

Vietnam Education Program

Excerpts from the Appleton Chapter 351 Newsletter

The Vietnam Display Committee put up the Vietnam Display at the Manitowoc Lincoln High School on April 8th with members of VVA Chapter 731 and students from Lincoln High School. The Vietnam Presentation Committee and members from VVA Chapter 731 did four classroom presentations. We helped with the display and presentation in the auditorium, and other members of Chapter 731 were in three other classrooms. The students rotated through all. With three Veterans in each classroom, the students got to hear from a lot of Veterans. The program was great.

We went to lunch put on by Lincoln High School students; they do a great job of feeding us each year. After lunch, we reset the display for a Vietnam Veterans program. This is a great program they put on each year.

They have the auditorium full of students. With all the lights out, they play combat sounds with color light flashing on our display. It is set up in combat positions, with a fogger, which lasts about a minute. They have only one spotlight on and play a drum roll as they bring in the American Flag. The Armed Forces Medley is played as they bring in each branch of the Service flags. Then the strings/orchestra plays "Amazing Grace" very softly as they bring in the POW/MIA Flag and place it next to the American Flag. The school band then plays the National Anthem. The lights come up and they do the POW/MIA table setting with the strings/orchestra playing "Ashokan Farewell" very softly. Then four active duty service men do the flag folding ceremony as someone reads off the meaning of each fold. The school chorus sings "God Bless America" as they place the flag on an easel. The chorus begins "Amazing Grace" softly as the 35 names are read of the Vietnam War Veterans killed from Manitowoc County. A bell is rung for each Vietnam War Veteran killed. A student with a small American Flag brings it up to the stage and it stands as a token for each fallen Veteran. In low light, a Veteran in full combat gear walks down the center aisle and goes to the middle of the stage and makes the combat cross and taps is played. School officials make closing remarks.

This year, the school awarded VVA Chapter 731 for 14 Years and VVA Chapter 351 for 10 years, an appreciation plaque made of black polished granite like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial granite in Washington D.C. for the Vietnam War Programs we have helped with. We were also donated a flight suit, Colonel's cap, tanker sight, tankers hand book and helicopter lamination parachute and 50 belted rounds for a M60.

We are hoping that this program will go on next year. As of now, the Vietnam War will be taught in middle school, and teachers there are not interested in a program. This was the best Vietnam War Program in the State thanks to the teachers and school officials caring for the students. Manitowoc should be proud of their educators for their caring for the education of the students they get. We thank them for their great work and making this program work for 15 years.

This makes for a long day for all the VVA 351 members that gave up the day and worked hard to make this program work. There were a lot of great comments on the display. There was a lot of thanks to our Chapter for having this great display. There is a kind of

shock to people the first time they see it. There is a sense of reality about military equipment and military service that books cannot bring forth. Big Thanks go out to Chapter members that made this day a success,

Mike Weaver, Richard Forrest, Mike Hok, Steven Buntjer, Chris Meidam , Chapter 351