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An advertisement for Medicare Solutions Inc. It features a green background. On the left is a portrait of Brian Johnson. The main text reads "Find out what is changing with prescription drug pricing and how it will affect you". Below this is a Medicare Health Insurance card for John L. Smith. To the right, it says "Come to our local Medicare meetings" and "Click for our schedule". The Johnson Medicare Solutions Inc. logo is on the far right, with "Established 2005" below it.

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GRATITUDE FLOWS

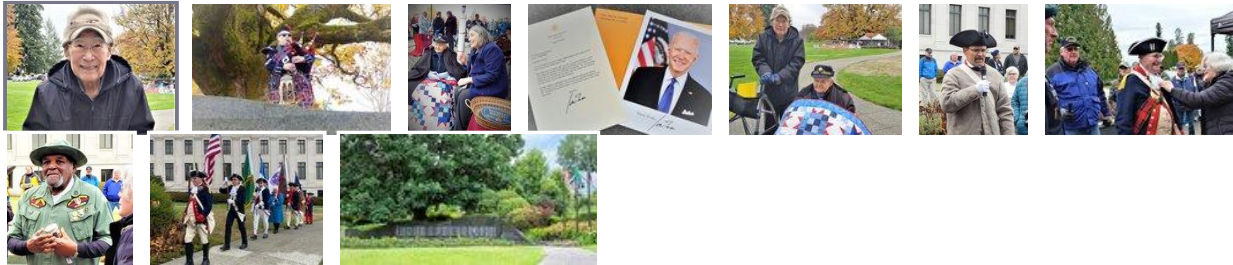
Thanking veterans, giving thanks for our nation and families



(/uploads/original/20221124-134136-Harry Nakashima - 11-11-22.jpg)

Veteran of Vietnam and Korea, Harry T. Nakashima enjoyed the event. He retired as a First Sergeant and he is a recipient of the Bronze Star for meritorious service in a combat zone in Vietnam.

PHOTO BY SHIRLEY STIRLING.



By Shirley Stirling

Did you know that since 2015, November has been known as National Gratitude Month? The official designation totally makes sense, as November has long invited us to embrace an attitude of gratitude with the celebration of Veterans Day, giving thanks to those who have served in the US military, and Thanksgiving, giving thanks for our families and nation. Why not envelope the entire month with gratitude?

Today is Thanksgiving Day, often celebrated within the immediate family. Let's also embrace US veterans and honor their service with thanks. Specifically, let's look at the recent commemoration at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Olympia.

For Vietnam Veterans

At the November 11, 2022 event, more than 125 people gathered at the wall on Olympia's Capitol Campus to honor Vietnam veterans. It was a "Welcome Home" event with a six-flag color guard to honor Vietnam-era veterans, their service, and their lives. During the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration (which started in 2012 and continues through 2025), the nation strives to give Vietnam veterans the welcome and thanks that they did not receive years ago. Congress authorized this commemoration; recognition includes anyone who served on active duty in the US Armed Forces from November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of the location of their service.



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A little background: The conflict in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia started in 1955 after French Colonial Rule, with Catholic nationalist Ngo Dinh Diem emerging as the

leader of the South Vietnam independence movement, with U.S. backing. Ho Chi Minh, backed by Russia and China, led the communist state to the north. The conflict ended in 1975, with the fall of Saigon on April 30.

The keynote speaker for the Olympia Veterans Day event was Colonel Paul T. Sellars, Special Forces, Chief of Staff of the Washington Army National Guard.

For the Living

At this event, male and female Vietnam veterans each stated their name and branch of service and accepted the Vietnam Veterans Eagle lapel pin. The Eagle represents courage, honor, and dedicated service to our nation and each pin is engraved with, “A Grateful Nation Thanks and Honors You.”

More than 30 Eagle pins were presented to Vietnam veterans, to family members of deceased Vietnam veterans, and a blue star pin to a spouse who lost her husband in the war. Also among the attendees were Vietnam-era veterans who had previously received the pin, family, friends, and others who wanted to give honor to those who have served.



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Below are a few words about some of the honorees:

Harry T. Nakashima

Harry T. Nakashima, originally from Oahu, Hawaii, received the Eagle lapel pin and

associated proclamations. This was the first event at which he was recognized as a veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars.

As were Japanese-Americans living in Washington and other western states, one member of Harry's family in Hawaii was sent to an internment camp during World War II. In Hawaii, internment was limited to community leaders and other adults with special skill sets.

This didn't dissuade Nakashima from seeking to serve his country. As a Japanese-American at home in Oahu, he first enlisted in the US Army when underage and was told to "come back next year."

He enlisted again in 1951 for the Korean War, and become a career soldier. After Korea, he eventually served a tour in Vietnam, which concluded in 1968, and then served a second term there. In his second tour, he flew, in peril, from base to base by helicopter to repair signals on

communication towers. First Sergeant Harry T. Nakashima was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service in a combat zone within Vietnam. At the end of his tour, he declined a promotion and retired to return to his family in 1971.

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A portrait of Bill Brown, a man with glasses and a suit, smiling.

After the Army, Harry attended South Puget Sound Community College (then Olympia Vocational Technical Institute) through the GI Bill and graduated with an Associate Arts degree in computer science. He worked at the Washington State Treasurer’s Office for over 20 years and retired as a computer analyst in 1994. Harry and his wife Kuniko “Kay” married during the Korean War and have had three children. They have been married for 69 years. Now 93, Harry looks forward to a 100th birthday celebration. Genetics are with

him (and his two sisters), as their mother lived to age 102!

Dick Motz

Dick Motz received the Eagle lapel pin and associated declarations. Dick is a 34-year Vietnam-era veteran who served 15 years in the Air Force, four years in the Navy and 15 years in the Army, retiring as a Master Sergeant in 1989. Three jobs he held included: 4.2 Mortar Gunner, Crew Chief on Aircraft, and Transportation Traffic manager, E-8. In civilian life, he worked for ten years in computer network support and retired from the Boeing Company. He married Hariklia in 1974 and they look forward to their 50th wedding anniversary in 2024.

Wendell L. Saville

Wendell L. Saville was represented by his son Kevin Saville who accepted the Eagle lapel pin and declarations in his stead. Wendell was a Specialist in the US Army, 1957-59. Based near Stuttgart, Germany; he served as a truck mechanic and driver. Wendell and his wife live in Ellensburg, where they raised their family. He worked for the Ellensburg School District as a school bus mechanic and driver for over 30 years before retiring.

Kevin Saville said, “We never felt that dad served in the Vietnam era, which, regarding the active war, was from about 1965-1974. I was surprised when preparing for this event at the capitol to learn that the Vietnam period had been broadened to start November 1, 1955, due to mostly small and perhaps covert US involvement in the late 1950s. Dad was not involved with that, but per the modern definition of the Vietnam era back to 1955 with service at any location, I decided to step forward. I presented the information and pin to dad last Sunday afternoon in Ellensburg, and he was very pleased to receive it.”

Barbara J. Nichols

Barbara J. Nichols, Army Nurse, received a 100th birthday letter and portrait from U.S. President Joe Biden. Barbara first served as a “Rosie the Riveter” at Boeing, joined the WWII Cadet Nurse Corps, then served in Korea, Vietnam, and stateside for over twenty years. Lieutenant Colonel Barbara Nichols was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service in a combat zone in Vietnam War.

For the Fallen



(<https://www.classycaninecountryclub.com/>)

Beverly York played the bagpipes, and members of the

Daughters of the American Revolution read all of the names engraved on the adjacent wall. The list included the 1,124 Washington State residents who were killed or missing in action. Commander Domenick Anthony Spinelli, US Navy, the most recent person listed, is missing in action, and his name was added to the list in 2016.

Hal Lymus

Hal Lymus received a special introduction at this event, initiated by another Vietnam veteran who received the Eagle lapel pin, Peter Scott.

Peter Scott, who served in the US Air Force, thanked Hal Lymus for his instrumental role in the fundraising of \$178,000 to create the Washington State Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. Hal’s work with others in the VVA Chapter 130, ensured the construction of the memorial wall.

Hal Lymus first joined the US Army in 1959. In Vietnam, he served two tours: the first as a Combat Medic in Vietnam’s 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry, “Wolfhounds” of the 25th Infantry Division; the second in the 12th Evacuation Hospital unit in *Củ Chi* from 1968-1970. Hal was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service in a combat zone in Vietnam War.

More about our Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall

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The current monument, designed by Seattle architect Kris Snyder, is actually the second to be erected on the Capitol campus. The first, dedicated in 1982, was unpopular as it was small and the names were “entombed” within due to the monument's design. Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), Chapter 130, lobbied to replace it with one that would better honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The VVA was so energetic and successful that this second monument was paid for with 100% private dollars. The majority of donations were sent in amounts of \$25 or less. The State of Washington offered to fund 50% of the costs, but they were ultimately unneeded.

Organized by the DAR and SAR

The Sacajawea Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), with the George Rogers Clark Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), presented the program in partnership with the Washington DC Vietnam War 50th Anniversary Commemoration Program. The event was organized by Franida Maudsley of the Sacajawea Chapter of the DAR. The Sacajawea Chapter began the tradition of reading the names in 2015 and will continue on, inviting veterans and the public.

Shirley Stirling, of Lacey, is a writer and member of the Sacajawea Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution.

If you have a story you'd like to publish in *The JOLT*, please contact us.

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Readers tell us what they're thankful for this Thanksgiving



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