's history, African American history, 20th century U.S. social history, the Vietnam War, and world history at Bridgewater College in Virginia. Her first book, *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), examines the Vietnam-era Army Nurse Corps. Additionally, she has published articles in *Signs* and *Nursing History Review* on the army's changing marriage and motherhood regulations



Adrian Cronauer (right) takes a question from the audience following his March lecture at Texas Tech.

and on the recruitment of nurses for the Vietnam War. She is currently working on a manuscript about civilian organizations that sent women to entertain American troops during World Wars I and II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and recent wars in the Middle East. Dr. Vuic will speak at the Lanier Auditorium of the Texas Tech University Law School on October 13, 2011 at 7:00 PM.

This year's final speaker, Dave Carey, graduated from the US Naval Academy and served as a carrier-based pilot in Vietnam. Shot down during one of his missions, Carey spent five and a half years as a prisoner of war in Hanoi. After returning from Vietnam, he held several command positions, including a position as the Director of the Navy's Leadership and Management Training Program. He earned the Legion of Merit, five Bronze Stars, two Meritorious Service Medals, the Purple Heart, eight Air Medals and the Navy Commendation Medal during his service. Carey's message emphasizes the power of the human spirit to triumph over adversity.



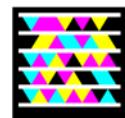
Kim Phuc, "the girl in the picture," discusses about her experiences at the Allen Theatre at Texas Tech in April

He will speak at the Allen Theatre in the Student Union Building on the Texas Tech Campus on November 10, 2011 at 7:00 PM.

For more information on the Guest Lecture Series, or to watch past lectures, please visit our website at [www.vietnam.ttu.edu/GLS](http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/GLS). (Note: due to copyright restrictions, we cannot rebroadcast Phan Thi Kim Phuc's lecture. To view her presentation, please visit

our reading room in the Southwest Collections/Special Collections Library on the Texas Tech University campus). If you would like to attend our upcoming events and require special accommodations, please call Mary Saffell at 806-742-9010. ★

Learn more about this series at  
[www.vietnam.ttu.edu/GLS](http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/GLS)

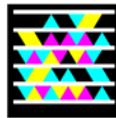


## 3rd Annual APAHM Film Festival

### **Ann Mallett and Justin Saffell**

Vietnamese American Heritage Project

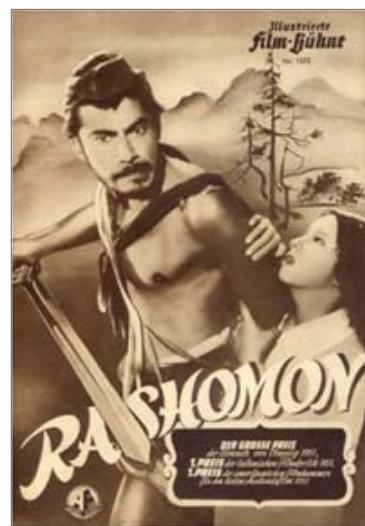
The 3rd Annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Film Festival was a great success. Collaborating with the Texas Tech University Libraries, the Center and Archive presented four films: *Green Dragon*; *Rashomon*; *Toll of the Sea*; and *Kim's Story: The Road from Vietnam*. Attendees to this year's festival included students and faculty from the University, as well as numerous people from the Lubbock community, many of whom were not familiar with the Center and Archive before attending this event.



Learn more about the films at  
[vietnam.ttu.edu/2011filmfestival](http://vietnam.ttu.edu/2011filmfestival)

May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, commemorating the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to the US in 1843, as well as the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, which involved the labor of many Chinese immigrants. The Center and Archive presents our annual film festival in April in order to allow greater participation from the University's students before finals and the summer break.

Previous year's festivals have shown films such as *New Year Baby*; *Daughter from DaNang*; *The Beautiful Country*; and *Men are Human, Women are Buffalo*. Working with Rob Weiner from the University Library, the goal of the festival is to present films covering a wide range of topics and featuring Asian or Asian American films, with a particular emphasis on Vietnamese Americans.



This year's showing of *Kim's Story* coincided with the lecture of Phan Thi Kim Phuc, "the girl in the picture" and subject of *Kim's Story*, the second speaker in the Center and Archive's 2011 Guest Lecture Series. ★

Continued from page one

on Hickey's contribution to our knowledge of the 54 tribes that constitute Vietnam's population. Moderated by Dr. Jeff Williams, former chair of the TTU Anthropology Department, the panel highlighted not only the importance of Dr. Hickey's work, but also the prospect for future research that will improve our understanding of the role of minority ethnicities in shaping world conflict.

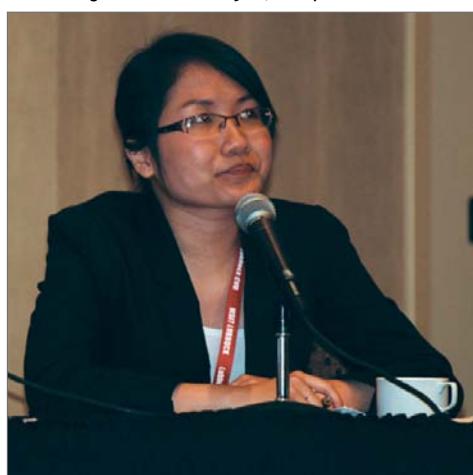
The U.S. Congress has established a Vietnam War Commemoration program to recognize and honor the contributions of Vietnam veterans and their families on the 50th anniversary of the war. The Department of Defense will oversee the decade long festivities that will occur across America, and Pentagon representatives provided valuable information about the program to our symposium attendees. The Vietnam Center is an active participant in the planning process for the commemoration.

While graduate student research has always been a highlight of our Triennial Symposia, we were fortunate this year to have welcomed seventeen students from not only the United States, but also from Singapore, Germany, and Vietnam. The unique nature of our program allows the students to not only present papers with established scholars, but also to answer questions from an audience made up of academics, government officials, and war participants. So the challenge for the students is to not only share their research with symposia participants, but to also be ready to defend their analysis against the questioning of persons with first-hand knowledge of the events. All of the students did so with professional approaches to their subjects.

Six Vietnam graduate students presented papers at this year's symposia, with several disciplines being represented: history, anthropology, political science, American studies, and English



Top: Guests at the 2011 Symposium listen to one of the many presentations during the three-day event.  
 Bottom left: Gemma Ngoc Dao, Heidelberg Center for American Studies, University of Heidelberg, Germany.  
 Bottom right: Charles L. Byler, Independent Researcher.



literature. Chau Huy Ngoc from the University of Singapore and a returning student, discussed the controversial death of American Peter Dewey, the first American killed in Vietnam. He concluded that there is still no definitive answer as to why he was killed just a few days after Ho Chi Minh's Declaration of Independence speech at which American representatives were present and supportive. Nguyen T. Trung, a student at the Woodrow Wilson Department of Politics at the University of Virginia, presented a paper on the role of Chinese advisors to the Viet Minh at Dien Bien Phu. Trung has studied previously in China, and his perspective on this subject sheds new light on the Viet Minh's success during this critical period of Vietnamese history.

Hoang Cam Thanh of Texas

A&M at Commerce, Texas, discussed the current attitudes of Vietnamese students toward America, focusing particularly on whether they view America as an imperialistic nation. This research is noteworthy in light of recent attitudinal research comparing American and Vietnamese student views of each other. Appearing on the same panel with Thanh was Thi Diem Ngoc Dao, a student at the Heidelberg Center for American Studies at the University of Heidelberg who complemented the imperialistic nation study with a normalization of relations research project. Both of these students were able to provide data that puts the Vietnam War into not only a historical perspective, but sheds light on how the war has affected contemporary societies, and the challenges that both nations have to improve relations.



Watch sessions online at  
[www.vietnam.ttu.edu/events](http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/events)

Quang Manh Ha, a recent Ph.D. graduate of Texas Tech University, presented a paper on Vietnamese-American literature in which he dealt with the many aspects of how the refugees of the war have written of either their experiences or the recollections of family members. Such literature is being produced at a significant rate, and allows those who know little about Vietnam War history to appreciate the impact of the war on those who served as America's allies.

LTC Mark Viney, Director of the U.S. Army Heritage & Education Center at Carlisle Barracks, presented a paper that provided new evidence that consideration was given at the highest level to invade North Vietnam. Relying on recently declassified documents, "Operation Muleshoe" was planned by General Earl Wheeler's office, and was designed to target certain known Surface to Air Missile sites by launching a Marine amphibious landing on the shores of North Vietnam and then occupying the enemy nation for up to fourteen days, followed

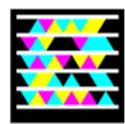
by a rapid withdrawal. Col. Varney's work will be published this summer.

One of the perennial speakers at our conference is Dr. Larry Berman, professor of political science at the University of California at Davis, who is the author of many books on the Vietnam War, including most recently *Perfect Spy: the Incredible Double Life of Pham Xuan An*. Dr. Berman presented a preview of his new book *Z, the Story of Admiral Elmo Zumwalt*, Chief of Naval Operations and a founder of the Vietnam Center and Archive. His presentation focused on the relationship between the American Admiral and his Vietnamese counterpart, Admiral Tran Van Chon. Finally, we were honored to have the founding director of our organization, Dr. Jim Reckner speak about the history of the Vietnam Center, which was of particular interest to many graduate students who will benefit from the extensive collection that Jim and others have made available to scholars of the Vietnam War. ☆



Dr. Jeff Williams of Texas Tech University moderates the Dr. Gerald Hickey Memorial Session at the 2011 Vietnam Center Symposium

See more images online at  
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## United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration

As many of you know, when the US Congress passed the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act, they included within it authorization for the Secretary of Defense to conduct a program to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War. Initially called the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration, they have now changed their name to The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration.

The Commemoration has submitted an ambitious program to the Secretary that will help focus national attention on commemorative activities from now until the year 2025 – the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon. To help coordinate those national efforts,



Michael L. Townes, Colonel, USAF (Ret), Executive Director, The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration, speaks about plans for the commemoration at the 2011 Symposium

they will be inviting organizations and institutions to become official partners and will be advertising events, large and small, throughout the United States.

The VNCA is proud to be one of the founding partners with this program and, in March 2011, a team of representatives from their offices in Virginia joined the us at our 7th Triennial Vietnam Symposium. In addition to setting

up a display and meeting with conference attendees, they provided a detailed presentation regarding their planned programs and activities. Also, while at the symposium, they donated several wartime map reproductions to the Center and Archive of the battle site at Dien Bien Phu and of the Citadel at Hue.

More recently, the Commemoration launched their new website and it includes a lot of additional information. New features include an interactive timeline, partner's program information, educational materials and information, and much more.

We are fully committed to the mission of the Commemoration and are proud to be a partner institution with them. We look forward to hosting events and activities over the next 14 years that recognize and honor our nation's Vietnam veterans and their families for their service and sacrifices. ☆



Learn more at  
[www.vietnamwar50th.com](http://www.vietnamwar50th.com)

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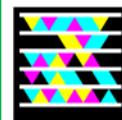
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Many of the URLs on our site and others can be long and cumbersome. By providing this tag to content relevant to the articles in the newsletter, readers can use the Microsoft Tag Reader App to go directly to the online content without having to enter a long URL.

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