

Vietnam War Commemoration Lecture Series



1973 – The South Vietnamese Fight on Alone

Presented by Dr. James H. Willbanks

May 9, 2023

**Reception at 5:30 p.m. • Buffet Dinner at 6 p.m. • Presentation at 7 p.m.
Riverfront Community Center • 123 S Esplanade St. • Leavenworth, KS 66048**

This 15th lecture of the series features Dr. James H. Willbanks, Professor Emeritus and former General of the Army George C. Marshall Chair of Military History at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and decorated Vietnam War Veteran. Willbanks will discuss the events of 1973 in South Vietnam that followed the signing of “The Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam.” Despite the hope that the signing of the peace agreement would end the war, the fighting began anew even before the cease-fire went into effect as U.S. troops departed. The military action that occurred in 1973 essentially constituted a third Indochina War. During the bitter fighting that year, the South Vietnamese fought on alone. This presentation will demonstrate how the South Vietnamese forces fought valiantly in 1973, sustaining the third highest casualties of the war (after 1968 and 1972) before the fighting took a fatal downturn the following year. It will also address several key decisions made in 1973 that contributed to this downturn in 1974 and ultimately to the fall of Saigon in 1975.



Dr. James H. Willbanks retired from the faculty of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in 2018, after 26 years of service following over 23 years of active-duty service as an Infantry Officer in various assignments, to include a tour as an advisor with a South Vietnamese infantry regiment during the 1972 North Vietnamese Easter Offensive. While a member of the CGSC faculty, Willbanks served as the Director of the Department of Military History and as the General of the Army George C. Marshall Chair of Military History.

Dr. Willbanks is an honor graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and a graduate of the inaugural class of the School of Advanced Military Studies. He holds a B.A. in History from Texas A&M University, and a M.A. and Ph.D. in History from the University of Kansas. He is the author or editor of 21 books on the Vietnam War and other topics in military history. Dr. Willbanks also served as a consultant to Ken Burns in the preparation of his 10-part documentary on the Vietnam War which aired on PBS in 2017.

His military awards and decorations include the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star with “V” and Oak Leaf Cluster, two Purple Hearts, and Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with two Silver Stars. He and his wife Diana now reside in Georgetown, Texas.

Register/purchase tickets at www.cgscfoundation.org/vl-230509

Advanced tickets are \$35/person for the buffet and the presentation.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. • Tickets available at the door for \$40/person



The Vietnam War Commemoration Lecture Series is presented by the CGSC Foundation and its Simons Center as part of the Distinguished Speaker Series



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