

## Rainier Junior/Senior High School History Club

### *The Wall that Heals*

During the 2013-2014 school year, the Rainier Junior/Senior High School History Club began working with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) in an effort to help students gain understanding of the Vietnam War era. Through their participation, Club members utilized three of the VVMF's lesson plan outlines and began to research local veterans. This allowed them the opportunity to talk with local community members and to ask questions, building understanding and knowledge in regards to the Vietnam era and War. In June 2014, the Club hosted a Veteran's ceremony to honor local veterans and active military personnel, and to thank them for their service to our country.

Through the VVMF, the Rainier Junior/Senior High School History Club was offered the opportunity to host *The Wall that Heals*, a traveling, half-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. This replica is approximately 250-feet in length and like the Memorial in Washington, it is a chevron-shape. Constructed of powder-coated aluminum, it is made up of 24 panels, each consisting of six columns of names, including Dennis Edge, a former Rainier resident and student, who died in the line of duty, December 11, 1968.

*The Wall that Heals* lists the names by year of casualty. Beginning at the center, the names start on the right-hand panel and work their way out to the end of that wing, picking up again on the far end of the left-hand wall, and then working their way back to the center. This represents the beginning and the ending of the conflict. Additionally, the trailer that carries *The Wall that Heals* unfolds to display a traveling museum exhibit where information cases are displayed showing photos of service members whose names are found on The Wall, as well as letters and memorabilia left at The Wall in Washington D.C. Also included are a map of Vietnam and a chronological overview of the Vietnam conflict. The traveling museum, as well as *The Wall that Heals*, works to tell the story of the Vietnam War, the era it encompassed and aim to put the event into a historical and cultural context. Admission to view *The Wall that Heals* was free. Volunteers were on hand to help visitors locate names on *The Wall*, as well as answer questions asked.

Through collaboration with the City of Rainier, as well as through the generous donations of the community, the Rainier Junior/Senior High School History Club was able to bring *The Wall that Heals* to Rainier during the week of March 18<sup>th</sup> – March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015. As the trailer was entering into Rainier, the local Patriot

Guard Riders and police escorted it to the Rainier City Park where it was set up for the week. On Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, an opening ceremony was held, paying tribute and honoring all veterans for their service.

The Rainier Junior/Senior High School History Club would like to thank everyone who worked to bring *The Wall that Heals* to Rainier. For more information, contact, Mayor Jerry Cole (Events Coordinator), Dr. Elaine Placido (Public Relations Coordinator), Mrs. Gretchen Demko (Volunteer Coordinator), Ms. Shalana Harrison (Assistant Volunteer Coordinator) or Mr. Andrew Demko (History Club Advisor and Project Coordinator) at [andrew\\_demko@rsd.k12.or.us](mailto:andrew_demko@rsd.k12.or.us).



# THE WALL THAT HEALS

A project of the Rainier Jr/Sr High School History Club with the support of the City of Rainier.

Made possible by the generous donations of the following individuals and organizations:

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