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**Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans event will focus on healing and camaraderie**

(PASADENA, MD, Feb. 7, 2018) — On March 29, 1973, the last U.S. combat troops left Vietnam. Forty-five years later, Veterans of the Vietnam War still struggle to find their way to peace and acceptance. It is Hospice of the Chesapeake's hope that they can find resources, a time of fellowship and a warm and hearty welcome at its **4th annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration**. The event will be held from 4 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 29, 2018, at Baltimore BWI Hilton Hotel, 1739 W. Nursery Road, Linthicum, Maryland.

The doors will open at 4 p.m. so that Vietnam Veterans can enjoy hors d'oeuvres and beverages while catching up with fellow brothers and sisters of the war. The 90 minutes prior to the start of the program also will be a time to visit with representatives from a number of agencies and organizations dedicated to assisting veterans.

The program will begin at 5:30 p.m. and will feature remarks from state Sen. **John Astle**, who served as a Naval Aviator flying helicopters in Vietnam. He was awarded two Purple Hearts and 31 air medals. Also speaking is retired Army Sgt. Major **Rodwell L. Forbes**, Fort George G. Meade's former Garrison Command Sergeant Major, who will share his experience with post-traumatic stress disorder. **Deborah Grassman**, a mental health nurse practitioner, is recognized as one of the nation's leading experts in caring for Veterans nearing the end of life. She will talk about how to heal Soul Injuries, which bear the unmourned grief and unforgiven guilt that combat veterans still carry.

Also speaking will be **Edo Banach**, President and CEO of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and **Lou Reymann**, a highly decorated Army veteran who served three years in Vietnam. Other highlights will include patriotic music performed by the **Voices of Vets** and Honor Salutes led by Fort George G. Meade's Garrison Command Sergeant Major **Brian S. Cullen**. The event is sponsored by **TowerCares Foundation**.

In 2015, at the request of Hospice of the Chesapeake's We Honor Veterans Committee, legislation to make March 30 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day in Maryland was

introduced by state Sen. John Astle and was the first bill signed into law by Gov. Larry Hogan. The intent of the law was to celebrate and acknowledge every Vietnam Veteran and give them the warm welcome and gratitude they deserved five decades ago.

Tickets are required to attend and can be obtained online at [www.eventbrite.com/e/welcome-home-vietnam-veterans-day-tickets-42356462319](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/welcome-home-vietnam-veterans-day-tickets-42356462319). They are free for Vietnam Veterans and one guest. Community members and two additional guests for each veteran may attend at \$30 per person.

Headquartered in Pasadena, Maryland, the nonprofit is a Commemorative Partner in the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration as well as a Level 4 Partner in the We Honor Veterans program, a national hospice initiative honoring the men and women from all branches of the military who have served our country.

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Caring for life throughout the journey with illness and loss is the mission of **Hospice of the Chesapeake**. For more information, please visit [www.hospicechesapeake.org](http://www.hospicechesapeake.org).