

# Vets Journey Home



We invite you  
to share your story

— *safely* —

[www.vetsjourneyhome.org](http://www.vetsjourneyhome.org)

**Craig Williamson** – VJH USA  
Carlisle, PA 17013  
717-385-6409  
crgwfsh@aol.com  
US Army/Vietnam Veteran

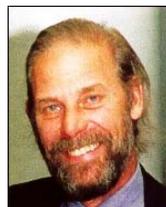
**Robin Stauffer** – Mid-Atlantic Board  
Carlisle PA 17015  
571-643-9462  
rstauffer1@mac.com  
US Army Veteran

**Jason Lucier** – California Board  
310-344-7946  
El Segundo CA 90245  
US Army Veteran

**Penney Johns** – Wisconsin Board  
Random Lake WI 53075  
414-531-7575  
PKayJohns@earthlink.net

**Vets Journey Home USA**  
8989 N Port Washington Rd—Ste 227  
Milwaukee WI 53217-1668

Vets Journey Home now offers both Women's Only  
& Couples' Retreats in some locations. Go to our  
website for more information about these inspiring  
retreats and their locations.



**Gene McMahon**  
Founder, Vets Journey Home  
Vietnam Veteran

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## Schedule

3pm Friday – 3 pm Sunday  
Graduation Ceremony, 3-4 pm Sunday  
open to the public

## Class Size

Limited to 8 participants

## Cost

As a Veteran you have done the Time  
and paid the Price.  
There is NO charge for this personal  
development Retreat!

-- *Welcome Home!!* --

Register on the web at  
[vetsjourneyhome.org/registration.asp](http://vetsjourneyhome.org/registration.asp)  
[www.vetsjourneyhome.org](http://www.vetsjourneyhome.org)  
[ContactUs@vetsjourneyhome.org](mailto:ContactUs@vetsjourneyhome.org)  
414-979-9113 (Voice Mail only)

Additional Testimonials at  
[vetsjourneyhome.org/testimonials.asp](http://vetsjourneyhome.org/testimonials.asp)

Read our reviews online at  
[www.greatnonprofits.org](http://www.greatnonprofits.org)



<http://greatnonprofits.org/reviews/vets-journey-home-usa-inc/>

# YOUR FAMILY NEEDS YOU. WE NEED YOU.

## *Is this for you?*

Combat or peace-time, in-country or mainland, any time, any engagement, any veteran, male or female, still feeling emotional pain connected to military service, is welcomed to the Vets Journey Home. If you have served in the military, this program is for you!

It's time for your story to be heard! Vets Journey Home offers a safe place where veterans and civilians want to hear you. We offer empathy for your painful journey and total support for your healing. You will not be judged, blamed or shamed.

Vets Journey Home is staffed by fellow veterans (many are graduates of the program) and compassionate civilians who are willing to listen to the stories and be present with vets while they share the pain and the story. Men and women who care for your heart and your spirit are ready to listen.

This listening allows the veteran to experience unconditional regard and acceptance, making it safe to open up even the deepest story, knowing it will truly be heard and not judged.

It takes the large group of caring individuals to “hold” that deep pain—often healing occurs much faster in the group than in a one-on-one therapy relationship. The result is a coming home to the heart, an emotional healing.

Most participants experience a deep bond with those who shared their Vets Journey Home experience: a connection that can last a lifetime.

## *Sharing your story...*

When Veterans get home they bring back important stories to tell of adventures and pain, fear and courage, and lessons learned. Often when Vets return home from service, people ask, “how was it?” Yet when Vets begin to talk about the pain that sits on their hearts it gets to be too much to hear—too much to share. Often friends and family become uncomfortable hearing and talking.

So, if Veterans open up at all, they often seek out another Veteran. Unfortunately, when Veterans talk together of war, attempts at sharing the grief and pain often slip into a “That ain't nothing” or “Top this one” exchange of war stories.

Other Veterans, welcomed home as heroes, find it difficult to talk of moments of doubt, or their regrets or fears. Survivor's guilt haunts many. For some, thoughts of “I didn't do enough” or “I could have done better” are too shameful to share. Finding relief or closure through telling one's story is difficult to achieve.

Many Veterans eventually lock up their authentic stories deep inside their “inner vault” and stop talking. This can lead to lack of intimacy, or turning to drinking, drugs, gambling, or risky behaviors.

## **Does this describe your experience?**

Vets Journey Home invites you to find out that you are not alone. There are many who care about you; who are willing to walk point, be at your side, and cover your back as you bring your heart to a peaceful place — home.

## *Here's why it's for you!*

*Don Shulla (US Navy/RET/PDRL):* “One of the facilitators said “I know how you do anger... go deeper...show me the other side of you.” That was tough but I felt safe enough to do that and bare my soul...let my pain out in a non-violent way. THAT is something I had never done before. The hardest part of a journey is that first step.”

*Gloria Luna (wife of Vietnam Veteran):* “Because of the Vet's Journey home program our life has become bearable. Sam is much more aware of himself and aware of me in his life. With the kids out of the house and both of us retired, we spend 24/7 together—and guess what I think we are going to make it. I love Sam. I knew that the man I had fallen in love with was there and he has finally surfaced. My hope is that other spouses will also find the person they fell in love with because that person is there and there is hope.”

*Tom Murrell (Air Force):* “What I learned at my Bamboo Bridge—and what I have since learned in staffing Bamboo Bridges, and its successor program Vets Journey Home, is that there are a lot of wounds of war that are not visible. While almost nobody fits their own definition of a hero, everyone deserves to be welcomed home with honor and dignity. Vets Journey Home is about stories: telling yours and hearing others'. It is about honoring those who have served in whatever way they were called upon to do so. We saw our duty and we did our best.”

*Larry Flaskrud (US Army 1986-2005/OIF, WI):* “My experience with Vets Journey Home has changed my life and that of my family in an amazingly positive way. I had returned from Iraq after a 16-month deployment and thought I would just move right back into my “normal” life as a husband and father. Five years later I woke up one morning and did not recognize the man that was looking at me in the mirror. There were problems in my family because of how I had changed. It was that day I decided I needed some type of help. After a retreat with VJH, I began to move towards a more positive lifestyle. VJH not only gave me hope of a more fulfilled life, but gave me the tools and support to cope with my issues that I had bottled up for such a long time. Every day I wake up a happier man. My wife and two daughters are much happier now that they have their ‘old Larry’ back.”

