



City of El Centro
1275 W. Main Street
El Centro, CA. 92243

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall Comes to El Centro

El Centro, CA – January 27, 2020 – The City of El Centro is proud to announce that the 2020 Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall will be hosted in Bucklin Park. Since 2009 the Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall has made its way through many locations in California. The “Wall” is a half-scale replica of the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, DC. The Wall is engraved with over 58,276 service members who were killed in Vietnam from November 1, 1955 until May 15, 1975.

The Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall is cared for by Point Man Antelope Valley (PMAV) a veterans’ outreach organization that ministers to veterans of all wars. Mr. Thomas Henderson, Point Man from VFW Post 9305 in El Centro is spearheading the project for the Walls’ arrival to El Centro. This project has been a labor of love for Henderson whom himself served in Vietnam. “The Mobile Vietnam Memorial wall offers a variety of opportunities for reflection by the residents of Imperial County says Henderson “For veterans, it is a chance to render respects to comrades in arms, some of whom we knew personally. To the families of those that fell, it is an opportunity to connect with their loved ones that have passed. For those that struggled with the war itself, it represents the closing of a long and difficult chapter in our history.” The Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall also provides a place to educate young people about the war and engage the community. “For those too young to know about the war, it is an opportunity to reflect on the 58,299 American lives lost to that conflict. Each name had a future life that was ended, opportunities that did not occur, and families that were lost or left incomplete. The community will have a chance to understand the price of military conflict, a chance to understand how polices can change communities. Most importantly, it will represent an opportunity for all of us to render our respect to those that answered the call of their nation during that difficult period.” stated Henderson.

The Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall will be in El Centro on March 26 through March 30th, 2020. It will be displayed at Bucklin Park in El Centro located at 1350 S 8th Street. The Wall will have twenty-four hour security and will also have a Point Man Military Guard that will stand by the wall twenty-four hours a day.

There will be a procession through the City of El Centro on March 25th beginning at 9:00 am (see route map). Prior to the Wall’s arrival Mr. Henderson and local VFW 9305 will be looking for volunteers willing to help with numerous tasks involved with the Wall. If you are interested in volunteering your time or would like more information, please visit the City of El Centro’s website at <http://www.cityofelcentro.org/> and click on the link for

the Vietnam War Memorial. In addition, local high schools, SDSU Calxico and Imperial Valley College will be offered an essay contest open to students to write about why Vietnam Veterans should be remembered. The winners will receive a cash prize for \$100.00.

In 2019, Councilman Jason Jackson started a campaign to bring the Mobile Vietnam Veterans Wall to El Centro. "This is an important project for me" states Jackson "I have always had a great deal of respect, pride and enthusiasm for our military. To help bring the Veterans Memorial to Bucklin Park was a big milestone for us as a Council and now the Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall is another accomplishment for our City to help honor our residents that served or are serving now," Jackson stated.

To bring the Wall to El Centro has been a project in the making for over a year. Diligent work has been done by Henderson, the City of El Centro, VFW 9305, the Imperial Valley Breakfast Rotary Club and the Imperial County Veteran's Services to make the Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall a reality. Beside all the funding and logistic arrangements, Mr. Henderson has worked tirelessly to try to find Vietnam veterans or family members living in the county and nearby areas. Social media has been a great source to help connect people to Mr. Henderson.

About The Wall

The concept was first developed in 2005 when a committee celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Palmdale Playhouse was looking for a mobile wall to display at the "Piece of My Heart" play. The play by Shirley Lauro detailed the stories and struggles of six women who served in Vietnam. A decision was made to construct a wall for the play and from there, the rest is history.

It took the PMAV group four years to raise over \$102,000 to fabricate the wall. Signs and Designs, Inc. of Palmdale was integral in the manufacturing and engraving of the wall. Each year since its completion and upon the release of additions and changes to the wall by the Department of Defense, Signs and Designs, Inc continues to update the panels. Local resident Tom Henderson states "The mission of the Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall is to create an experience for all veterans, veteran's families and citizens of Imperial County that will bring to mind the sacrifices made by service members for our communities, county, state and the United States."

Local sponsors for the Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall coming to the Imperial Valley are: The City of El Centro, VFW 9305, the Imperial Valley Breakfast Rotary Club and the Imperial County Veterans Service Office. If you would like to learn more about the Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall you can go to their website at: <https://avwall.org/>

Attachments: Upcoming Events for the Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall
Procession Map

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