

Experiencing ‘Camaraderie’ of the Past

Tennessee Post commemorates Vietnam War Veterans Day

Jul 21, 2021

A VFW Post in The Volunteer State observed Vietnam War Veterans Day on March 29 to remember and honor Vietnam War veterans and their families.

According to then-VFW Post 5019 Commander Harold Alexander, the Post is largely comprised of Vietnam War veterans, which was the impetus for this event.

“We looked through the history of our Post, and it seems this is the first time we have commemorated this date,” Alexander said.

The date commemorates not only the national holiday but the 1973 release of American prisoners of war from North Vietnamese custody in the country’s capital of Hanoi.

More than 75 families, including veterans and local officials, attended a dinner service that evening at the Post home in Shelbyville, Tennessee. About 20 Vietnam vets were recognized.

“The event was a huge success,” said immediate past Post 5019 Auxiliary President Carole Anne Woods. “It provided many of our local veterans the opportunity to share a meal with one another, tell stories and experience the camaraderie each one of them had with their fellow team members many years before.”

Past VFW Commander-in-Chief John Furgess also attended the dinner and offered his personal account of his time in Vietnam.

Woods said the retired Army colonel reminded guests to recognize veterans of all wars, not just Vietnam.

“John is always supportive of all the local Posts and Auxiliaries,” Woods said. “He’s just a fine person.”

Other speakers included Iraq War veteran Brandi Majerus, who spoke about The Wall That

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Heals which will be at Barfield Crescent Park in Murfreesboro, Tenn., from November 11 – 14.

This Vietnam Wall is a mobile replica of the Wall in Washington, D.C., and provides a healing opportunity to Vietnam era veterans and their families and friends. More information on The Wall That Heals event can be found at twthmidtn.org.

Vietnam War vet and Silver Star recipient Dave Plumley spoke about suicide awareness, while Judy Gorman King shared a poem she wrote years ago called “The Spirit of the Wall.”

Woods said the United States of America Vietnam War Commemorative Partner Program mailed pins to be awarded to the Vietnam vets in attendance. She added that the group was “very supportive” of the Post’s event.

“It was just a really good turnout,” Alexander said. “We were pleased with it.”