

**For Immediate Release**

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**Contact**

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**READING TOGETHER SPONSORS LOCAL VIETNAM MEMORIAL**

As a tribute to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., the 2006 Reading Together program will offer a traveling "wall" as a place to post materials to honor Kalamazoo area Vietnam veterans. Those who visit the wall may share a memory or memento of their, or their loved one's, time in Vietnam. Materials posted may include short stories, poems, photographs, letters, or anything that the veteran carried during the war or has since carried, that serve to remind all those viewing the wall of that time so long ago and far away.

Veterans should place photocopies of treasured materials, rather than originals, on this wall, since what is left at the wall will become part of a history archive housed at Western Michigan University. Materials will not be returned unless clearly marked with instructions on how to do so. While some memories may provoke powerful and graphic reminders, please remember that materials may be viewed by children, as well as adults.

The panels will be on display at several locations between February 9 and March 31. A full schedule follows. Some materials may be removed as new materials are offered.

Consort Display Group donated the design and construction of Kalamazoo's traveling wall. Volunteer members of the Reading Together Steering Committee will care for and transport the wall to locations hosting Reading Together events.

Kalamazoo Public Library leads Reading Together, the fourth annual community-wide reading program, with support from two-dozen organizations, including the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, Western Michigan University, and the Air Zoo. More than 50 other groups are helping offer numerous book discussions, 20 special events, an eight-week film series, plus a breath-taking traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian Institution at the Air Zoo from February 14 to April 8. Details and more information may be found at [www.readingtogether.us](http://www.readingtogether.us) or call program coordinator Joan Hawxhurst at 553-7913.

The traveling wall will be displayed on the following occasions.  
Schedule for the Traveling Wall

Saturday, February 18, 1:00-1:30 pm  
Douglass Community Association, 1000 W Paterson St.  
During the Southwest Michigan Black Heritage Society book fair and the Reading Together panel discussion, The Experiences of Black Vietnam Veterans.

February 20 to March 3  
The Air Zoo, 6151 Portage Rd, Portage  
During the opening celebration and for the first two weeks of the Smithsonian Institution exhibit, "Vietnam: Journey of the Heart." The opening celebration features a performance by John Balaban, author of the exhibit's descriptive text, and musician Ngo Thanh Nhan, who will play a 16-string dan tranh, the classical zither of Vietnam.

March 5, 3:00 pm  
First Baptist Church, 315 W Michigan Ave.

During concert and sing-along, "Music of the Vietnam War Era," with singer/songwriter Pat Madden.

March 15-16

KVCC, Texas Township Campus, Commons Theater

During the presentation "Writing in Dark Times: War and Plague" and the screening of *Platoon*, Oliver Stone's 1986 film about the war in Vietnam.

March 20, 7:00-9:00 pm

The Air Zoo, 6151 Portage Rd, Portage

Author Tim O'Brien begins his visit to Kalamazoo with a private reception for veterans of any war and their guests. For more information about this event, call the Air Zoo at 382-6555.

March 21, 7:00 pm

Miller Auditorium, Western Michigan University

During "Telling Stories," author Tim O'Brien's public talk

March 22 to 31

Kalamazoo Public Library, 315 S. Rose St.

The traveling wall will be displayed on the third floor balcony throughout these dates for library visitors and those attending the following events at the library.

March 23, 7:00 pm, screening of documentaries *Regret to Inform* and *How to Behave*

March 24, 12:00 noon, "Healing the Wounds of War," a brown-bag lunch discussion group

March 27, 7:00 pm, screening of KRESA Education for the Arts students' video interpretations of *The Things They Carried*

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