

VIETNAM WAR BACKGROUND

(Some history most American people never knew)

Interesting Statistics from the Vietnam Memorial Wall:

- There are 58,267 names listed on that polished black wall, including those added in 2010.
- The names are arranged in the order in which they were taken from us by date and within each date the names are alphabetized. It is hard to believe it is 57 years since the first casualty.
- The first known casualty was Richard B. Fitzgibbon, of North Weymouth, Mass. Listed by the U.S. Department of Defense as having been killed on June 8, 1956. His name is listed on the Wall with that of his son, Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Richard B. Fitzgibbon III, who was killed on Sept. 7, 1965.
- There are three sets of fathers and sons on the Wall.
- There were 39,996 on the Wall that were just 22 or younger.
- There were 8,283 that were just 19 years old.
- The largest age group, 33,103 were 18 years old.
- There were 12 soldiers on the Wall that were 17 years old.
- There were 5 soldiers on the Wall were 16 years old.
- One soldier, PFC Dan Bullock that was only 15 years old.

- There were 997 soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam... 1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam... 31 sets of brothers are on the Wall.
- Thirty one sets of parents lost two of their sons.
- There were 54 soldiers attended Thomas Edison High School in Philadelphia. I wonder why so many from one school.
- There were 8 Women are on the Wall, Nursing the wounded.
- There were 244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War; 153 of them are on the Wall.
- Beallsville, Ohio with a population of 475 lost 6 of her sons.
- West Virginia had the highest casualty rate per capita in the nation. There are 711 West Virginians on the Wall.
- The Marines of Morenci - They led some of the scrappiest high school football and basketball teams that the little Arizona copper town of Morenci (pop. 5,058) had ever known and cheered. In quieter moments, they rode horses along the Coronado Trail, stalked deer in the Apache National Forest. And in the patriotic camaraderie typical of Morenci's mining families, the nine graduates of Morenci High enlisted as a group in the Marine Corps. Their service began on Independence Day, 1966. Only 3 returned home.
- The Buddies of Midvale - LeRoy Tafoya, Jimmy Martinez, Tom Gonzales were all boyhood friends and lived on three consecutive streets in Midvale, Utah on

Fifth, Sixth and Seventh avenues. They lived only a few yards apart. They played ball at the adjacent sandlot ball field. And they all went to Vietnam. In a span of 16 dark Days in late 1967, all three would be killed. Later it known that LeRoy Tafoya was killed on Wednesday, Nov. 22, the fourth anniversary of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Jimmy Martinez died less than 24 hours later on Thanksgiving Day. Tom Gonzales was shot dead assaulting the enemy on Dec. 7, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

- The most casualty deaths for a single day was on January 31, 1968 ~ 245 deaths.
- The most casualty deaths for a single month were May 1968 - 2,415 casualties were incurred.
- For most Americans who read this they will only see the numbers that the Vietnam War lost. To those of us who survived the war, and to the families of those who did not, we see the faces, we really feel the pain.

We are, until we too pass away, haunted with these numbers, because they were our brothers, friends, fathers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters. There are no noble wars, just noble warriors.