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Vietnam War veterans to be honored March 29 in special ceremony

The names of 50 young Wiregrass men who sacrificed their lives in defense of liberty will be read at the city's first National Vietnam War Veterans Day ceremony at 11 a.m. Tuesday, March 29, at the Enterprise Farmers Market.

The commemoration day was designated by presidential proclamation in 2017 to "honor the brave Vietnam veterans who, in service to our Nation and in defense of liberty, fought gallantly against the spread of communism and defended the freedom of the Vietnamese people."

This year will be the first commemorative ceremony in Enterprise resulting from a collaboration with the City of Enterprise and Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 373. All Vietnam in-country from 1955 to 1975 and era veterans are invited to attend.

"It is our honor to be a part of this ceremony recognizing the men and women who served our nation valiantly during the long war in Vietnam," said Mayor William E. Cooper. "Sadly, the conflict took the lives of more than 58,000 American soldiers. This ceremony will pay our greatest respect and appreciation for both the survivors and the fallen heroes."

Retired Chief Warrant Officer Bob Cooper, president of VVA Chapter 373, will lead the ceremony, where the Mayor will sign a local proclamation declaring Vietnam Veterans Day in Enterprise.

The names of the 50 soldiers listed on the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Ozark will also be read.

They are:

From Coffee County – CPL Alfonzie Culver, PFC Delacy Gray, SSG Charlie Frank Lee, 1SG Joseph M. Moore, 1LT William Terry Allen, SP5 Allen Wayne Allums, SFC Guy Albert Byrd, SSG Lytell B. Christian, SSG Ronald Isaac Crody, CWO Billy Gene Hammer, PFC John Henry Jones, SGT James Richard Layton, SSG Green Edward Miller Jr., LTC William Russell Phillips, SP4 James Rowe Stephens, SP4 Gary Morgan Pridgen, PFC Roy Lee Bass and 1LT Paul Lewis Sawyer Jr.

From Dale County: CWO Jerald Wayne Carter, CPL Robert Michael Durall, PFC James Edward Isaac Jr., MAJ Robert John Williams; SSG Kenneth Earl Enfinger, CW) Lawrence John Herman III, SFC Donald Eugene Lisenby, Capt. Robert Neal Middlebrooks, WO James Arthur Barefield, LCPL Clifton Bradley Smith and WO Gerald Douglas Spradlin.

From Geneva County: SSG Earl Gautney, SMAJ Robert Allen Fowler, SGT Jefferson Davis Hall, 1LT Donald Lynn Kelly, SP4 Kenneth Edward Ray Burch, 2LT Harley Edwin Spivey; PFC Raymond White, and SP4 J.C. Love.

From Houston County: SSG Larry Allen Brown; SSG Joseph Thomas Roberson; SP4 Ernest Lee Elliott, PFC Charles Walker Ford; SP5 William Robert Gregory, SSGT Lowell Clay Hansen, PFC Randle Kinney, CWP Russell Wilford Kistler, LCPL Hurley Alvin Smith, CPT Robert Thomas Wilson, PFC Jeffrey Allen Yerion, LCPL David Mitchell Wood and LTC Donald Dawson Burnham.

The memorial wall was sponsored by VVA Chapters 373 and 607, and was approved by the Dale County Commission in March 2019. The monument is located on the grounds of the Dale County Administration Building.