

Vietnam

Many questions are unanswered in American's hearts and minds about the war in Vietnam. Nancy Eckert, RN (LVH's Neuroscience Research Nurse Coordinator), was given the opportunity to answer some of her own questions and those of a generation too young to remember. Eckert served as a combat nurse at the 93rd Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh, Vietnam, from 1966 to 1967.



Vietnam Women's Memorial taken by Beth Hall, RN

Recently, she attended the unveiling of the Vietnam Women's Memorial in Washington, D.C. accompanied by her 19 year old daughter, an acting troupe from Cedar Crest College, two reporters and a photo-

grapher. "How often do you attend the unveiling of a national monument in your lifetime?" Eckert said enthusiastically. The monument was dedicated to the memory of 264,000 women who volunteered to serve in the Vietnam war. The monument, created by Glenna Goodacre, depicts a woman holding a soldier in her arms while other women beside her raise their arms and eyes to the sky. "The monument is so lifelike that you are almost waiting to see it breathe" Eckert said. "And it was created so that it does not favor any one person or branch of the service."

Of the 264,000 women who served in Vietnam approximately 7,000 were nurses. Only one nurse, Sharon Lane from Ohio, was killed in the line of duty. The acting troupe from Cedar Crest College who performed a play at the college called "A Piece of My Heart" paid tribute to Sharon Lane. They laid an autographed program from their performance next to her name and picture at the Vietnam Memorial. Eckert served as technical advisor for this soon-to-be-adjudicated stage production. It is based on the story of 6 women who served as nurses, Red Cross volunteers and entertainers during the war.

"Everyone looks to the monument to see the woman they remember from Vietnam," Eckert said. Women served as Red Cross volunteers, clerical workers, journalists, entertainers, nurses, flight attendants, doctors and missionaries. "Women were not housed in safe zones as previously reported," Eckert said. "They were in the middle of the war like everyone else, because there were no safe zones in Vietnam."

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I witness your leave, and as you go
I have this need to let you know
The many thoughts that fill my head
So little time, so much to be said.

As you go off to fight for peace
I pray that soon this war will cease
Yes, to all things a time and a season
Though we may question rhyme and reason.

So as you go, keep this in mind
From all of us you left behind
We applaud your effort — courageous and brave
Your own life at risk, another's to save.

And while you're gone, though we're apart
These thoughts and words are in my heart
Steadfast like the sun and moon
Come Home Safe, Come Home Soon.

And now my friend, I deliver my thanks
You're home at last on familiar banks
Sincere thanks I offer, humble and true
Thanking God each day for Americans like you.

*Joan Collette, RN
Written for Desert Storm employees.
1992*

PersonalizATIONS (from page 7)

Kim Hitchings, RN, Professional Development - Paper Presentations titled "A Decentralized Peer Reward and Recognition Program" and "A Preceptorship Model: Strategies to Achieve Success"; 2nd Annual Staff Development Conference, Duke University, Durham, NC.



Debra Jean Leaswitch, RN; Cheryl Tyler, RN; Deborah Swavely, RN.

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Eckert's reaction to the unveiling of the monument sparked memories from her days in Vietnam, and enabled her to share her piece of history. For her daughter and the students from Cedar Crest College, Nancy Eckert viewed this day as one of "coming full circle" and the "passing on of history." She was able to share a piece of herself with those who have now become a "piece of her own heart."

Postscript: Nancy Eckert says that she has retired from the public eye since her day at the monument's unveiling was covered by the Morning Call and the Washington Post, AND after she served as technical advisor for "A Piece of My Heart," AND after she gave the keynote address at both the POW-MIA Recognition Ceremony and the Memorial Day Ceremony held at Bethlehem Steel, AND after her involvement in the Vietnam Veterans Post 415! ...And now that Nancy was recently selected as one of six coordinators nationwide whose job is to maintain the beauty and history of the Vietnam Women's Memorial, it promises to be a busy retirement! Congratulations Nancy! This is only the beginning...

*Roberta Hower, RN
- Special Care Unit*

Mary Kinneman, RN, Senior Vice President - 1) Paper Presentation titled "Merger Madness"; Trends in Critical Care Nursing, Philadelphia, PA. and 2) Presentation titled "Megatrends"; Cedar Crest College junior and senior student body.

Virginia Kovalovich, RN, Director, OR and Jody Porter, RN, Administrator - Poster Presentation titled "Work Redesign in the Perioperative Setting: A Multitasking Approach to Patient Care"; Nursing Economics Conference - New Health Care Realities: Options and Opportunities for Nursing, Washington, DC.

Karen Schaefer, RN, Allentown College of St. Frances de Sales, Deborah Swavely, RN, Patient Education, Debra Jean Leaswitch, RN, Home Care and Cheryl Tyler, RN, 3-C - Research titled "Factors Affecting Life-Style Changes Post Coronary Angioplasty"; Poster Presentation, ANA Council of Nurse Researchers: 1993 Scientific Sessions, Washington DC; Paper Presentation, Teacher, Practitioner, Researcher 3rd Annual Research Conference, Bethlehem, PA.

RepresentATIONS

Christine M. Faller, RN, Staffing and Louise Oswald, RN, Director, ICU are serving as Vice President and Treasurer, respectively, of the Mu Omicron Chapter (Allentown College of St. Frances de Sales) of Sigma Theta Tau, International.

Ginny Kovalovich, RN, Director, Operating Room provided review sessions for perioperative nurses preparing for certification as OR nurses.

Jody Porter, RN, Administrator, Patient Care Services is representing Region 1 as a member of the Association of Operating Room Nurses National Legislative Committee.

Kim S. Hitchings, RN

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Mary Kinneman, RN, Senior Vice President, Patient Care Services

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