The Bulletin

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STORYTELLING

AMBASSADORSHIP

PERSUASION



It's amazing what one can accomplish when you are feeling well and have a little time. Compared to last month, this issue is going out fairly timely.

About this issue—you will see that it has a theme about a very special important date next month. So we highlighted it in this issue to give everyone time to consider perhaps doing something special

for that occasion. Circle March 29th on your calendar.

I try to grow and learn with each of you when I prepare each issue. Please share what you learn here. But as you share please encourage membership in P.A.L.S.—very little cost even with mailing. Stamp and printing price increases are pushing us to our limits.

Hope all are well and safe out there in this crazy winter. L'Editeur

"The signs of the Vietnam War protesters said "Make Love not War". It didn't seem to me that they were capable of either." - Ronald Reagan

In this issue!!

- PR Clipboard—PR stuff from around the web
- P.A.L.S. Page—Recognizing Vietnam Veterans
- Public Relations Special Event Press Release
- Newsletter Ideas
- PR Guest Editorial
- Robert F. Kennedy's Important Speech on the Vietnam War
- Newsletter Filler, Trivia or Just for Fun
- Spotlight on PR—Back to Business Cards
- Poster of the Month
- Digital Only—More Unremembered

P.A.L.S. since 1984—Past L'Editeurs

George Hartley Don Collins Paul Chevalier



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THE CLIPBOARD



- For the upcoming Super Bowl, Anheuser-Busch is leaning into nostalgia. The major brewer is trotting its iconic Clydesdales back out once again for a commercial during the upcoming game on February 11. ABC reported that the commercial will be a hat tip to the brewery's old commercials with an emphasis on delivering what it promises a high-quality product. In addition to the prancing horses, the commercial also features real-life Budweiser wholesalers, another nod to authenticity and history over flash and glitz. It's interesting to see such a major company rely on tradition rather than star power on the biggest advertising stage, but a tactic that could serve as solid counterprogramming during the Big Game.
- The IRS is piloting a program that would allow many Americans to calculate their taxes for free, without turning to paid software like TurboTax. At the moment, only Americans who resided in 12 states in 2023 are eligible, and their tax returns must be relatively simple. But it signals a sea change for an industry that has been pay-to-play for years. Accountants and tax software makers attempted to battle the program in Congress, NPR reported, but now that it's in progress, they must fight to show why they're worth paying for. They still have a few years before the program is potentially rolled out to the entire country and publicized. The time to ramp up PR around your software's value add is now.



- Everyone's favorite wholesaler is in the news again, but this time, it's not for keeping their hot dog prices low. At Costco locations, members will now be asked for photo ID in addition to their membership cards. The wholesale giant explained the change, stating, "We don't feel it's right that non-members receive the same benefits and pricing as our members." While this might be unwelcome news for Costco-card leeches (something this author is guilty of, admittedly), let's take a look at the positive spin here. Costco identified an issue of fairness for their members and acted quickly and decisively to preserve the customer experience. And while Netflix's similar move to crack down on password sharing was unpopular from a PR perspective, it scored big in the dollars department.
- It's a new era for the United States Postal Service, as the first electric mail trucks have been rolled onto the roads to deliver the nation's mail. After initial resistance to the change and a commitment to get just 10% of the next generation of mail trucks running on electricity, 45,000 more trucks will be electrified by 2028. "We are grateful for the support of Congress and the Biden administration through Inflation Reduction Act funding,"



Postmaster General Louis DeJoy said in a release. This is a positive story for the USPS, after several years in which seemingly precious few of those were around given the mail delivery debacles from the height of the COVID pandemic. Additionally, the commitment to electrification could serve as a path toward innovation regardless of who wins the electron in November.

P.A.L.S. Page—Recognizing Vietnam Veterans

President Donald J. Trump signed the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017 on March 28, 2017 to officially recognize March 29 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

Nationale Vietnam Veterans Day is less than two months away and let's consider some ways or ideas on how we, a members of the Forty and Eight, recognize that service. More than nine million Americans served from Nov. 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975. Six million are still living.

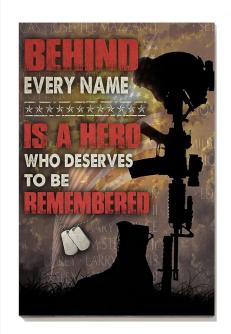


National Vietnam War Veterans Day is an opportunity for national reconciliation. It offers a chance for a now grateful nation to recognize the fortitude and commitment that Vietnam veterans showed and continue to show every day. March 29th is an opportunity to thank and honor the millions of service members who served in Vietnam. For Vietnam veterans, this is a day when they finally receive the recognition and respect that was missing so many years ago. For everyone else, while we cannot go back and fix the mistakes of the past, we can work towards ensuring that all Vietnam veterans receive the welcome home they truly deserve.

"We hope everyone will join together on March 29, 2022, to honor Vietnam Veterans and their families during this 5th anniversary of National Vietnam War Veterans Day," said Phil Waite, chief of strategic engagement for The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration. "These warriors – our Nation's blood and treasure from a generation ago – deserve the Nation's deepest gratitude!"

Consider identifying those members of your locale who are Vietnam War veterans. At a promenade near March 29th, see that they are recognized. Consider a special honoring with a lapel pin, certificate of appreciation and recognition in your newsletter. Take pictures! See if any are willing to grant you leave to use a personal picture of their service.

How about a special breakfast or at the promenade a commemorative cake. Consider making the POW/MIA Missing Man White Table a part of your recognition. If there is a table already set, consider clearing the table and have it reset by your Vietnam veterans in a proper ceremony.



If you're on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or any other social media, post a thank you message mentioning a Vietnam veteran that you know or Vietnam Veterans in general. Remind your Facebook friends that March 29, is Vietnam War Commemoration Day.

Buy a Vietnam veteran lunch! A small gesture to show appreciation.

Donating... Contribute to organizations like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to help veterans in need. Help Remember, Honor, Educate and Heal. Your donation to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund will help expand their mission to honor, preserve and educate. A donation helps provide for the care and preservation of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site, supports VVMF programs such as The Wall of Faces and the In Memory program, and provide free educational materials to teachers, students and visitors to the Memorial.

https://www.vvmf.org/giving-to-vvmf/ (Ctrl-Click)

Public Relations Special Event Highlight

La Societe des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux



THE SOCIETY OF 40 MEN & 8 HORSES
THE GRANDE VOITURE DU TEXAS
8714 Marble Dr, El Paso, TX 79904





Égalité Fraternité

PRESS RELEASE - IMMEDIATE

FRENCH AND US VETERANS MEET TO MARK 75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRATITUDE TRAIN

An Expression of Goodwill and Gratitude from the People of France



Houston, Texas 11:00 am, Friday, February 2, 2024 Residence of France / 1904 Kirby Dr, Houston, Tx

Consule Générale de France Valérie Baraban will welcome members of La Societe des 40 Hommes et 8 Chevaux "The Society of 40 Men & 8 Horses" of the Grande Voiture du Texas along with French Veterans in Texas to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Train de La Reconnaissance Française also known as the Gratitude Train. February 2nd marks the 75th Anniversary of the arrival of the Gratitude Train to the United States aboard the French freighter "Magellan".

As a response to the "Friendship Train of 1947" in which 700 rail cars were sent to France and Italy after World War 2, France sent 49 of the small "40 & 8er" boxcars to the United States which became known as the Gratitude Train. Each of the boxcars came decorated with 40 Coats of Arms plaques from historical regions of France and were filled with gifts from the people of France. A few of these gifts are on display with the Texas Merci Boxcar at the Texas Military Forces Museum at Camp Mabry in Austin and a small selection of gifts from the Texas Merci Boxcar will be on display at the Residence of France.

The Grand Chef de Gare du Texas (40 & 8 State Commander) will make a presentation to Consule Générale de France Baraban and will announce the upcoming celebration to be held in Austin on Friday, March 22, 2024. The Austin celebration will begin at 12:00 pm at the Texas Military Forces Museum where the Texas Merci Boxcar is on permanent display and then at 2:00 pm an exhibit of gifts from the Texas Merci Boxcar will officially open at the Capitol Visitor Center in Austin, Texas. Gifts from the Texas Merci Boxcar are rarely on display and the exhibit will be open to the public through July 2024.

POC: Grande Voiture du Texas POC: Consulate General of France in Houston

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OUR 1920 FOUNDERS WERE VETERANS OF W.W.I. FRANCE. During the First World War, French boxcars carried American Doughboys to the front. These wartime boxcars, which held either 40 men or 8 horses, were emblazoned with a "40/8"; a symbol readily understood by American veterans of that era. Today our organization's titles are in French and we meet in symbolic W.W.I. train depots, in grateful homage to the sacrifices of our Doughboy founders and indeed to honor all Americans who yet serve. -- We are most commonly known as "La Societe" or simply "The Forty & Eight".

Newsletter Ideas!

Another subject we broach from time to time, but here may be some fresh or innovative ideas to think about if you want to consider freshening up your newsletter. All the time I hear about website and Facebook updates and changes—consider the same for your newsletters.

First of all you might want to ask your membership what they would like to see in their newsletter. When and how often to receive it and how? What do you like the least or most about it? Just because you think something is important or of value in the newsletter doesn't mean it appeals to everyone!

VEWSLETTER OF WELLTER

Consider when to send out. If email, they are less read on Sundays and Mondays.

Ensure Your Newsletter Design Is Mobile-Friendly. Did you know that 46% of all email opens are on mobile devices? It's important to ensure your newsletter design is mobile-friendly. I always include myself on my newsletter emails and check on my phone to see how it looks when opened.

Double-check your email authentication settings. Most email service providers will take care of this for you, but it's worth a quick check to make sure your emails are authenticated properly. (If not, you might end up in the spam folder!)

Here's the easy way to do it: Open Gmail on a desktop or laptop, and open one of your newsletters. Click on the three dots on the right, and then click on "Show Original." Look at the lines for SPF and DKIM — what do you see? There are two options here: PASS or FAIL.

- If you see PASS, you're in good shape!
- If you see FAIL, immediately reach out to your email service provider every ESP has their own step-by-step guide to help you correctly authenticate your emails.

Consider placing your minutes in your newsletter—I've brought this up before. Not everyone makes your promenades for a variety of reasons. Minutes do not need specific names but rather a summary of what was important and voted on. This develops a continued interest in those that cannot make it.

What will make your newsletter something of value that your membership will be looking for it? There is little value in including a calendar of events in your newsletter for any month if it's sent out far beyond the 1st few days.

Mix things up a bit... Are you always using the same format, same colors, same content? Even subtle changes will work. That's not a bad thing, but take a look and see if you might consider some changes to make your newsletter more dynamic and interesting. Example—Columns instead of block texts. Interject more quotes, trivia and fun stuff!

Take an honest look at others newsletters and see what they are doing—do not be afraid of getting some fresh ideas from what others are good at.

Have a very special event coming up? Your newsletter is a great marketing tool for fund raising and promotion. Consider promoting an early bird promotion, those purchasing tickets early get a discount? Keeping members informed about ticket sales and timelines is important—use your newsletter. Consider a 100% goal thermometer to clearly show where you stand for such things as ticket sales, revenue received— even as a membership gauge.

First page, last page, doesn't matter but make it easy to see—include links or how to get to your websites and any social media you have. For personal feedback and you are comfortable with it, include your Gmail chat or WhatsApp for personal feedback.

Finally—Freshen up your email lists! At the Nationale level, I've gone so far as to check "Taps" to see if someone has left us. Continually remind members of the important of letting you and Correspondants of changes.

PR Guest Editorial

I would like to contribute to The Press Association of La Societe. By way of introduction, I am a psychologist and psychoanalyst in private practice in New York, and I specialize in working with veterans and first responders battling with PTSD, and other mental health issues. I want to have a relatable and down to earth discussion with you all about PTSD without psychobabble.

I started my career as a diagnostician in a state-run super maximum prison. It was my job to read an inmate's rap sheet, read psych testing data, interview the inmate for about an hour and a half, write a report with program suggestions and send him on his way. This was one hell of a first job.

A Vietnam combat vet came into my office, and all his legal woes were alcohol related, culminating in his first Federal charge. After Nam, he came back to "The World" severely alcoholic, catastrophically symptomatic with PTSD.

One of my standard questions I ask all the combat veterans is "who do you miss the most?" Usually, they tell me about their best friend, battle brother or sister cut in half or vaporized into pink (blood) by machine gun fire or whatever, right in front of them. But what this guy told me gives me chills to this day. The color surged to his face, the veins in his neck, face and forehead popped out, he began to sob, and he shouted:

"DOC, I MISS ME!!! I USED TO BE A NICE GUY!!!"

I'll never forget his face, his voice, and his message. What he was saying was he went into the service as "Person A" and came out the other end as "Person B." He had no idea who he was anymore when he came home. The things that used to give him joy no longer did. He had visceral combat triggers galore. He hadn't really slept in years. He had a violent temper. He was emotionally numb. He couldn't concentrate at work which cost him job after job. He was moody, and had nightly, violent nightmares. He slept with a loaded .45 under his pillow. He checked his perimeter at all hours of the day and night, until he lost his home, and there was no perimeter to check anymore. And his family deserted him.

I am certain you all have heard of such horror stories, and perhaps a few of you have experienced them and survived. Folks, it happens DAILY.

I believe the first step in relief of PTSD and suicide prevention is to encourage each other to open our mouths and say something. I cannot make it any simpler: open your mouth and the pain comes out.

So many have told me as the years have gone by how they hate to ask for help. It's understandable: it's how we were trained, to think of everyone else first and ourselves last, anything else is a sign of weakness: we don't want to be "that guy/gal."

But I vigorously submit there is absolutely NO DIFFERENCE between calling in reinforcements on the battlefield or at home. In either arena, this fight is won by the team, and not by individuals.

So many have said to me as the years have gone by that if approached by someone in emotional agony that they don't know what to say or do. I believe the person coming to you already knows your skill set and will ask for help based on that skill set. All they want is to be heard, which is to say in plain English, use your ears more than your mouth. Ask an occasional question gently, such as "how can I be of most help to you right now, or do you need me to just listen? Tell me."

Voyageurs let us make this happen. Remember from the Talmud "He who saves a single life saves the world entire."

Doc

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Fellow of the American Board of Clinical Psychology—Fellow of the American Board of Counseling Psychology

Thank you Doc! - L'Editeur

Robert F. Kennedy's Most Important Speech on the Vietnam War

The Vietnam War was an era that was marred by violence and unrest and was encapsulated by the voices expressing support as well as those demonstrating militant protest. On March 29th, we again celebrate or better said, recognize, Vietnam War Veterans Day. A lot has been written and spoken about the war. At Robert Kennedy's February 8, 1968 appearance in Chicago, he decided to evaluate the meaning of the Tet Offensive. Being a Vietnam Veteran myself and having interacted with many vets over the years, opinions are as diverse as Senator Kennedy's. We may not agree with the following words, but much of it has become true. This was written at the time of the Tet Offense in 1968.

..."No one can predict the exact shape or outcome of the battles now in progress, in Saigon or at Khe Sanh. Let us pray that we will succeed at the lowest possible cost to our young men. But whatever their outcome, the events of the last two weeks have taught us something. For the sake of those young Americans who are fighting today, if for no other reason, the time has come to take a new look at the war in Vietnam, not by cursing the past but by using it to illuminate the future.

For years we have been told that the measure of our success and progress in Vietnam was increasing security and control for the population. Now we have seen that none of the population is secure and no area is under sure control.

This has not happened because our men are not brave or effective, because they are. It is because we have misconceived the nature of the war: It is because we have sought to resolve by military might a conflict whose issue depends upon the will and conviction of the South Vietnamese people. It is like sending a lion to halt an epidemic of jungle rot.

This misconception rests on a second illusion—the illusion that we can win a war which the South Vietnamese cannot win for themselves. You cannot expect people to risk their lives and endure hardship unless they have a stake in their own society. They must have a clear sense of identification with their own government, a belief they are participating in a cause worth fighting for...

The third illusion is that the unswerving pursuit of military victory, whatever its cost, is in the interest of either ourselves or the people of Vietnam. For the people of Vietnam, the last three years have meant little but horror. Their tiny land has been devastated by a weight of bombs and shells greater than Nazi Germany knew in the Second World War. We have dropped 12 tons of bombs for every square mile in North and South Vietnam. Whole provinces have been substantially destroyed. More than two million South Vietnamese are now homeless refugees...

These are some of the illusions which may be discarded if the events of last week are to prove not simply a tragedy, but a lesson: a lesson which carries with it some basic truths. First, that a total military victory is not within sight or around the corner; that, in fact, it is probably beyond our grasp; and that the effort to win such a victory will only result in the further slaughter of thousands of innocent and helpless people—a slaughter which will forever rest on our national conscience.

That the pursuit of such a victory is not necessary to our national interest, and is even damaging that interest.

That the progress we have claimed toward increasing our control over the country and the security of the population is largely illusory.

That the central battle in this war cannot be measured by body counts or bomb damage, but by the extent to which the people of South Vietnam act on a sense of common purpose and hope with those that govern them. That the current regime in Saigon is unwilling or incapable of being an effective ally in the war against the Communists.

That a political compromise is not just the best path to peace, but the only path, and we must show as much willingness to risk some of our prestige for peace as to risk the lives of young men in war.

That the best way to save our most precious stake in Vietnam—the lives of our soldiers—is to stop the enlargement of the war, and that the best way to end casualties is to end the war. Our nation must be told the truth about this war, in all its terrible reality, both because it is right—and because only in this way can any Administration rally the public confidence and unity for the shadowed days which lie ahead.

No war has ever demanded more bravery from our people and our Government—not just bravery under fire or the bravery to make sacrifices, but the bravery to discard the comfort of illusion, to do away with false hopes and alluring promises..."

Newsletter Filler, Trivia or Just for Fun!



The Vietnam War is known as "The American War" in Vietnam.

Vietnam remains an authoritarian country today. And it's communist, too, but in name only. Things have changed a lot over the last 40 years. According to a recent Pew Research survey, Vietnam today has the single most positive views on capitalism of any country, with an enthusiasm that is even more widespread than in Germany, India, or the United States. T

Every heard of Fort Moore? Here's the latest list of major military base name changes...

- Fort Benning, Ga. renamed Fort Moore after Lt. Gen. Hal and Julia Moore.
- Fort Bragg, N.C. renamed Fort Liberty after the value of liberty.
- Fort Gordon, Ga. renamed Fort Eisenhower after General of the Army Dwight Eisenhower.
- Fort A.P. Hill, Va. renamed Fort Walker after Dr. Mary Walker.
- Fort Hood, Texas renamed Fort Cavazos after Gen. Richard Cavazos.

In Vietnam, anybody had to burn "shit"? "Our human waste was valuable to the Vietnamese, and we were burning it for many reasons. In some isolated areas, the GI's had to do it. Burning our shit actually deprived local farmers of valuable fertilizer, used large amounts of gasoline and diesel fuel, served as punishment duty and fouled the Vietnamese sky with a dense, dark black smoke. In Vietnam, human waste was a staple fertilizer. Ours was much richer than that of locals, and each of us out-produced even the best-fed farmer. We could have auctioned it off and made some cash for Uncle Sam or simply given it away.

Our food, anti-malaria pills and native bacteria conspired together so that each man, in a firebase averaging 140-200 men, had diarrhea most days. It was a very popular place, creating a significant amount of waste. Pulling these waste-laden cans from under the "thinking platform" slopped the contents around and often onto the person pulling them. The cans to be burned would be half full of a dense liquid with floating solids and a layer of scum at the bottom. The burn location needed to be away from what we fondly called the crapper, so heat from the fire did not stop others from answering nature's call, many of which were emergencies.

The process of burning our shit required us to use empty replacement cans, heavy rubber gloves, the aforementioned gasoline and diesel fuel, some long stir sticks and a stick wrapped with toilet paper on one end, long enough to ignite the mix from a safe distance. Too much gasoline in the combustion mix could toss the contents a good distance when ignited – never a good thing. Everything had to be present and right to excel at this job!



Anyway, before one of the cans was put under the door, some diesel fuel was added to dampen the odor, repel flies and allow the crap to marinate in a combustible liquid. The diesel soaked into the solids and made the next burn go faster. Once ignited in the actual burn stage of the process, the mixture was stirred and more diesel fuel added as the fire lessoned; gasoline was very dangerous to add but necessary at times. The burning cans also needed to be spaced far enough apart to allow a cool space to move around while stirring. Time passed slowly, and it seemed the contents would never burn away, but hours later a dark, dry residue would be all that remained. After the can cooled, the contents were dumped into a hole and covered. Everyone on that duty knew that a change of clothes and a shower were a must before being welcomed by others.

Like many things in Vietnam, the two-to-four hour job of burning was weather dependent. Rain, of course, slowed the burn, while wind could whip the smoke up. But it was a no-win situation because if it were too calm, the smoke hovered over the base. Its black particles clung to anything they touched, especially the lucky GI burning it, and its odor was horrific." From Vietnamsoldier.com L'Editeurs note—I only had to do once as an E-4, my orders came thru for E-5 and then starting pulling guard duty 24 on 24 off.





Back to Business Cards

Business cards have been around for a while and we bring them up once in a while. Business cards should be considered an integral part of your personal public relations. Business cards are a type of card used in organizational settings to introduce oneself. It can be a traditional business card or a more modern version. A business card is what you hand to someone who is new to who you are and what you represent, what you give to someone who does not know you or what you leave behind after meeting someone.

A business card is a perfect lead in for your storytelling and naturally ambassadorship—a perfect PR networking tool.

Business cards display a user's personal and professional credentials which helps build trust and credibility between you, La Societe and those who may be interested in us—great tool to pitch yourself and the Forty and Eight!

Designing a business card is not rocket science but it does take some time, planning, and things to consider. A good way to start is by using a template or simply using the card available in our emblem sales.

As a minimum, this contact information should be on your business card...

First and last name; Job title or position; Email address; Phone number; Business or personal address; Website

Social media can be considered. Look at including a QR Code on your card for quick access to websites and social media.

We've said it before to try and keep it simple. It can be tempting to go all-out but your card might become a cluttered mess with your important contact info lost in images, logos and pictures. So some design creativity might need to be considered. Readability should be the focus on your card.

Incorporate Forty and Eight colors and logos. Consider Avery Business Card stock and print your own. A simple nice profile head-shot might look great! Seek brand symbolism for La Societe.

Fonts are important!!! Serif vs. Sans Serif for Business Cards

When exploring fonts, one of your first choices is whether to use a serif or a sans serif font. Serif fonts have "serifs," or small decorative lines at the ends of letters. Serif fonts are traditional and promote an image of respectability.

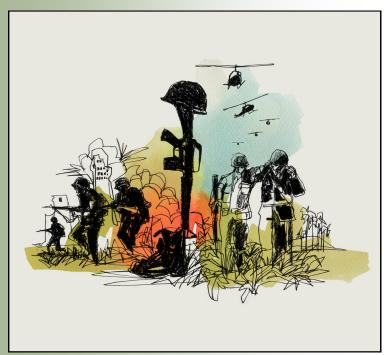
Sans serif fonts, on the other hand, don't have those small strokes, and the widths of letters are typically more uniform. This gives sans serif fonts a modern feel.

Typically, sans serif fonts are a useful choice for business cards, as they are easier to understand at a glance. They are the perfect choice when you're looking for a font that's sleek, clean, and easy to read.

Consider these three. Remember that the font you choose should align with your identity and the tone you want to convey.

- Times New Roman—A classic serif font that exudes elegance and sophistication. It has been a popular choice in professional settings for many years.
- Helvetica: A versatile sans-serif font that is clean, modern, and easy to read. It's widely used in various design contexts, including business cards.
- Arial: A straightforward sans-serif font that works well for business cards. It's legible and widely available on
 most systems.
 The above ideas were gathered from a variety of web and Internet sources.

POSTER OF THE MONTH

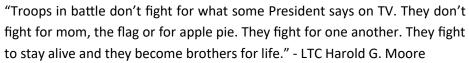




"The strongest people are not those who show strength in front of us but those who win battles we know nothing about..."

L'Editeurs Back Page







APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP TO THE BLUE					INITIAL MEMBERSHIP		
CHEVALIER	S						
NAME:					40ET8 MEMBER	LA FEMMES MEMBER	NON MEMBER SUPPORTER
ADDRESS:	STREET:			CITY:		ST:	ZIP:
PHONE:				EMAIL:			
New members: \$15.00 Renewals: \$2.00 PUFL: \$65.00 for new members \$50.00 members							
Checks payable to P.A.L.S Remit to:							
Renslar R. Keagle, 8714 Marble Drive, El Paso, TX 79904							
P.A.L.S./Blue Chevalier dues are annual from January to December							
P.A.L.S. APPLICATION—RENEWAL or NEW MEMBER							
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An Unremembered Sailor

James Elliott "Willy" Williams—In the history of the United States Navy, only seven men have earned all of the big three valor awards: Medal of Honor, Navy Cross, and Silver Star. Six were World War II officers, including one aviator. The seventh was James Elliott "Willy" Williams – considered the most decorated enlisted man in the history of the Navy.

Williams, a Cherokee Indian, was born November 13, 1930, in Fort Mill, South Carolina. In August 1947, at the age of 16, Williams enlisted in the United States Navy with a fraudulent birth certificate. He completed basic training at Naval Training Center San Diego. He served for almost twenty years, retiring on April 26, 1967, as a Boatswain's Mate First Class (BM1). During those years, he served in both the Korean War and Vietnam War.



During the Korean War, was stationed aboard the Destroyer USS Douglas H Fox (DD-779) from November 1950 to June 1952. He was detached off the Destroyer and operated off the coast of Korea by taking raiding parties into North Korea on small boats. From 1953 to 1965 he served tours on a variety of naval vessels. Williams Volunteered for Combat Duty in Vietnam. In 1966, with only a year before he was to retire from the Navy, the burly man, 5-foot-8 and 210 pounds Williams volunteered for combat duty in Vietnam.

Williams arrived in Vietnam in April 1966 as a BM1. He was assigned in May to the River Patrol Force, River Squadron Five, in command of River Patrol Boat 105 (PBR-105). The force's mission was to intercept Viet Cong and North Vietnamese arms shipments, supplies, and personnel on the waterways of South Vietnam's swampy Mekong Delta and to keep innocent boat traffic on the river and canals safe.

On July 1, 1966, Williams led a patrol that came under fire from the Vietcong sampan. His deft maneuvers and accurate fire killed five VC and resulted in the capture of the enemy boat, earning Williams a Bronze Star Medal with a V for Valor. Twenty-two days later his crew captured another sampan, earning Williams a second Bronze Star Medal for Valor. Less than a month later, he received his Silver Star and the first of three Purple Hearts he would eventually receive. On the night of October 31, 1966, Williams was commanding PBR 105 alongside another PBR searching for Viet Cong guerrillas operating in an isolated area of the Mekong Delta.

Suddenly, Viet Cong manning two sampans opened fire on the Americans. While Williams and his men neutralized one sampan, the other one escaped into a nearby canal. The PBRs gave chase and soon found themselves in a beehive of enemy activity as the VC opened fire on them with rocket-propelled grenades and small arms from fortified river bank positions.

Despite three hours of intense combat, Williams' crew received only two casualties—one gunner was shot through the wrist, and Williams himself was wounded by shrapnel. For his conspicuous bravery above and beyond the call of duty he was put in for the Medal of Honor — which he received from President Lyndon B. Johnson on May 14, 1968, during the dedication ceremony of the Pentagon's "Hall of Heroes."

On January 9, 1967, the Navy dredge Jamaica Bay was blown up by mines and PVR-105 arrived to pick up seven of the survivors. Another man was wrapped in the rapidly sinking dredge. Williams dove into the water and, with a rope attached to a nearby tree, pulled clear and obstruction, then swim through a hatch to recover the Sailor. For this, he was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal.

Six days later Williams was wounded while leading a three-boat patrol that interdicted a crossing attempt by three VC heavy weapons companies and 400 fighters. He and his boat accounted for 16 VC killed, 20 wounded in the destruction of nine sampans and junks. Williams was awarded the Navy Cross and his third Purple Heart.

In the fall of 1999, he was in Florence, South Carolina where he suffered a heart attack and died on the Navy's birthday, October 13th. He was buried with full military honors at the Florence National Cemetery in Florence, South Carolina. The procession of dignitaries at his funeral included seven Medal of Honor recipients and state and national legislators. •