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CITY OF PALMDALE

NEWS RELEASE

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Opening Ceremony for AV Wall to Highlight “Women of the Vietnam War”

PALMDALE – An opening ceremony featuring local high school groups, musicians and speakers around the theme of “Women of the Vietnam War” will be held this Friday, Nov. 6 at 6 pm at the Palmdale Amphitheater, 2723 Rancho Vista Blvd.

The ceremony will commence the display of the *Mobile Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall for the Antelope Valley (AV Wall)* which will go through Thursday, Nov. 12 at 8 am. Admission is free.

Welcoming remarks will be made by AV Wall Treasurer and Volunteer Coordinator Stacia Nemeth, followed by the presentation of colors by an all-female color guard under the direction of Major Conrad Hernandez and featuring students from the Highland High School CA-944 AFJROTC Cadet Group, William J. “Pete” Knight High School CA-20053 AFJROTC Cadet Group, Littlerock High School AJROTC Lobo Battalion and Antelope Valley High School NJROTC.

Music will include the National Anthem and “She’s an American Who Fought,” written and performed by Chief Warrant Officer Jennifer Housholder. The Table of Honor will be presented by an all-female multi-branch military group.

Guest speakers will include Sharon (Vander Ven) Cummings, American Red Cross “Donut Dollie” (Vietnam ‘66-’67); Linnie Stone, American Red Cross “Donut

Dollie” (Vietnam ’66-’67); and Lt. Col. Toni Flanagan, United States Air Force Intelligence Officer (Vietnam).

Hosted by the City of Palmdale and Point Man Antelope Valley, the AV Wall will be open to the public 24 hours a day while it is on display. This year’s theme is “Women of the Vietnam War,” and ceremonies will include female veteran speakers, performers and other participants.

Taps will be played nightly at 10 pm.

On Saturday, Nov. 7 at 9 pm, there will be a Candlelight Memorial Walk to honor the eight American military women who died while serving in the Vietnam War and the 76 soldiers from the Antelope Valley - AV 76 - whose names are inscribed on the Wall.

Then on Veterans Day, Wednesday, Nov. 11 at 11 am, the annual Veterans Day service co-hosted by the Antelope Valley Service Organization (AVSOA) and the AV Wall organization will take place. Taking part in the ceremony will be emcee Bobby Breech of the AVSOA, Highland High School AFJROTC as Color Guard, The Sunday Night Singers and members of the Palmdale High School Chamber Singers performing the National Anthem, Bruce Robertson reciting the poem “Freedom’s Wall,” George Palermo presenting “What is Veterans Day,” and a recognition of all veterans in attendance during a performance of the “Armed Forces Medley.”

The viewing of the AV Wall will end on Thursday, Nov. 12 at 8 am.

For more information, please call 661/524-6408, or visit www.avwall.org.

ABOUT THE AV WALL

The AV Wall is one of the rarest home-grown memorials of its kind in the nation and represents the Antelope Valley's commitment to the men and women who served their country. The AV Wall was designed and fabricated by Signs and Designs, Inc. of Palmdale.

The six day display is staffed completely by volunteers, Veterans, local service organizations and others. The volunteers attend an in-depth training so they can provide visitors with the best possible experience during their visit to the wall. Volunteers help look up names in the computer database, assist in locating the names on the wall, and provide information about the wall design and layout.

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The AV Wall has been visited by thousands of men, women and children since its dedication and has provided education, healing and a gathering place for Vietnam Veterans to mourn and remember. A visit to the AV Wall offers a chance to show respect and honor those who lost their lives in Vietnam.

For more information, please call 661/524-6408, or visit www.avwall.org

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