

Trailer viewing on tap for Vietnam movie

BY JIM TOTTEN • DAILY PRESS & ARGUS • JULY 8, 2010

Emmy-winning filmmaker Keith Famie noticed something while shooting a documentary about Detroit's World War II veterans last year.

Wherever he went for an interview, he found Vietnam veterans helping out and supporting the aging soldiers.

"Vietnam veterans had become the caregivers of the World War II generation," he said.

Shunned when they came home in the 1960s and 1970s, Vietnam vets were the first group at airports welcoming back soldiers who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, Famie said.

"We refused to allow our military to in any way feel the way we felt when we came home," they told Famie.

Famie, a 50-year-old Novi resident and former contestant on "Survivor," will show an extended trailer of his upcoming film "Our Vietnam Generation" on July 22 at Crystal Gardens banquet center, 5768 E. Grand River Ave. in Genoa Township. He's looking to raise money to continue working on the film, which includes interviews with local Vietnam veterans and events held in Livingston County.

The event will feature clips of his homage to World War II veterans, "Detroit: Our Greatest Generation," which features local veteran Jack Pickett. The public is welcome to attend. Cost is \$40 per person and includes dinner. To reserve a seat, call (248) 869-0096.

Famie said 2,645 soldiers from Michigan died during the Vietnam War. He

began filming in December and figures he will conclude around September. He expects to interview a total of 40-50 people.

He said Vietnam veterans have become the backbone of our communities, filling roles as politicians and police officers.

"They helped build our communities, and yet received so little recognition for what they did in one of the most longest, most difficult conflicts," he said.

"In a nutshell, they deserve (this film)," he added.

Famie said there are wonderful stories revealed in his film about what people went through back then and what they're doing now.

"It's not a war film," he said. "It's about people in our community."

He recalled filming a group of Patriot Guard Riders who drove 60 miles to Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Macomb County to meet the body of a soldier killed in Afghanistan. They arrived early on a cold, rainy Sunday. Many were in their 60s. The group then escorted the family home and arrived the following week for the funeral.

"It just defines patriotism," Famie said.

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