

# VFW In Action

## Veterans Educate Students in the Classroom

VFW members in New Jersey and New York work with students who appreciate and value the chance to learn about military history from those who witnessed it firsthand.

### Post 2856

### Vietnam Vets Tell Students 'the Real Story'

*New Jersey Post members answer questions from juniors and seniors who honored the group with applause.*

Members of Post 2856 in Livingston, N.J., visited Livingston High School in May to speak to an auditorium of high schoolers about the Vietnam War.

Teacher Ernest Cuneo invited Post members Martin Halo, Charles Quinn, Jerry Schmotolcha, Walter Wilczak and Jerry Wolfe, along with several civilians who were in Vietnam, to speak to the crowd of upperclassmen at the school about 13 miles northwest of Newark.

Wolfe served with the 720th MP Battalion in Vietnam in 1968-69. His connection with Cuneo dates back to when his daughters had him as a teacher more than 10 years ago.

Post 2856 is part of the Pentagon's Vietnam War 50th Commemorative Partner Program.

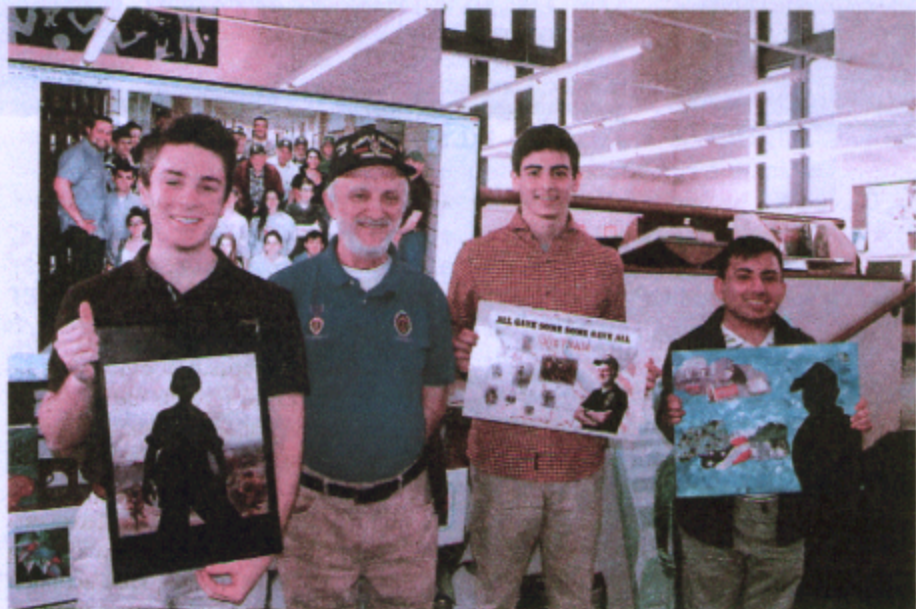
Post members were happy to be invited and share with the students. "It is nice to know that someone out there cares enough to get involved and to teach the kids," Wolfe said. "This was an opportunity to tell the real story."

He said because they were all in different units and various locations it gave the students varied perspectives on the war. The students prepared questions, which Cuneo screened ahead of time. That gave Post members an opportunity to feel comfortable.

"We're not big talkers," Wolfe said

about himself and many of his Vietnam veteran buddies. "It was nice that the students were interested, but it was also hard to bring up the war again. For us, it resurrected some old memories that will probably keep us up a few nights. But in a way it made us all feel that it was worth it when all the kids stood up and applauded us."

The vets work with Cuneo because they respect the way he teaches the students that there is more to war than what is found in history books. "We thank you, Mr. Cuneo, and all the students who made us feel like our service meant something," Wolfe said.



Vietnam Veteran Eugene Lang stands with advanced art students at Livingston High School in Livingston, N.J., on the final day of their Living History Veterans Project. Art teacher and Persian Gulf War veteran Ron Whitehead facilitates the program that pairs students with veterans, who teach them about their experiences at war and inspire the students' art.