



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Patriots Point to Honor Vietnam Veterans and share the story of Lucy Caldwell;
Will offer Vietnam Veterans Free Admission on Vietnam Veterans Day

March 29, 2023 is the 50th anniversary of the day the last U.S. combat troops left Vietnam

MOUNT PLEASANT, S.C. – On Vietnam Veterans Day, Wednesday, March 29, Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum will offer free admission for Vietnam Veterans and their immediate families. Museum staff will also welcome each veteran home throughout the day by pinning them with a Department of Defense Vietnam War Veteran lapel pin.

At 1 p.m. Patriots Point will host a memorial ceremony inside the Vietnam Experience Exhibit to honor the 896 South Carolinians who did not survive the war.

“We must do everything we can to honor the lives of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice while fighting in Vietnam,” said Patriots Point Interim Executive Director Mac Burdette. “We must also extend a hand and welcome home the men and women who survived. Fifty years later, it is more important than ever to remember our Vietnam Veterans and thank them for their service.”

At 7 p.m. on March 29, Patriots Point will host a free program aboard the USS Yorktown to honor the life and selfless actions of Lucy Caldwell. In March 1966, 56-year-old widow, Mrs. Charles (Lucy) Caldwell, left the comforts of her home in Princeton, NJ, and purchased a one-way ticket to Saigon despite knowing no one in Southeast Asia. Lucy was disturbed by images of war protests, draft card bonfires, and the desecration of the American flag she was seeing on TV. Ultimately, Lucy volunteered with the United Service Organization (USO) to support service members in the Vietnam War. Over the next 34 months, Lucy solicited care packages, hosted dinners, talked with critically wounded men, read to them, and wrote letters home to their families.



Lucy passed away on February 28, 1979. One Marine's daughter, Tara McClary Reeves, is working to ensure her story is told, along with the narratives of those brave men she encouraged. Tara nicknamed them "Lucy's Boys."

"I first learned of Lucy through being shown one of her letters. On March 3, 1968, my father's reconnaissance team was hit. Daddy, 1st Lt. Clebe McClary, was medevacked to a field hospital where decorated USMC General Lewis William Walt had assigned compassionate Lucy. Since Daddy's head was completely bandaged, he never saw her there. However, he still speaks of Lucy's kindness and how she gently coaxed him to communicate to his bride of only 11 months and 23 days, the woman who'd become my mother. I'm honored to be able to tell Lucy's story that showcases her unselfish devotion to those who courageously fought in Vietnam." - Tara McClary Reeves.

The National Vietnam War Veterans Day program will feature the first and second episodes of the PBS documentary series "Lucy Caldwell" and then a fireside chat with as many of "Lucy's Boys" as can be found.

Visit www.patriotspoint.org for more information about Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum and its Vietnam Veterans Day events.

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About Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum

Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum, on the Charleston Harbor, is the #1 attraction in Mount Pleasant, S.C., and is home to a fleet of National Historic Landmark ships, and the only Vietnam Support Base Camp in the U.S. Patriots Point is also headquarters to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and the agency's official Medal of Honor Museum. Visit www.patriotspoint.org for more details, or find us at @patriots_point on Twitter and Instagram, and Facebook at www.facebook.com/PatriotsPoint.org.

About the USS Yorktown Foundation

The USS Yorktown Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization dedicated to raising funds to provide scholarships for educational programs at Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum, as well as supporting new exhibits, symposiums and special programs. The Foundation's mission is "to cultivate a unique learning environment that connects generations by celebrating America's history and its heroes, inspiring freedom, patriotism, leadership and service." For more information, please visit www.USSYorktownFoundation.org or call 843.881.5925.

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