

Joe Gromelski/The VVA Veteran

Memorial Day 2026 at *The Wall*

VVA and AVVA once again took part in the annual Memorial Day ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Hosted by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund and the National Park Service, the solemn ceremony began at 1:00 p.m. on May 25.

Two Vietnam War veterans spoke during that intermittently rainy afternoon: retired Army Sgt. Maj. Donna Dear, one of the first 45 women who served in the Vietnam War, and retired Air Force Col. Michael Brazelton, an F-105 Thunderchief pilot shot down over Hanoi on August 7, 1966, on his 112th combat mission, who was held as a Prisoner of War until he was released during Operation Homecoming on March 4, 1973.

After Sgt. Maj. Dear and Col. Brazelton told their Vietnam War stories and paid tribute to the servicemembers whose names are etched on *The Wall*, VVA's Scott DeArman and AVVA's Anthony Gigli joined other veterans and family groups placing wreathes along the entire length of the Memorial. Afterward, participants in the wreath laying and supporters mixed and mingled at *The Wall*.◆