

LETTERS TO LZ LAMBEAU

The following is a sampling of e-mails sent to the LZLambeau.org website and to Wisconsin Public Television staffers following the LZ Lambeau event in Green Bay. We have included both the thank you's and the criticism for your consideration. Names and contact information have been omitted.

To all that had ANY part in the event, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!
It was done with class, dignity and honor. I can't tell you how much the event helped heal a lot of deep wounds.
thank you again from the bottom of my heart. Co. D 2/5 1st Air Cav Div. RVN 67-68

I came on Saturday in honor of my late husband who died 5 years ago of cancer due to exposure to chemicals in Viet Nam. I know that he would have thoroughly enjoyed the camaraderie as well as the welcoming atmosphere of your event. The thoughtfulness & compassion was very evident. Thank you again for staging such a wonderful event.

I had the privilege of attending and volunteering at the event this past weekend. It was one of the finest experiences that I have ever had, and certainly the finest thing that has happened to me as a Vietnam veteran. All other vets that I have spoken with reflect these same sentiments. A very large thank you, to all those who made this event possible.

Thank you for a great weekend. When I was drafted in October 1965 there was approx 40 guys from Wisconsin and we all stayed together. We were sent to Fort Knox, KY. The Army decided to form a new Light Infantry Brigade called the 196th LIB. They flew 2,000 guys from Fort Knox and another 2,000 from Fort Dix, NJ, and sent us too Fort Devans, MA. All the guys from Wisconsin were placed in F Troop, 17th Cav. We stayed together for 1 year 7 months. The last five months over half of the 196th was sent to other units. The reason was we shipped (30 days on a boat) to Vietnam as a unit and we were not able to leave together.

This weekend we ran into another guy some of us had not seen since 1967. I was looking at the giant map on the ground to see if anyone signed it from F Troop. Sure enough right next to me was another F Trooper. I asked him what years he served and if he was with anyone. He told me who he was looking for, and that is when I told him my name. I took him over to the table my friends were at, and Gary.. didn't recognize Bob until he spoke. Gary and Bob were on the same gun jeep in 1966 - 1967.

Thank you again for a great weekend. I only bad thing we lost money at Oneida.

If you could post or e-mail this out it is the town chairman's e-mail from freedom,wi they deserve some thanks for the fantastic turn out they had there during the ride into lambeau his e-mail is tmaass@townoffreedom.org , thank you.

---From the organizer of the "Ambassador" volunteers, the 'gate-greeters.'
[My wife] & I had a wonderful time, even while working it. I met so many nice people who had volunteered to be greeters. One person...was scheduled for a couple of shifts Friday and had such a good time, she hung out at the Oneida entrance for a while Saturday and Sunday as well. I just had to go out and thank her a couple of times.

Two veterans in particular were really moved by the experience of being there.... was shot in the jaw in 1970 when we crossed the border into Cambodia. For many years he would not talk about his time in Vietnam or about his injuries. [They]started to open up during the weekend and he was very moved by the whole event.

The other veteran was [a friend] from Hayward. ... when he came home from Vietnam, he didn't get any kind of welcome at all. Even his father who he said was a cruel man told him he had 6 weeks to get a job and move out of the house. He was a very angry and bitter man for many years. It has been just recently that he started going to a VA center and starting talking about his experiences. [He] was very moved by the ceremony and by the National Guard saluting us.

[My wife's] observations- she said when she was at the map, she heard stories from several veterans and others were listening to them or hugging them-a lot of tears there. The map was a huge success. She also noticed many of the veterans who were missing arms or legs or were in wheelchairs-they didn't look out of place, they were welcomed and talked to as brother veterans, not as someone who had a disability.

Thank you for all you did... I will never forget this past weekend.

Hello

I just had a call at the front desk of the Chamber of Commerce and the gentleman and veteran wanted to pay a huge compliment to the City of Green Bay and everyone that had anything to do with LZ Lambeau. He and his wife attended and they live in the Lake Geneva area. He felt very fortunate to be a part of such a wonderful, organized, and thoughtful event.

He gave a big Thank you to Green Bay, Lambeau Field, and all the event planners. I told him I would pass on his kind words.

It is calls like that, that make my job a joy!

My wife and I spent Friday and Saturday at LZ Lambeau Welcome Home. It was a humbling and rewarding experience. I think the comment that summed it up the best was made by another Vietnam Veteran when he said, "We went over alone, we came home alone, but here we are all finally together." There were a lot of tears, a lot of smiles and a lot of hand shakes with fellow Vietnam Veterans. Thanks to everyone that made this possible.

US Army - Vietnam July 1968-July 1969

Thanks to the sponsors, volunteers etc.

The weekend was a big success, even with a wet ride on Friday.

all the families and veterans , that we know that attended enjoyed and were educated about things they had heard about and now can understand.

Hats off to the originator or the idea. A very welcome idea - long overdue but accomplished.

Congratulations! What a wonderful weekend! Thank you all for your vision, your hard work, and your attention to the needs and desires of a diverse audience. It couldn't have been better. Best to you all.

I thought it was awesome. I didn't get to be there in person, but I did what it on TV last night. Through the tears I watched and thank you for all you are doing thought LZ Lambeau. I do want to comment on the section of the program where the soldiers were all around the field, did the about face and saluted the people in the seats. My first thought as they did that , as a veteran of tow wars Desert Storm and Iraq, It appeared to me , as the soldiers did the about face to face the stands to render salute, they first have faced the empty white chairs, saluted, then did an about face and saluted the people/soldiers. veterans in the stands. It looked to me seeing it the first time, like the soldiers turning their back to the empty seats for the Vietnam vets. . Was the only sad moment I noticed. If I felt that way , I'm sure others that worn the uniform did too. Just the only thing i saw I would add to this great event. Thanks again

First off, Thank You all for the organizing and accomplishment of this event! As a Marine Viet Vet, it was comforting to finally hear something from outside the ranks. We never asked for it, always have missed it, might have gone on another 40 years without it, but most of us DO appreciate it. I won't sully my own thanks now by complaining, but there are curiosities.

Jim [Northrup] was great. His poetry was wonderful. Beyond that, I've always been impressed with what I consider the basics of Native American humor: dry, self-deprecating, ironic and incisively honest/true.

Kudos also on the moderated panel discussion by the women vets. Marvelous!

Although I'm Vietnam era (USAF, 1962-66) and participated as a volunteer, a HS classmate and distant MN relative were KIA.

It was a very rewarding three days. Thanks again for all your efforts.

We just wanted to say THANK YOU for the outstanding Welcome Home event we attended over the weekend. My husband is a Vietnam era vet and my brother-in-law a Vietnam vet. We were very moved by the outstanding job everyone did to make this weekend so special. The Saturday evening event was incredible and will stay with us always. It was done with such dignity and respect. We shed many tears this weekend for all vets, but they are good, healing tears. THANK YOU to everyone involved and the city of Green Bay for hosting this warm "Welcome Home."

THANK YOU for the LZ Lambeau event as a Viet Nam vet I appreciated all that was done for this event. I would like to see this as an annual event honoring ALL veterans no matter when they served be it WW 2 to the modern Iraq/Afghanistan wars near Armed Forces Day each year. Jim Northrup was GREAT!! Thank you again

I had the privilege of attending and volunteering at the event this past weekend. It was one of the finest experiences that I have ever had, and certainly the finest thing that has happened to me as a Vietnam veteran. All other vets that I have spoken with reflect these same sentiments. A very large thankyou, to all those who made this event possible.

I want to sincerely thank you for organizing such a thoughtful & meaningful event. I came on Saturday in honor of my late husband who died 5 years ago of cancer due to exposure to chemicals in Viet Nam. I know that he would have thoroughly enjoyed the camaraderie as well as the welcoming atmosphere of your event. The thoughtfulness & compassion was very evident. Thank you again for staging such a wonderful event.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for LZLambeau. While at the ceremony this poem was pulled out of my mind; HONOR I am stronger than anger. I am stronger than hatred. I am stronger than jealousy. I am stronger than my ego. Fear doesn't know me. But I am not stronger than pride. I have done my duty. Just don't get in my face. Many have asked me to publish it. thank you.

Hello to all of the organizers of LZ Lambeau.

I just returned to my home, on the West side of the State, after riding in the Honor Ride from La Crosse to Green Bay, and spending the weekend. And I have to tell all of you, THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! Please give anyone you know who helped with this project a big hug from me.

I was very reluctant to get involved with this gathering. I'm currently seeing a DVA counselor for some Vietnam related issues that will not go away for me, forty years later. And, I was afraid to pack up with a bunch of veterans, full of testosterone and war stories. On top of that, I don't like to ride my motorcycle in a big pack of people I don't know, because I have seen what can happen; and I've dumped a big bike hard myself, and am still dealing with the injuries from that.

So, when it was raining hard, Friday morning, and I pulled into the parking lot at the Veteran's Memorial Stadium, in La Crosse, to hear from a volunteer that we were going to be delayed a little bit, because "we already have a few bikes down on the highway", I had to wonder if I was going to regret my decision to become involved.

But, hours later, when we pulled out of Appleton with all of the riders we had picked up there, and started riding through miles and miles of people, standing in the rain to wave, and cheer, and cry with us, I didn't care what else happened to me. I still get choked up thinking about it. After we got to Green Bay, I spent two days walking around the Stadium area, talking to veterans, and joking about some of the things that were so painful in the past. My cheeks still hurt from it. And the program on Saturday night was the icing on the cake. Especially the Rolling Thunder ceremony. It awakened feelings in me that I had forgotten for a long time. So, thank you! Please forward this on to anyone who helped, so they can feel my love and appreciation for a job well done. I'll never forget it.

I know you are all tired, and ready to move on. But, I would like to encourage whoever has the email list for this site to hang onto it. Because there may come a time when we could all communicate again for the good of veterans. And there may be a need too great to ignore. Please let me know if I can help. If I can, I will.

I will make this short and sweet since I know how busy you must be. JOB WELL DONE. Please thank any and everyone for the excellent work that went into the project. In the 41 years since I returned from my RVN tour, I have never felt so honored. Again, thank you.

My husband of 39 years died in November as a result of agent orange in Viet Nam. Both legs were amputated, after an attempted bypass that resulted with an implanted heart pump and an eventual heart transplant a year later. He died one month after the heart transplant. A condition call ischemic heart disease was said to have been a direct result of agent orange. Our 15 year old daughter and I have been devastated financially. I have lost my job carry for him in the last year and now must sell the house David and I lived in for over 35 years. We have raised six children in our home and now our lovely home on the bay will be sold for a loss, and hopes for owning a home unlikely. It's a sad legacy for such a decorated veteran and beautiful person as David. I would have liked him to attend LZ Lambeau, for this belated thank-you. Thank-you for listening.

I was asked the significance of the ride from La Crosse to Green Bay. After thinking about it a while my answer was; our major means of transportation when a grunt was by air, the motorcycle represents the wind in your face, the noise of the bike the rotor noise and the cooler temperature in the air was cooler than on the ground much like being on a bike. The trip back to base camp is represented by the road trip, riding in formation the way the helicopters flew, the sense of continued danger inherent to fling through enemy areas and the hazards to riding your bike poses many hazards as well. The landing at the LZ was the end of the mission and time to relax and talk about the mission, friends lost and screw up that were made. But a time to reflect on friends and family and what we were going to do back in the world. So if anyone asks, it isn't just a group of motorcycle making noise, causing traffic jams for the pleasure of us riders, it represents the ride home for all of us.