

# USS FRANK E. EVANS DD 754

WWII KOREA VIETNAM



## FOOTLOCKER TALK NEWSLETTER NUMBER 94 — THIRD QUARTER 2024

### AHOY SHIPMATES, FAMILY & FRIENDS

In late 2023 Tim Wendler and Steve Kraus reached out to California State Representatives inquiring as to the feasibility of naming a highway or a bridge dedicated to the memory of our “Lost 74” This was done as a test to determine just how difficult it might be to get State approval for such a memorial. To our surprise on 8/13/2024 California Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR-143) PASSED. This measure would designate the interchange at the junction of State Highway Route 710 and State Highway Route 1 in the County of Los Angeles as the USS Frank E Evans Lost 74 Memorial interchange and the bridge on State Highway Route 1 over the Los Angeles River in the County of Los Angeles as the USS Frank E Evans Lost 74 Memorial Bridge. The measure has been sent to the Department of Transportation to determine the cost of appropriate signs showing these special designations and, upon receiving donations from non state sources covering those costs. We have started a campaign to raise funds for this project.

As of 8/6/2024 there's 10 cosponsors for H.R. 3826 - USS Frank E Evans Act. Also, on 7/10/2024 Senator Charles Schumer introduced amendment SA 2207 to Senate Bill S.4638. “INCLUSION ON THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL WALL THE NAMES OF THE LOST CREW MEMBERS OF THE FRANK E EVANS KILLED ON JUNE 3 1969.”

As all of you know by now, Doug Sage had his left toe removed on September 17, 2024 due to complications of diabetes. Doug asked that we send out his sincere thanks, love and appreciation for all the prayers and financial support from the Association. He is behaving himself right now and making his doctor appointments, keep him in your thoughts prayers during this recovery time.

*Steve Kraus*  
Association President

*Terry Vejr*  
Vice President

## IN MEMORIAM



MMFN Aaron "Charlie" Fuchs 1967-69 Survivor, age 75, passed away on 6 August 2024 in Grand Prairie, Texas after a long bout with respiratory problems. His birth name was Aaron but everyone knew him as "Charlie."

He reported for duty on 16 August 1967 just prior to deployment. He immediately became friends with almost everyone on the ship. He was known from time to time to be mischievous, but remembered as a fun loving guy who was bound for bad luck if there was any luck at all. He was a long term member of the association and in his younger years was known for buying a round or two at reunions. He also was remembered for always getting up and speaking at the reunions

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Airman First Class Joe Watt (USAF) age 82 (father of member Lisa Watt and grandfather of members Xiola Watt, Julliette Darcey and Ronan Darling) passed away on 18 July 2024 in Hemet, California. In the last few years Joe battled throat cancer and many other health issues. A military burial took place with friends and family at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Riverside California on 26 August 2024.



Most of you are not aware that Joe was responsible for reaching out to our association to place a memorial tile on American Legion Post 149's Honor and Remembrance Wall in 2010. Little did we know that that tile would draw the interest of a young newspaper reporter (Louise Esola) who would soon write her first book "American Boys." Our Association thanks Joe for his constant support of the USS Frank E. Evans Association and the "Lost 74". Condolences can be sent to his daughter; Lisa Watt via email to: [lisa-janewatt@gmail.com](mailto:lisa-janewatt@gmail.com)



Marianne P. Thibeault wife of shipmate and survivor Bill Thibeault of Norwich Ct, passed away peacefully at home on Friday, August 30, 2024. Marianne was born in Tampa, Fl on December 24, 1952. She was the daughter of the late Edward and Sophie Pisz. Besides her husband Bill she is survived by sisters, Muriel George of Omaha, NE, and Edwina Ross of Norwich, CT, daughter, Stephanie Hyde, her husband Brandon, and grandchildren, Devon and Ashlyn Hyde. Donations may be made in her name to Saint Jude Children's Research Hospital. Celebration Of Life will be on Nov. 2, 2024 from 2 - 6 at the VFW in Uncasville, CT.

### 3 June 2024 lost 74 Memorials

A special “Thank You” goes out to all that helped organize and conduct this years 3 June Memorial Ceremonies for the “Lost 74.” Memorials were held in Fairfax, Virginia, Niobrara, Nebraska, Independence, Missouri and Long Beach, California.



Carol Coulter organized the Virginia ceremony and American Legion Post 177 volunteered their facility. Since it was a nice day outdoors the group decided to take the ceremony outdoors.

In the photo are, L to R: Keith Rines, Dave Turner ( Richard Rines’ son -in-law), FN Richard Rines Survivor, Carol Coulter (Twin sister of YN2 Earl Preston,) Bill Coulter, Amy Turner (Richard Rines’ daughter.)

Under clear sky's at the Mt. Washington Cemetery in Independence, Missouri Friends, Family and Relatives of the Lost gathered to pay tribute to the Lost 74. As they do each year the Washington Cemetery staff readied the grounds and provided shelter and chairs to accommodate our attendees.

Our hats go off the employees at Mt Washington Cemetery and to Ben and Pam Chilcutt for organizing this important event. Please mark your calendars for 2025, Ben & Pam have indicated they will continue to conduct this memorial has long as they are physically able.

More pictures were posted on social media along with a video of parts pf the program.



### 3 June Memorials (continued)



The community of Niobrara turned out in full force for this year's 3 June ceremony. In attendance this year were survivors RD3 Del Francis, SA Terri Vejr and SM2 Steve Kraus.

This was the third year in a row that the town along with other local politicians, friends and family of the lost gathered to honor the Lost 74. Speakers included Dist. 40 Senator Barry DeKay, Mike Cline a retired Navy Seal and Ron Green a Niobrara High School alumni and close friend of the Sage Brothers.

Don Hazlet, Commander of Niobrara VFW Post 4834 organized this year's memorial. In the picture to the left Linda Sage-Vaa and Gregory Allen Sage accept the Gold Star flag.

Under cloudy sky's in Long Beach, California, Survivors, Friends, Family and Relatives of the Lost gathered to hold the annual memorial. Al Collins reported that attendance was a little smaller than normal probably because it was a Monday and many people who normally attend had to work.

Special thanks go out to the Hawthorne JROTC who were the honor guard. The Hawthorne JROTC has been the honor guard for at least the last 20 years. Pete Peters has been the Master of Ceremonies since he started doing these memories in 2005, keep up the good work Pete. As a footnote, Pete now has a board shadow, Casey Sage, who will be following in Pete's shadow and footsteps, learning all the ins and outs of survivor relations.



## **VA UPDATES**

### **Why Your DD214 Is So Important for Veterans Benefits**

**Your military discharge papers are officially known as DD Form 214, or just DD214. All veterans receive this Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty once they are out of the military.**

**In a nutshell, the DD214 is proof of your military service. All branches use this same form. There may be no more important document, as it serves as the key to unlocking benefits of all kinds.**

**Treat your DD214 like gold, as this piece of paper is vital to many aspects of your life in the civilian world.**

### **Why Is a DD214 Important?**

**This separation document contains information normally needed to verify military service for benefits, retirement, employment and membership in veteran organizations.**

**This form also gives civil and government agencies the information needed to apply any federal and state laws relevant to members who separate from the military.**

**A DD214 generally is needed for the following:**

- **Home loans**
- **Civilian employment**
- **Veteran organizations membership**
- **Social Security**
- **Burial/flag**
- **Education**
- **Homeless veteran services**
- **Medical services**
- **Deals and discounts for veterans (sometimes)**

### **Where can I get my DD 214?**

**DD-214s can be requested either on-line or by mail. You will receive your DD-214 from the Archives in about three to four weeks. You must have a working printer attached to your computer if you use the online request form. For a mail request, you can download the paper application here:**

**Online: <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records>**

**Mail: National Personnel Records Center  
1 Archives Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63138-1002**

# Standard Form 180—Request for Medical Records

Standard Form 180 (Rev. 07/2015) (Page 1)  
Prescribed by NARA (36 CFR 1233.18 (d))

Authorized for local reproduction  
Previous editions unusable

GSA No. 3095-0019 Expires 04/30/2024

## REQUEST PERTAINING TO MILITARY RECORDS

Requests can be submitted online using eVetAccess at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>  
To ensure the best possible service, please thoroughly review the accompanying instructions before filling out this form. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY OR TYPE HELI-PW

### SECTION I - INFORMATION NEEDED TO LOCATE RECORDS (Furnish as much information as possible.)

1. NAME USED DURING SERVICE (last, first, full middle)	2. SOCIAL SECURITY #	3. DATE OF BIRTH	4. PLACE OF BIRTH			
5. SERVICE, PAST AND PRESENT (For an effective records search, it is important that ALL service be shown below.)						
	BRANCH OF SERVICE	DATE ENTERED	DATE RELEASSED	OFFICER	ENLISTED	SERVICE NUMBER (If unknown, write "unknown")
a. ACTIVE				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b. RESERVE				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
c. NATIONAL GUARD				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. PLEASE LIST LAST FOUR DUTY STATIONS, IF KNOWN: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____						
7. IS THIS PERSON DECEASED? <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES - MUST provide Date of Death if veteran is deceased: _____						
8. DID THIS PERSON RETIRE FROM MILITARY SERVICE? <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> YES						

### SECTION II - INFORMATION AND/OR DOCUMENTS REQUESTED

1. CHECK THE ITEM(S) YOU ARE REQUESTING:

**DD Form 214 or equivalent:** Year(s) in which form(s) issued to veteran (Date of Separation): \_\_\_\_\_  
This form contains information used to verify military service. An UNDELETED DD Form 214 is ordinarily required to determine eligibility for benefits. If you request a DELETED copy, the following items will be blacked out: authority for separation, reason for separation, reenlistment eligibility code, separation (SPD/SPN) code, and, for separations after June 30, 1979, character of separation and dates of time lost. Please note - recent veterans may be able to request a DD Form 214 through milConnect by visiting: <https://www.va.gov/health/milconnect/military-service-records/>  
An UNDELETED copy will be sent UNLESS YOU SPECIFY A DELETED COPY by checking this box:  I want a DELETED copy.

**Official Military Personnel File (OMPF):** The OMPF may include duty stations and assignments, training and qualifications, awards and decorations received, disciplinary actions, administrative contacts, enlistment and/or discharge information (including DD Form 214, Report of Separation, or equivalent), and other personnel records. Detailed information about the veteran's participation in hostilities and other military engagements is NOT contained in the record.

**Medical Records:** Includes health (outpatient), extended ambulatory, and dental records. If inpatient/hospitalization records are requested, please specify below:  
 I request inpatient/hospitalization records from \_\_\_\_\_ (facility), last treated in \_\_\_\_\_ (year). (NOTE: Fields are required)  
If available, you may receive copies of inpatient narrative summaries, operative reports, discharge summaries, etc. contained in the record.

**Dental Reports:** Please check this box if ONLY dental records are needed from the medical record.

**Other (Please Specify):** \_\_\_\_\_

2. PURPOSE: (Providing information about the purpose of the request is voluntary; however, it may help to provide the best possible response and may result in a faster reply. Information provided will in no way be used to make a decision to deny the request.)  
 Benefits (explain)  Employment  VA Loan Programs  Medical  Genealogy  Correction  Personal  Other (explain)

Check here: \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION III - RETURN ADDRESS AND SIGNATURE

<p>1. REQUESTER NAME: _____</p> <p>3. <input type="checkbox"/> I am the MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER OR VETERAN identified in Section I, above. <input type="checkbox"/> I am the DECEASED VETERAN'S NEXT-OF-KIN (MUST submit Proof of Death. See item 2a on instruction sheet.)</p> <p>4. SEND INFORMATION/DOCUMENTS TO: (Please print or type. See item 4 on accompanying instructions.)</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Street Address _____ Apt. # _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____</p> <p>Daytime Phone _____ Fax Number _____</p> <p>Email Address _____</p>	<p>2. RELATIONSHIP TO VETERAN: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am the VETERAN'S LEGAL GUARDIAN (MUST submit copy of Court Appointment) or AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE (MUST submit copy of Authorization Letter or Power of Attorney) <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (Specify) _____</p> <p>5. AUTHORIZATION SIGNATURE: I declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the information in this Section 3 is true and correct and that I authorize the release of the requested information. (See items 2a or 3a on the accompanying instructions sheet. Without the Authorization Signature of the veteran, next-of-kin of the causal veteran, veteran's legal guardian, authorized government agent, or other authorized representative, only limited information can be released unless the request is archival. An approval is required if the request is for archival records.)</p> <p>Signature Required _____ Do not print _____ Date _____</p> <p>* This form is available at <a href="http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html">http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html</a> on the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) website. *</p>
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## USS Frank E. Evans Mount 53 Story

Two sailors from the USS Lloyd Thomas DD 764 write about what they remember about getting Mount 53 from the aft section of USS Frank E. Evans in 1970.

Destroyers were stationed along the coast of Vietnam to provide artillery support to ground troops. Targets could be trucks, tanks, boats, bunkers, or enemy personnel. The Thomas could use one or both of her two twin gun mounts located fore and aft on the ship. These guns could fire a five inch high-explosive projectile nine to twelve miles inland. Occasionally, one of the guns would fail to fire normally, and the powder casing and the projectile would remain in the barrel. After several unsuccessful attempts to fire the gun using auxiliary firing methods, the "hot gun" would have to be cooled by flooding the barrel with water. This was to prevent the heat from previous firings from detonating the high explosive charge in the projectile (bullet) remaining in the gun barrel.



During the 1970 WestPac cruise, the Thomas suffered an explosion in her gun mount not from a "hot gun" as such but from bad ammo. The problem was that the projectile was pretty old (Korean War vintage) and was designed for a particular powder, either flash less or non-flash less. The flash less powder would be used during the day as the burst of fire from shelling would not be seen during the daylight. The non-flash less powder would create smoke instead of a fire burst and would be used at night to prevent detection. The powder the Lloyd Thomas was using this day was a new smokeless, flash less formula that burned faster. It overstressed the projectile and blew the base fuse up into the High Explosive charge. That in turn ruptured the barrel and vented the force of the powder and the HE into the mount.



Want to hear more of the story go to the following Link and read about it at

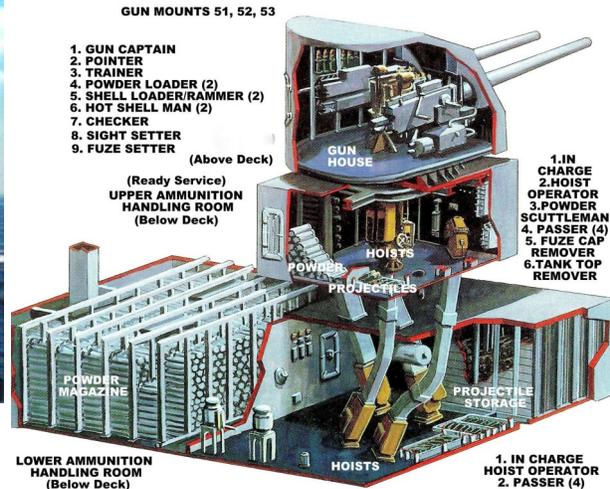
<https://youtu.be/qFE9PfwVemU?si=cH7WDiTdfQIBsxL5>

## MAIN ARMAMENT - THE 5" 38 CALIBER GUN

USS FRANK E. EVANS (DD 754) had three double barreled 5" 38 caliber guns...from fore to aft: Mounts 51, 52, and 53. Each mount was capable of firing 26 rounds per minute up to 12 miles at air, sea or land targets. Each projectile weighed 57 lbs. propelled by 38 lbs. of powder. Each gun mount consisted of the Gun House, Upper Ammunition Handling (Ready) Room, and the Lower Ammunition Handling (Magazine) Room. It took 26 men to man each gun! There were two modes of mount operation...primary and local. Automatic where the mount was slaved to the fire control system and local was if the fire control system was damaged or if the ship's power was out.



Diagram of a Gun Mount and Projectile & Powder Storage



**Mount Captain** - A senior Petty Officer in command of the mount. He stood on a platform on the back bulkhead. There was a hatch where he could stick his head and shoulders out the mount's top. He wore sound powered phones to receive orders from the battery commander, and send status reports. He wore gunnery binoculars. He could see the entire interior of the mount. Next to him was a voice tube down to the upper handling room. He had switches for controlling communication, emergency lighting, and battle lanterns.

**Gun Captain** - The Gunner's Mate responsible for maintaining the mount, daily checking fluid levels, lubricating bearings, cleaning gun sights, cycling powered equipment, testing firing systems, checking gas pressures, and verifying that all the equipment needed was ready for action. The gun captain stood high and aft of the rammer motor where he could watch the actions of the powder-man, projectile-man, breech block, and rammer. If something went wrong, he was free to move around the gun to fix the problem. He knew everybody's job, and could step in if necessary. At the mount captain's command, he manually opened the breech block before the first round was loaded, and reported if the bore was clear.

**Pointer** - Controlled the mount's elevation (up and down) and firing. He sat in the left front corner of the mount. In front of him, were the optical sight, hand wheels, and elevation drive controls. The Electrical Fire Select Switch... Local enabled the electric firing key on his right hand wheel. By rocking his right foot forward, he fired the gun. In local control, he controlled the gun's elevation with his hand wheels to keep his sight on the target. At the command of the Mount Captain, he fired the gun by squeezing the firing key on his right hand wheel.

**Trainer** - Controlled the mount's train angle (bearing). He sat in the right front corner of the mount. In front of him, were the optical sight, hand wheels, and train drive controls. Between his knees was the Train Indicator Regulator with a set of dials that indicated the horizontal bearing angle of the gun. When the Mount Captain commanded, "Match pointers. Switch to Automatic," the trainer looked at the dials which indicated the difference between the present angle and the one ordered. The trainer changed the bearing by moving the hand wheels, until the difference was zero... "matched", and then switched the drive to Auto, to the Fire Control System. When the Mount Captain commanded, "Switch to Local", the Trainer controlled the gun's train angle with his hand wheels.

## MAIN ARMAMENT - THE 5" 38 CALIBER GUN (continued)

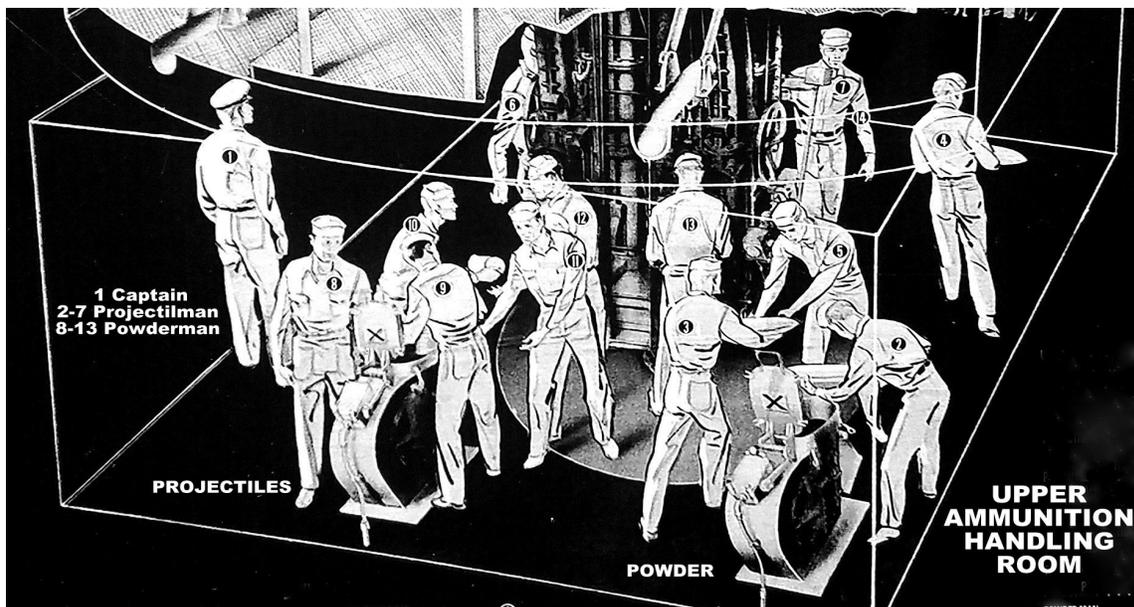
**Sight Setter** - Moved the sights' reticles relative to the barrel's axis. He sat between the guns, just forward of the projectile hoists. The Sight Setter took sighting orders from the Mount Captain in yards of range and mils of deflection. The sight had movable prisms in the optical paths. By using the three dials and two hand cranks, the Sight Setter controlled the elevation reticle offset (Sight Angle), and the reticle's left and right offset (Sight Deflection.) When the mount was in Automatic, the disks were controlled by the Fire Control System.

**Fuze-Setter** - Operated the equipment to set the fuze time on projectiles with mechanical time fuzes. He sat next to the Sight Setter between the guns. Under the Pointer's seat, and in front the Fuse Setter, is the Fuse Indicator Regulator, a box with a window, a hand crank, and a selector lever. In Local Control, he followed the Mount Captain's fuze orders by spinning the hand crank until the dials in the window read the correct fuze time. In Automatic control, the Fuze Indicator Regulator automatically follows the fuze setting orders sent from the Fire Control System.

**Powder-man** - Slid the primer protector off the powder case; then lifted the case from the powder scuttle at his feet to the gun's rammer tray.

**Projectile-man** - Moved the projectile from the hoist to the rammer tray; then pulled the rammer lever to load the projectile and powder case into the chamber.

**Hot Case-man** - After the gun fired, he caught the ejected powder case and threw it out of the mount. **Check Sight** - Verified that the mount was properly aimed at the target.



The Upper Ammunition Handling (Ready) Room was located immediately below the Gun House and above the Lower Ammunition Handling Room (Magazine). It was used to store projectiles and powder for immediate use in the Gun House. Through a series of hoists it accepted projectiles and powder from the Lower Ammunition Handling Room (Magazine) for intermediate storage and ultimate final transport to the Gun House.

### LOWER AMMUNITION HANDLING (MAGAZINE) ROOM

The Lower Ammunition Handling Room (Magazine) is located below the Upper Ammunition Handling Room. A series of hoists delivers munitions from the magazine to the Upper Ammunition Handling (Ready) Room. Up to five men functioned as projectile and powder passers and hoist operators.

**NEW SHIPS STORE**  
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*go to: <https://www.ussfee.org/store/>*

*The new ships store is now on-line for your purchases between reunions. The store provides you the opportunity to purchase hundreds of items never available before.*

*If you want to purchase the official USS Frank E Evans Ballcap (\$20 each, includes shipping) you can only get them by contacting Margaret Campbell at:*

*Email = [m.campbell.ncta@gmail.com](mailto:m.campbell.ncta@gmail.com)*

*Text @ 817-929-2403*

*We will continue providing various products at the annual reunions.*

***Shop for Christmas now!***

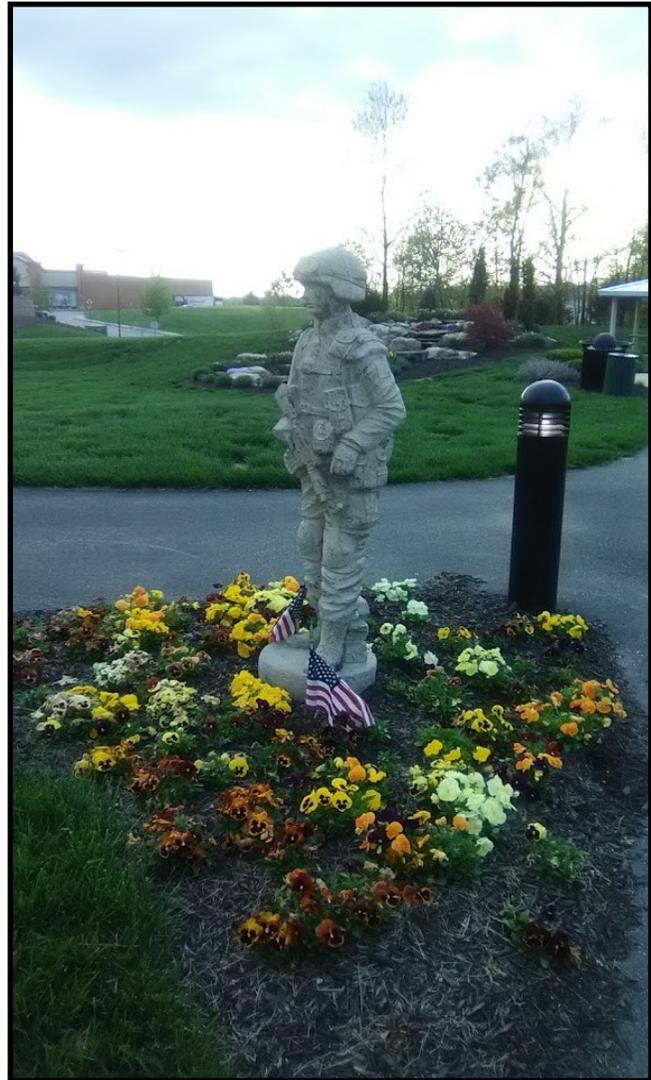
## Memorial Dedication & Invitation — Lake St. Louis, Missouri

For years FN Joe Mulitsch (survivor) has been asking his local VFW post to consider sponsoring the addition of a memorial for his lost fallen shipmates. This year when Joe saw the memorial pictures from the Vietnam Veterans memorial in Papillion, Nebraska he asked again for the VFW to see what could be done in Lake St. Louis's Vietnam Memorial Park.

Good news! With the help of Steve Brown, VFW Post 10350 and the City of Lake St Louis a memorial was approved and will be added to the cities' Vietnam Memorial Park. To help support this effort the USS Frank E. Evans Association provided support by donating money.

The addition of the memorial will be dedicated this coming Veterans Day. Everyone is invited to attend this special occasion. Please join us for the dedication!

- November 11, 2024 (Veterans Day)
- 11:00 am
- Lake St Louis, MO 63367
- Rain or Shine



The park is easy to find.... Take exit 2 off I-64 . Look for 5 flag poles just North of the Schnucks grocery store. The Vietnam Memorial Park is located adjacent to Lake St. Louis City Hall. Parking is available in the Schnucks Parking lot.

In order to accommodate seating and other logistics please RSVP to Joe Mulitsch no later than November 8, 2024 if you plan on attending. Joe can be reached by text at cell number 443-905-1434 or through email at [andtewj@gmail.com](mailto:andtewj@gmail.com)



**USS FRANK E EVANS ASSOCIATION**  
2286 Morgan RD.  
Carlsbad, CA 92008

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SEPT 17 — 20, 2025**

