Bittersweet Commemoration

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On Memorial Day, University of Dayton Law professor and Vietnam vet Tom Hagel will once again be side-by-side with brother Chuck in service to their country, as they were during the Vietnam War.

But this time, they'll be joined by the President of the United States and the country's top military brass for the official start of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C.

"It's amazing that a half-century has passed," Tom said. "I'm honored to be part of this bittersweet celebration and recognition of the families who lost people whose names are on that wall."

The ceremony kicks off an extensive Department of Defense program of national, state and regional events and activities to broaden knowledge of the Vietnam War and recognize those who served or supported it.

The Vietnam experiences of the Hagel brothers are chronicled in "Echoes of War" a documentary for the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project of the American Folklife Center. The piece is among the first acquisitions of the Vietnam Veterans Collections Campaign and can be viewed at NET Nebraska Echoes of War.