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New Famie documentary gives Vietnam vets past-due honors

Ursula Watson / The Detroit News

When soldiers go off to fight for their country, the last thing they probably imagine is being treated like pariahs upon returning home.

Yet such rejection — from being spat upon to being shunned at VFW posts — was not uncommon in the Vietnam War era (Aug. 5, 1964-May 7, 1975).

These and other stories of Michigan's Vietnam veterans are captured in the 82-minute documentary "Our Vietnam Generation" from director/producer Keith Famie, a Michigan native and one-time contestant on CBS' "Survivor."



Michigan Vietnam veterans hold vintage Life magazines before the half-sized replica of the memorial wall honoring Michigan Vietnam veterans shown in "Our Vietnam Generation." (Visionalist Entertainment Productions)

"Our Vietnam Generation" is scheduled to premiere at the Fox Theatre on Jan. 28. Tickets, \$25 and \$35, go on sale Monday.

Famie of Novi says the film is a way to give Vietnam veterans the past-due honors they deserve.

"There were protestors waiting for them when they got off the plane," Famie says. "Many soldiers were advised to not even wear their uniforms so as to avoid harassment."

The documentary also explores the social and political upheaval that affected the public's view of war in this country at the time.

In addition to Vietnam veterans sharing their stories, "Our Vietnam Generation" includes interviews with the current American ambassador to Vietnam, Michigan native Michael Michalak, as well as Detroit native Duke Fakir of the Four Tops.

Fakir talks about how Vietnam veterans still approach him to say how the Motown Sound served as bit of comfort during the war, Famie says.

Fred Nahhat, director of production at Detroit Public TV (WTVS-TV, Channel 56), calls "Our Vietnam Generation" a powerful documentary that not only serves to educate but preserve history.

"Even though 'Our Vietnam Generation' is about the past, it's a lesson for the present day," Nahhat says. "The voices of veterans are still among us, and it is important to capture those reflections."

The documentary, says Nahhat, will air on Channel 56 sometime in February.

More information

'Our Vietnam Generation'

Jan. 28, Fox Theatre 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit
Tickets \$25 and \$35; on sale Monday Call (800) 982-2787 or visit www.ticketmaster.com In addition to "Our Vietnam Generation," Famie's 20-minute short film "One Soldier's Story," about Army Sgt. Michael K. Ingram Jr., a Monroe resident who was killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan earlier this year, will also be shown.

From The Detroit News: <http://www.detnews.com/article/20101012/ENT09/10120327/New-Famie-documentary-gives-Vietnam-vets-past-due-honors#ixzz129sHKw2N>