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people that we need to make sure us Vietnam Veterans grew up in that we always honor. Most of a family that we had a mom and

dad who went through World War II. I think that's our saving grace as a generation - we saw people that survived the Depression and survived World War II, and we still have their values."

Clack spoke to what he saw as an erosion of those values in today's political environment, and how many veterans are on the frontlines of faith and upholding the Second Amendment.

"There are four different Walls that travel America," said Clack. "They're going to be, in this year alone, in over 420 communities across America. I had the opportunity to have this very wall back in Conyers in May, and that was my fifth time bringing it to Metro Atlanta. And each time is a very unique experience."

"You learn different stories, you meet different people. It's phenomenal. Chapter 1101 is to be commended for all that they had to do to make this a reality. You're being commended for being a part of it, and what you're going to do for the citizens here today. They're going to have an opportunity 24/7 to view that wall."

The story told by The Moving Wall is one of both

historical and cultural importance. According to Clack, there are 1,583 Georgians who served in the Vietnam War listed on The Wall, including the names of 30 still missing and 20 that were repatriated after having been prisoners of war.

Each and every one of those Georgians is part of a larger narrative, one that is often overshadowed by the negative public opinion of the war at the time.

"Georgia has always played a role in the defense of this country, but I want to remind we Vietnam Veterans - and I've been saying this since the day I got back - we actually won every battle we fought in Vietnam," said Clack. "We actually stopped the killing fields while we were there. We actually gave the Pacific Rim countries time to develop into the free societies that they are. We met every goal assigned to us, we eliminated the Viet Cong, we stopped the NVA while we were there."

"That's an awesome heritage, folks, that we accomplished, and sometimes it gets forgotten. We came home and we became fathers. We became people that got involved in our communities. We became elected officials, and



Crowd shows reverence and respect for our Flag at opening ceremony

we got involved in everything around our society, and we make a difference."

The ceremony closed with the North Georgia Honor Guard's Firing Squad, followed by a live playing of "Taps" and the Retiring of the Colors.

Alongside the hundreds from around the area in attendance that Thursday was the Union County High School Band, which also

performed the national anthem and a selection of service songs called "Salute to America's Finest."

Local and area government leaders in attendance were Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley, Union County Sheriff Mack Mason, Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall and Georgia Sen. Steve Gooch.

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most of the guests of The Wall, and the tens of thousands of names told best the story of the war.

The four men from Union County whose names appear on The Wall - Roger Ray Brown, Herbert Carson Davis, Anthony Edwin Elliott and John Henry Woody - speak for the very personal loss experienced by the community on the home front.

But with loss comes a chance to learn and grow, something acknowledged by local Vietnam Veteran Roy Hamby, who served 23 years in the Army, followed by 23 years in the Georgia Department of Veterans Services before retiring a decade ago.

"I think it's a good education," said Hamby of The Wall, who served two and a half years in Vietnam, from 1966-1969. "A lot of our younger people in school may not know what Vietnam was all about. And the most salient point would be that it's a healing process for the Vietnam Veterans who never got a Welcome Home. This is welcome home to all the Vietnam Veterans in this area."

Bringing The Wall to Union County was a massive effort that required countless hours of organization, from raising funds to recruiting volunteers, to getting the location itself ready for the wall.

Union County government made Meeks Park available as the site of The Wall, and had electric and fiber optic utilities installed at the site to accommodate the demands that hosting an around-the-clock memorial would create.

The Home Depot of Blairsville proved instrumental in preparing and installing the necessary components to make The Wall as accessible to the public as possible, and the Combat Veterans

Motorcycle Group volunteered to escort The Wall into the park for its installation.

Union County first responders, like the fire department and sheriff's office, helped to direct traffic and run security for The Wall.

Volunteers from the community, as well as the many members of the Blairsville Chapter 1101 of the Vietnam Veterans of America under the leadership of Chapter President Mike Priven, staffed the event, ensuring that no matter the time of day or night, people were available to welcome visitors to The Wall.

Along with a Moving Wall Memorial Keepsake booklet containing an abundance of information about The Wall, the war, Agent Orange and much, much more, volunteers at The Wall made available printouts of names for people to make rubbings from the wall.

Each printout contained the biographical information of the service member whose name could be found on the wall, as well as a special place to complete the rubbing for a personalized keepsake.

The county even installed a flagpole to be situated behind the memorial, and the flag that flew there was first flown in the U.S. Capital.

From monetary donations to simple donations of time spent volunteering at the wall, a nearly countless number of the community pledged their support in making this Welcome Home a reality.

And even the rainy start of the weekend could not deter the many thousands who spent time at The Moving Wall in Union County.

Luther Hyatt, VVA Chapter 1101 member, welcomed Wall visitors with umbrella in hand on Saturday, Oct. 10.

"This is just a mild, slight rain," said Hyatt, who was in Da Nang, Vietnam, in 1966 and 1967. "During the monsoons, it was just constant rain, full force, all the time. We didn't have umbrellas, just ponchos and helmets."

Hyatt moved to Ellijay about a year ago and joined the Blairsville VVA chapter six months later.

"The support we're getting, even though it seems like it's 50 years late, it's appreciated now," said Hyatt.

Brenda Todd drove up from Woodstock to visit The Wall with her granddaughter. Todd's husband, Vietnam Veteran David Todd of the 101st Airborne, passed away two years ago from lung cancer due to exposure to Agent Orange.

Todd first saw The Moving Wall 28 years ago with her husband in Comer, and visiting The Wall again was emotional for her, and she was glad to be accompanied by her 14-year-old granddaughter.

"The last time I saw it, it was with him, and it was kind of a somber moment then, and it's brought back some memories today," said Todd. "I would just like to welcome home all of the vets that are still here."

Georgia Sen. Steve Gooch, who attended the opening ceremony for The Moving Wall on Thursday, Oct. 8, walked through the memorial with an air of reflection. This was the first time The Wall had visited his district.

"It's an honor for me to be here, and to be reminded of the great sacrifice that so many people gave their ultimate life to protect our freedom and preserve our future liberties here in America," said Sen. Gooch. "It's sobering to be in the midst of all these heroes, and the 58,307 names that are on this wall - we owe them everything."

Union-Towns Volunteers for the Handicapped, Inc. Pecan Sale

The Union-Towns Volunteers for the Handicapped, Inc. will be doing their fundraiser again this year with those fresh, right off the packers line, pecans. When you invest in these tasty pecans, you are helping the special needs people put a smile on their faces as they enjoy the activities that we provide with your help.

For your convenience any of our officers listed below would be glad to take your order and give you information. Liz Franklin, 706-994-3360; Jim Miller, 706-896-9059; Annette McTaggart, 706-994-3808; Jo Ann Strickland, 706-781-5687.



The Night Crew: Kirby Bowron, Spence Davis and Ray Tiburski...all Vietnam Veterans, guard the wall and welcome nighttime visitors

Union County Vietnam War Casualties

GARY R CARPENTER · WILLIAM L DAZEY Jr · ANTHONY E ELLIOTT · ROBERT W FORKL · N · JEHUVAH GRAVES · R

Anthony E. Elliott

BY C VINSON · PAUL · JOHN H WOODY · DUNG · BENJIMAN · 7 · JOHN F McDER

John H. Woody

E MITCHELL · EDW · E H WALKER · WILBER · ROGER R BROWN · T · OTT · WALTER H KOSK · F WELCH Jr · HA

Roger R. Brown

JIMFIELD · ROBERT F B · KENNETH L CRYSEL · HERBERT C DAVIS · J · ON · VERNON H LACK · SPENCER S FREESTON

Herbert C. Davis

Charles F. Lance and Preston H. Patterson, while killed in service, are not listed on the wall.



One of many rubbings of the name of fallen heroes made at the wall