

Local Vietnam vet goes before Senate

By Frank Bucholtz
News Contributor

A Maple Ridge man will be pleading for fellow Vietnam War veterans in front of a Canadian Senate committee Aug. 15.

Woody Carmack, adjutant of Vietnam Veterans in Canada, is one of three Vietnam veterans invited to speak to the Senate sub-committee on veterans affairs at the invitation of chair Sen. Jack Marshall of Newfoundland. He will be speaking to senators on the need for veterans living in Canada to have ac-

cess to proper counselling on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which affects many vets.

Carmack said he will ask senators to push the U.S. government to provide veterans living in Canada access to contract counsellors who have expertise with PTSD. The U.S. government pays for such counselling in the United States, but it is not readily available to veterans who live in remote parts of Canada, unless they are prepared to travel great distances.

Carmack emphasized that he is not asking the Canadian govern-

ment to spend any money on the counselling. He just wants it to prod the U.S. government into doing for Vietnam vets who live in Canada what it does for those who are stateside.

Carmack says the counselling issue is not a problem for vets like himself who live near the U.S. bor-



CARMACK

der, as they can travel to the U.S. easily. He says there are few Canadian counsellors qualified to counsel victims of PTSD, largely because Canada has few veterans of recent military conflicts.

The Vietnam vets will also be pressing the committee to have a site set aside somewhere in Ottawa for a memorial to Canadians who died serving in the Vietnam War.

Canadian Vietnam vets have already received a memorial from the Michigan Association of Concerned Vets, but the federal government has shown no interest in setting

aside land for the memorial.

"(Federal cabinet minister) Michel Dupuis sent a letter to MPs outlining why we shouldn't be given federal land for the memorial, but Sen. Marshall issued a six-point rebuttal," Carmack said.

Vietnam veterans are actively lobbying MPs for a site.

Carmack says such a memorial would raise awareness of the fact that many Canadians fought and died in the Vietnam War, and would "raise awareness of the plight of the living Vietnam veteran as well."