

The 1,113th Monument Terrace Troop Rally marked Lynchburg's Vietnam Veterans' Homecoming celebration

Lynchburg's Monument Terrace Troop Rally marked Lynchburg's Vietnam Veterans' Homecoming on Friday, March 31, 2023. The group shows support for veterans and active military members every Friday at Monument Terrace in downtown Lynchburg, Virginia.

"I can't believe it's been over 21 years," said veteran Steve Bozeman.

In fact, it's actually 1,113 consecutive weeks.

The rally started in November 2001 following the Sept. 11th terrorist attacks.

Bozeman said he and several others helped organize the first gathering. They noticed a group of people protesting the U.S. going to war, so they decided to hold their own demonstration.

"We rallied and had about 75 to 80 folks down here, and we had to stand on the sides and around the back; and [the other group was] down at the curb. So, that was how it was for probably the first couple months, then they went away, and we stayed here. Next thing you know, we're still here," said Bozeman.

The MOPWW Virginia Piedmont Chapter has contributed to the Rallies since their inception. The Vietnam Veterans Homecoming Rally was not exception: MOPWW Patriots Steve Bozeman and David Stokes were the Rally leaders, Companions Tom Current, Joel Kramar, and Paul Yacavone all filled important rolls.

To remember the many veterans who have died, an American flag and banners sit in the front of every Monument Terrace Troop Rally. This was especially poignant on Vietnam Veterans Homecoming weekend, March 31 – April 1, 2023. The Vietnam Veterans Homecoming weekend celebrates the 50th anniversary of the freeing of the United States military prisoners of war in 1973, and finally welcomes home the many Vietnam veterans who served but were never properly welcomed home.



Vietnam Veterans of America National President Jack McManus and National Vice President Tom Burke attended and addressed the rally. President McManus said he was impressed with the rally and believed that Lynchburg's was the longest continuous rally in the country. Vice President Burke said that it was important to never forget, and the rally was doing just that.

And as long as the veterans keep showing up, Lynchburg will always remember. So every Friday at noon, rain or shine, hot or cold, a group of veterans and supporters gather at the foot of Monument Terrace in Lynchburg, Virginia and support our troops and remember the 1% who took the oath and proudly served.

*Prepared by Charles W Bennett, MOPWW Historian General
A tip of the hat to **Tim Harfmann**, WSLs 10 News*



Lynchburg Vietnam Veterans Homecoming Monument Terrace Troop Rally #1,113, 31 March 2023



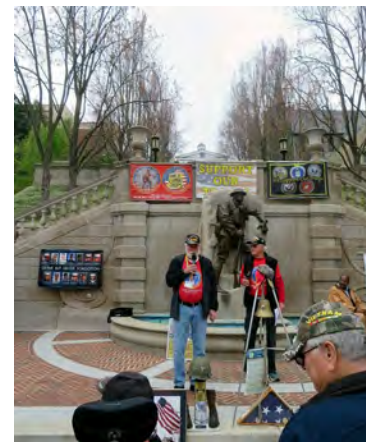
Monument Terrace, Lynchburg, Virginia



Troop Rally leaders David Stokes & Steve Bozemen



Vietnam Veterans of America National President Jack McManus and National Vice President Tom Burke with David Stokes



The Military Order of the World Wars gang



