



The California Zephyr



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SPRING 2020

IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

CALIFORNIA STATE COUNCIL MEETING FOR APRIL HAS BEEN CANCELED

The California State Council has canceled the CSC meeting scheduled for April 24-26, 2020.

Because of the concerns for the Coronavirus/COVID-19 we have decided to err on the side of caution and cancel the meeting.

The Residence Inn contract was also canceled with no penalties for CSC due to the National Emergency.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

If you have made a reservation to stay at the Residence Inn, you need to cancel that reservation as soon as possible. We cannot cancel the reservations for you. You need to do it yourself.

The next meeting for CSC will be the California State Convention in June (June 12-13, 2020) at the Wyndham in Visalia. We are hoping this Coronavirus/COVID-19 will be under control by then and that things are back to normal. We will keep everyone informed.

Steve

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hopefully everyone has read the important message that the April California State Council Meeting has been cancelled. I will say it again here, if you made your reservations at The Residence Inn in Visalia it is your responsibility to cancel that reservation. CSC has already cancelled the meeting with the hotel but we cannot cancel your personal reservations.

We are still planning on the convention being held in June (12th-13th) at the Wyndham in Visalia. The CSC board is hoping the home confinement will be over by then, only time will tell. So for now plan on the convention being held as scheduled. Check the deadlines for submitting Award Nominations to make sure you get all your nominations in on time, deadline is May 15. Deadline for early delegate registration is May 22.

We are keeping an eye on the current events and if anything changes, we will let you know ASAP.

Another item for concern is the VVA and AVVA National Leadership Conference planned for July in Dayton, Ohio. The Leadership Conference Committee is still working on the conference as planned, but they are taking it one day at a time. If they decide to cancel the conference, we will let everyone know as soon as we know.

Last but not least I want to inform everyone that I will not be seeking re-election for State Council President. I have been in the position long enough, probably too long. It is time for someone new to step in and take the hot seat. Whoever that might be, I will be there to assist them in a smooth transition.

I want to thank everyone for their trust in me over the years. It has been a privilege to represent you.

Steve

- Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others.
- When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact, and wash your hands often.
- Avoid shaking hands

THE NATIONAL GUARD:

ALWAYS READY, ALWAYS THERE

Eileen C. Moore

Associate Justice, California Courts of Appeal



In a former life, Justice Moore served as a combat nurse in Vietnam in the Army Nurse Corps. She was awarded the Vietnam Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Cross of Gallantry with Palm. She is a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America. Since 2008, she has chaired the Judicial Council's Veterans and Military Families Subcommittee. For nine years, she served as a mentor in a Veterans Treatment Court, primarily to women veterans. In 2015, her book "Gender Results" received a Benjamin Franklin award. (Cool Titles, 2014)

MESSAGE FROM VVA NATIONAL PRESIDENT ON COVID-19

"In light of the latest information about COVID-19, also known as the Novel Corona Virus, VVA is urging all of our members to visit the CDC and VA websites and to abide by all recommended precautionary measures meant to reduce the spread of the virus," said John Rowan, VVA National President. "We also strongly encourage our members to refrain from sharing internet memes and unverified updates about the virus on social media which are not confirmed by reputable sources such as the CDC, World Health Organization (WHO), and Department of Veterans Affairs."

VA website: https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/#utm_source=VA%20Alerts&utm_medium=banner&utm_campaign=Coronavirus&utm_content=link1

CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>

WHO website: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

According to the CDC, while the current risk for the average American to contract the virus is low, the people who are at greatest risk due to COVID-19 includes those who are older, (particularly over 70) and those who have chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, chronic kidney disease, cancer, and lung disease. Due to toxic exposures associated with military service such as Agent Orange, many of VVA's members have comorbidities which make them susceptible to the most severe complications or death if they contract the virus.

If you develop symptoms of coronavirus (such as high fever, a deep dry cough, fatigue, and shortness of breath), CALL YOUR PROVIDER.

Currently, a doctor's recommendation is the only requirement for the COVID-19 test.

If you are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, the CDC recommends that you should:

- Stock up on supplies.

For the past few decades, we have thought of the National Guard as being citizen soldiers, prepared to give up their civilian lives to go to some far-off place and defend our country. That's what the Guard does alright. But the current COVID-19 crisis has underscored just how much more the National Guard does for all of us.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL GUARD

Although the title "National Guard" was not actually used by militia units until 1824, it is said the National Guard began on Dec. 13, 1636, when the Massachusetts Bay Colony organized three regiments of militia to defend against local Indians. In grammar school, we learned about the Minutemen fighting British troops during the Revolutionary War. When our Founding Fathers prepared our documents, they feared a standing army, preferring that citizens be ready to defend the country instead. In Federalists No. 46, Madison argued that a standing army could be offset by a militia of citizens with arms in their hands. When the Constitution was written, Article 1, section 8, clauses 15 and 16 granted Congress the power to "provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the Militia" and "To provide for the calling of the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions." Accordingly, each state has its own National Guard.

In the Militia Act of 1792, Congress mandated that all free, able-bodied male citizens between 18 and 45 years old enroll in the militia in their respective states. For a long time, there were disputes over whether the National Guard was under the control of the federal or state governments.

During the Spanish-American War of 1898, President William McKinley, individually swore members of the militia into federal service. Under those circumstances, the troops were, in effect, volunteers. This procedure obviated the restriction of sending National Guard troops to serve on foreign soil.

The Militia Act of 1903 codified when the National Guard of the states may be federalized. The National Defense Act of 1916 allowed the president to draft state Guard troops into the regular Army, permitting the federal government to rely on Article I, section 8, clause 12's power to raise and support armies, rather than the militia clauses. Thus,

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as federalized troops, they could be sent anywhere in the world. Timing is everything, of course. Shortly thereafter President Woodrow Wilson sent National Guard troops to Europe when the United States entered World War I.

In 1986, after Governors George Deukmejian of California and Joseph E. Brennan of Maine refused to allow the deployment of their states' National Guard units to Central America for training, Congress passed the Montgomery Amendment, 10 U. S. C. 672(b)(d), which prohibited state governors from withholding their consent to overseas deployments for training without the declaration of a national emergency. The governor of Minnesota, Rudy Perpich, challenged the law, arguing it violated Article 1, section 8 of the Constitution. The case ended up in the U. S. Supreme Court. In Perpich v. Department of Defense, the high court held the fact that Guard units also have an identity as part of the state militia does not limit

Congress' plenary authority to train the units as it sees fit when the Guard is called to active federal service. In 2006, Congress enacted the National Defense Authorization Act, Public Law 109-163, containing a provision that gives the president the authority to mobilize National Guard units without the consent of state governors.

Today, persons enlisting in a state National Guard unit simultaneously enlist in the National Guard of the United States. State governors accept allotments of military personnel and equipment from the Department of Defense to train the National Guard. The enlistees retain their status as state Guard members unless and until

ordered to active federal duty, and revert to state status upon being relieved from federal service. When joining the National Guard, soldiers and officers swear to obey the orders of both the state governor and the president of the United States.

The National Guard in Action Over the Years Little Rock

A few years after the 1954 U. S. Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education, holding that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional, national attention focused on Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. In 1957, Gov. Orval Faibus ordered Arkansas's National Guard to preserve the peace by turning away

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of VVA, the State Council or its members.

Who Are The Vietnam Veterans Of America?

Founded in 1978, Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. is the only national Vietnam veterans organization congressionally chartered and exclusively dedicated to Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA is organized as a not-for-profit corporation and is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

VVA'S FOUNDING PRINCIPLE

"Never again shall one generation of veterans abandon another."

PURPOSE

The purpose of Vietnam Veterans of America's national organization, the state councils, and chapters is:

To help foster, encourage, and promote the improvement of the condition of the Vietnam veteran.

To promote physical and cultural improvement, growth and development, self-respect, self-confidence, and usefulness of Vietnam-era veterans and others.

To eliminate discrimination suffered by Vietnam veterans and to develop channels of communications which will assist Vietnam veterans to maximize self-realization and enrichment of their lives and enhance life-fulfillment.

To study, on a non-partisan basis, proposed legislation, rules, or regulations introduced in any federal, state, or local legislative or administrative body which may affect the social, economic, educational, or physical welfare of the Vietnam-era veteran or others; and to develop public-policy proposals designed to improve the quality of life of the Vietnam-era veteran and others especially in the areas of employment, education, training, and health.

To conduct and publish research, on a non-partisan basis, pertaining to the relationship between Vietnam-era veterans and the American society, the Vietnam War experience, the role of the United States in securing peaceful co-existence for the world community, and other matters which affect the social, economic, educational, or physical welfare of the Vietnam-era veteran or others.

To assist disabled and needy war veterans including, but not limited to, Vietnam veterans and their dependents, and the widows and orphans of deceased veterans.

FUNDING

Vietnam Veterans of America relies totally on private contributions for its revenue. VVA does not receive any funding from federal, state, or local governments.



black students who sought to integrate the school. Just how the federal government should respond was complicated by the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act, 18 U. S. C. Section 1385, which prohibits the domestic use of federal troops to enforce civil law. Attorney General Herbert Brownell issued an opinion to President Dwight D. Eisenhower that enabled Eisenhower to federalize the entire Arkansas National Guard, ordering it to protect rather than reject the nine students integrating Central High School.

RIOTS AND PROTESTS

In 1964, New York Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller ordered National Guard troops to quell a race riot in Rochester, New York. The California National Guard was mobilized in response to the 1965 Watts riot by California Gov. Edmund G. Brown, Sr. Governor Jim Rhodes ordered the Ohio National Guard to repress anti-Vietnam War protests in 1970 at Kent State University. The Guard shot into a crowd, killing four students and injuring nine others. In 1992, following acquittal of four police officers who beat Rodney King, the California National Guard was mobilized to restore order in Los Angeles. During the 1993 siege at Waco, the Texas and Alabama National Guards were mobilized.

SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the National Guard was called upon to help in many different ways. Within minutes, two Massachusetts Air Guard F-15 Eagle fighter jets were the first to arrive at the World Trade Center. By the end of the day, more than 8,000 National Guard troops were mobilized by the governor of New York. National Guard troops from numerous states provided security at several major airports after the attacks. Following the attacks, the National Guard Bureau required all states to operate a Joint Emergency Operations Center, JEOC, on a continuous basis. Thus, if a state's emergency management operations fail for some reason, the National Guard and JEOC is designed to assist and augment a state's response to a disaster.

HURRICANE KATRINA

When the levees in New Orleans were breached during Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Louisiana National Guard troops evacuated their headquarters. Offers of help from the

New Mexico National Guard, packed and ready to go to New Orleans, went unanswered. The Louisiana governor resisted relinquishing control of the Louisiana National Guard to the federal government. Eventually, President George W. Bush ordered National Guards from other states to go to New Orleans.

OPERATION JUMP START

In 2006, President George W. Bush federalized National Guard troops to increase border security in a program known as Operation Jump Start. California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson opposed using their Guard troops in Operation Jump Start in this law enforcement capacity since the troops were already stretched to their limits due to deployments to Iraq. This disagreement highlighted the question of just how much authority governors still have over their National Guards when the federal government calls for state troops. As noted, shortly thereafter, Congress gave the president the authority to mobilize National Guard units without the consent of state governors.

WILDFIRES

For years, the National Guard from several states have been assisting in fighting wildfires. In addition to actually dropping water on the fires, the Guard maps operations, makes damage assessments, supports communications and provides security.

CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Governors in all 50 states as well as in the District of Columbia and U. S. territories have declared a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 crisis. In Pennsylvania, National Guard troops were trained and prepared to help from the moment the national emergency became obvious. Early on, the Florida National Guard began preparing for field hospitals. The National Guard in several states delivered supplies and test kits to cruise ships and assisted stranded passengers. In many states, the Guard has been distributing food, disinfecting public spaces and running screening facilities. In West Virginia, the National Guard has been training first responders on how to mitigate their exposure to the virus. In New Jersey and Texas, the Guard has been directing traffic to testing sites and delivering supplies. Members of the

Maryland National Guard have been building tents outside medical facilities to expand treatment capabilities. The Michigan National Guard has been delivering critical protective gear, such as gloves, gowns, face shields and other supplies amid the pandemic. In hard hit New Rochelle, New York, the National Guard has been distrib-

uting food and provisions throughout the emergency. In Georgia, the governor called up 2,000 National Guard troops to ensure a steady supply of medical equipment, food, shelter and needed materials to the states' communities. The California National Guard has been quite active in our current situation. The California Guard helped with the cruise ship supplies and evacuations. It has been delivering food and supplies to food banks and providing security in vulnerable areas.

President Donald J. Trump also deployed some National Guard units, sending them to the particularly hard-hit states of New York, California and Washington in the coronavirus crisis. However, the president did not federalize the troops in the usual manner pursuant to 10 U. S. C. Section 12301 (d), known as Title 10 status. Instead, he left them under the control of the governors pursuant to 32 U. S. C. Section 502, known as Title 32 status. Nonetheless, the deployments will be funded federally by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA.

CONCLUSION

What the National Guard is doing thus far in our current crisis is likely just the beginning. All of us should be grateful that these brave troops set aside their personal affairs and step up to the plate for the American people in never-ending ways.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATE

By: Seth Reeb, Legislative Advocate-Reeb Government Relations

Save the Date:

April 22, All Vets Day at the Capitol

California State Commanders Veterans Council will be hosting the annual All Vets Day at the State Capitol on April 22. See the sign-up form in this newsletter. (subject to change due to Covid-19 concerns)

2020 Legislative Session

The legislative bill introduction deadline was February 21. This means all legislation has been introduced, and all of the bills will now be sent to committees for a hearing date to be scheduled. Then we will begin to have public hearings.

Currently, we are still sifting through these bills to identify all legislation for relevance to veterans and the military. So far, we have identified over 50 bills that may pertain to veterans and their families. Below you will find a list of bills that the VVA-CSC has taken a position on so far.

There are just a few weeks before the legislature breaks for recess, April 2-13. During this break, it would be an excellent opportunity to go and meet with your elected officials to talk about legislation.

AB 160 (Voepel R) Employment policy: voluntary veterans' preference.

Summary: Would enact the Voluntary Veterans' Preference Employment Policy Act to authorize a private employer to establish and maintain a written veterans' preference employment policy, to be applied uniformly to hiring decisions, to give a voluntary preference for hiring or retaining a veteran over another qualified applicant or employee. The bill would provide that the granting of a veterans' preference pursuant to the bill, in and of itself, shall be deemed not to violate any local or state equal employment opportunity law or regulation, including, but not limited to, the antidiscrimination provisions of California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA).

Position Support

AB 408 (Frazier D) Vehicles: disabled veterans.

Summary: Would require the Department of Motor Vehicles to accept a certificate from a county veterans service officer or the Department of Veterans Affairs that certifies that the applicant for a special license plate or placard is a disabled veteran.

AB 1809 (Cervantes D) Disabled veteran business enterprises.

Summary: This bill would authorize a state agency to award a contract for services or information technology that has an estimated value of between \$5,000 and \$500,000 to a certified small business, including a microbusiness, or to a DVBE, as long as the agency obtains price quotations from 2 or more certified small businesses or 2 or more DVBEs. The bill would specify that a certified small business or DVBE that utilizes this process as an alternative to the competitive bidding requirements

California State Commanders Veterans Council All Veterans Day at the Capitol

April 22, 2020

State Capitol, Sacramento California



TIME & LOCATION

WHEN: April 22, 2020, Wednesday

TIME: 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM

WHERE: Eureka Room, Basement, State Capitol

Lobby Day: Legislative speakers, Legislator of the Year Award presentation, visit legislative offices.

Who's invited: CSCVC Veteran organization members are invited and encouraged to attend and meet your state legislators. It is important that veterans attend the Day at the Capitol to help educate legislators and their staffs on the many issues of importance to veterans.

A complimentary continental breakfast and lunch buffet is provided by CSCVC for registered attendees.

There is seating available for 90 attendees, so please register ASAP if you wish to attend!

TO REGISTER:

- Scan and e-mail this form or your information to: dana.nichol@sbcglobal.net
- or mail to Reeb Government Relations, 1107 9th Street suite 620, Sacramento, CA 95814
- For more information call Dana @ (916) 558-1926

REGISTRATION FORM:

Complete and e-mail this form or your information to: dana.nichol@sbcglobal.net



Name:

Address:

E-mail / Phone:

Check the veterans organization(s) you belong to:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AMERICAN LEGION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AMERICAN G.I. FORUM | <input type="checkbox"/> NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF CA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AMVETS | <input type="checkbox"/> NATIONAL VETERANS FOUNDATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ASSOCIATION OF THE US ARMY | <input type="checkbox"/> PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CA ASSOCIATION OF CVSO'S | <input type="checkbox"/> RESERVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ELITE SERVICE-DVBE'S | <input type="checkbox"/> SCOTTISH AMERICAN MILITARY SOCIETY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION | <input type="checkbox"/> US SUBMARINE VETERANS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> JEWISH WAR VETERANS OF THE US | <input type="checkbox"/> VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MARINE CORPS LEAGUE | <input type="checkbox"/> VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MARINE CORPS VETERANS ASSOCIATION | <input type="checkbox"/> WOMEN VETERANS ALLIANCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER |

may not also receive the small business preference or the DVBE participation incentive.

AB 1911 (Maienschein D) State agencies: veterans.

Summary: The bill would require the state agency, through the intake form, to request permission from that person to transmit their contact information to the Department of Veterans Affairs so that the person may be notified of potential eligibility to receive state and federal veterans benefits.

AB 2688 (Cervantes D) Veterans: veterans service officers.

Summary: Would appropriate \$11,000,000 from the General Fund to the Department of Veterans Affairs for allocation to counties for county veterans service officers based upon a workload unit performance formula to be developed by the department. This bill would also require the department to develop performance metrics to demonstrate the effective use of appropriated funds.

Position Support

SB 725 (Rubio) Veterans rental housing.

Summary: Current law creates the Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Act of 2014, to provide for the acquisition, construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable multifamily supportive housing, affordable transitional housing, affordable rental housing, or related facilities for veterans and their families to allow veterans to access and maintain housing stability. This bill would require the department to establish a rental housing assistance program to provide financial assistance to veterans seeking rental housing, based on the needs of the veterans.

SB 907 (Archuleta) Child abuse or neglect investigation: military notification.

Summary: Would require a county child welfare department investigating a case of child abuse or neglect to determine if the parent or guardian is an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States. The bill would authorize the county child welfare department to develop and adopt memoranda of understanding with military installations that would govern the investigation of allegations of child abuse or neglect against active duty service members, as specified.

Position Support

SB 1007 (Hueso) Personal income taxes: exclusion: uniformed services: retirement pay.

Summary: This bill would exclude from gross income retirement pay received by a taxpayer from the federal government for service performed in the uniformed services, as defined, during the taxable year.

Position Support

SB 1018 (Chang) Veterans: Governor's Memorial Certificate.

Summary: The bill would require the program to send a Governor's Memorial Certificate to the survivors of any deceased veteran eligible for burial in a national or state veterans' cemetery, and would require that certificate to be accompanied by information directing survivors to county veteran service offices.

SB 1071 (Wilk) Personal income taxes: exclusion: uniformed services: retirement pay.

Summary: Would exclude from gross income specified amounts of retirement pay received by a taxpayer from the federal government for service performed in the uniformed services, as defined, during the taxable year.

Link to find more information on Legislation

Bill info, votes, Committee Analysis: <http://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billSearchClient.xhtml>

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Kate O'Hare-Palmer

as Vietnam Veterans Day. The proclamation invited "all Americans to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that commemorate the 50-year anniversary of the Vietnam War."

In 2017, President Trump signed the law designating March 29 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day. The annual commemoration was long overdue. Many Vietnam veterans came home to a nation embroiled in anti-war and anti-government protests. Some, like O'Hare-Palmer, found themselves to be targets after returning stateside in 1969.

"Flying home to Travis Air Force Base, we were bussed to the Oakland depot with protestors throwing rotten vegetables at us. It was shocking ... we were not prepared for this. How could this be? We had left one war zone to arrive in another," she wrote in a chapter of a book by Thomas Sanders titled "Vietnam War Portraits: The Faces and Voices."

Time has a way of healing the wounds or at least numbing the hurt. National Vietnam War Veterans Day is intended to be the "welcome home" most never received. It is a time each year for Vietnam veterans to share their stories so others might understand what they endured, the sacrifices they made, the friends they lost, and what they've experienced in the years since.

Her own story of serving in Vietnam is a prime example. Instead of telling it at the memorial, she'll be at home sheltering in place – a concept O'Hare-Palmer and other veterans understand perhaps better than anyone. That is what she did at Army evacuation hospitals in Lai Khe and Chu Lai, where she was a surgical nurse in 1968 and 1969.



Army evacuation hospital, Vietnam, 1968.

"We were overrun once as a hospital unit," she said. "We were hiding patients, and putting them into containers; hoping to keep them safe. It's kind of similar to what's happening right now. We lived in lockdown there. We stayed inside the fence."

Tending to the wounded and the dying became etched in her mind, haunting her for decades after the war. She looked for ways to stay grounded while in-country, and the things that helped her cope there helped her cope back home, too.

"I started trading my (medical) instruments for chickens so that I could get fresh eggs," she said. "Some (other military personnel) had dogs. Pets were helpful. I had 10 chickens before I left. The engineers built me a little chicken coop. The dogs got after one of them, and I took it into the ER and got an IV into it to save it."

Years later, when some of her nursing comrades vis-

ited her back home in Sonoma County, the first thing they noticed about her place was the chicken coop not unlike the one she had in Vietnam.

"It didn't even dawn on me," O'Hare-Palmer said.

She returned from the war to work at VA hospitals, including Fort Miley in San Francisco, but her experiences as a surgical nurse never left her.

"I had trouble even seeing blood," she said. She had nightmares about it, which convinced her to move out of surgical nursing. She used her GI Bill education benefits to get her degree in nutrition from UC Berkeley. She spent more than 30 years in nursing; became an advocate for women veterans, speaking out about everything from post-traumatic stress disorder to military sexual trauma.

O'Hare-Palmer was among the speakers at the Veterans Day ceremony at the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., in November 2017, sharing the stage with the current and former U.S. Defense Secretaries.

And Sunday, she planned to be at the National Vietnam War Veterans Day ceremony in Sacramento which, under any other circumstances, would have drawn a good-sized crowd. Videos from the ceremony might even have gone viral.

Instead, it's being preempted for the time being by COVID-19.

FORMER CALVET UNDERSECRETARY UMBERG HELPED MAKE HISTORY AS ARMY'S CULTURE INVOLVING WOMEN BEGAN TO CHANGE IN 1970's

By Jeff Jardine

As we continue to celebrate Women's History Month, the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) can look in its own storied history to find women who have made great contributions in the military, and to the agency itself.

Retired Brigadier General Robin Umberg is one of them. She broke ground for other women in the military by rising through the ranks during a time of great change in the Army's culture.

Umberg comes from a military family. Her dad was an Air Force pilot who served during World War II, Korean, and Vietnam wars. His service took the family overseas to Italy and Africa, among other places. As a young girl, with the family sometimes living in off-base housing, she'd meet other kids. When they asked who she was, "I'd say, 'I'm an American, and then I'd say my name,'" Umberg said.

That military background gave her plenty of insight into her future. Umberg joined the Army at 18 in the 1970s, beginning a career that spanned 33 years. "There were two reasons," she said. "I wanted a free education, and I got a nursing scholarship through the Walter Reed Army Institute of Nursing." And the other reason? Opportunity.

Graduation from Walter Reed Army Institute of Nursing 1977

"I took a look at the data," she said. "There were lots more men than women. Certainly, I wanted to serve God and country. And the military very quickly changed me. The camaraderie I experienced – I loved being a soldier and serving with soldiers. It not only took hold of the core of who I am, but also the core of my comrades."

Umberg's career began when the Army transformed itself into a single unit in which men and women served together rather than separately. It meant opportunities for promotions, better pay, and better duties; although women couldn't serve in combat roles until 2015.

"The 1970s were really important for women," she said. "Women actually served during the Revolutionary



Retired Brigadier General Robin Umberg



Graduation from Walter Reed Army Institute of Nursing 1977

WOMEN VETERANS

RETIREED ARMY NURSE, WOMEN VETERANS ADVOCATE HAS STORY TO TELL EVEN THOUGH VIETNAM WAR VETERANS DAY EVENT NIXED BY COVID-19

By Jeff Jardine

Kate O'Hare-Palmer planned to come to the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Sacramento on Sunday for what she and other Vietnam veterans has seen grow into an annual day of respect.

Instead, the former Army nurse, who chairs the Vietnam Veterans Association of America's Women Veterans Committee, will stay home in Petaluma like other Californians trying to protect themselves and others from the coronavirus, officially referred to as COVID-19.

President Barack Obama proclaimed March 29, 2012,

War. But it took a couple of centuries before it really took hold.”

Umberg recognized the opportunity, enlisted, and began her ascent through the ranks, adding a Master’s in Business Administration to her nursing credentials along the way. She eventually moved off of the nursing floors and into commands, including the 6253rd and 4122th Army Hospitals, and a pair of overseas assignments. President Clinton appointed her to serve on the West Point Board of Visitors in 2000.

Promoted to Brigadier General in 2005, she served as Chief, Professional Services, 3rd Medical Command at Fort Gillem, Georgia, which handled battlefield readiness for more than 27,000 Army medical personnel. She was inducted into the Order of Military Medical Merit in 2006.



121 ST Evac Hospital, Korea.

The greater responsibilities of rank also challenged her emotions in one of her very last assignments.

“I represented the Chief of Staff of the Army at funerals of soldiers (killed in) Afghanistan,” she said. Umberg remembers a service in Mississippi that revealed how difficult it would be. “I always met with the family, to talk to them about their loved one, to make my remarks personal. When you get down on one knee and present the flag on behalf of a grateful nation ... I said I wasn’t going to cry ... I’m there in my white gloves and looking at that mother with tears in her eyes. ...”

As the ceremony ended, Umberg said she stepped behind a tree as she composed herself. A man wearing a motorcycle club vest saw her and approached. “He thanked me,” she said. “He didn’t understand that leadership really felt that much, cared that much.”

She did, and made it a point of writing a personal letter to each child of the fallen whose funerals she attended, giving them something that they could cherish as they grew up.

But Umberg will say that leadership had its challenges, some of which she met better than others.

“At the end of my career, women would come up to me and say, ‘You led the way,’” Umberg said. “‘You commanded hospitals. You moved up in a man’s world.’ It made me squeamish. I may have opened doors, but I did not have the courage of the women who came after me. When I was harassed, I didn’t have the courage to speak up. I felt if I said something, I might not move up.”

She put up with harassment in hopes that she could build the power to affect changes and outcomes down the road. “Women like me might have been able to open doors, but others worked their tails off (to fight harassment),” Umberg said. “I’m so proud of the women who followed me and did that.”

After retiring in 2010, she went on to serve as a deputy secretary and then as the undersecretary for CalVet.



Brigadier General Umberg sworn-in as CalVet Deputy Secretary for Veterans Homes

Today, she is a member of the California Veterans Board, which advocates to ensure and enhance the rights and benefits of California veterans and their dependents.

She lives in Southern California with her husband, state Senator Tom Umberg. He is a retired Army colonel and former federal prosecutor who also served as President Clinton’s drug czar.

CHAPTER NOTES

Chapter 201

VVA CHAPTER 201 PARTICIPATES IN UVC VETERANS DAY PARADE

VVA and AVVA Chapter 201 members participated in the United Veterans Council 2019 Veterans Day Parade in downtown San Jose on November 11, 2019. The Chapter 201 Color Guard included Phan T. Nguyen, Stephen Thompson (Secretary/Treasurer), Bob Kadlec, Gerald Arnold Alexander Cao and Duc Nguyen.



Chapter 201 participated in the UVC 2019 Veterans Day Parade

CHAPTER 201 AVVA GIFTS TO VA HOSPITAL PATIENTS

VVA-201 Secretary/Treasurer Stephen Thompson and AVVA-201 President Cang Kim Dong and members of AVVA Chapter 201 provided annual holiday greetings to patients in the Palo Alto VA Hospital on November 23rd and the Menlo Park VA Hospital on November 30th.



Stephen Thompson and Cang Kim Dong

Over 200 holiday gift bags were distributed to the patients at the Palo Alto Hospital and over 300 were distributed at the Menlo Park Hospital.



AVVA Chapter 201 Gift Packages

AVVA members also provided string music and songs to entertain the patients to show gratitude for their service.



AVVA Chapter 201 Entertain VA Patients

CHAPTER 201 SUPPORTED WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

National Wreaths Across America Day (WAA) is an event in December dedicated to remembering the sacrifices veterans have made in wars since the American Revolution. WAA Day pays tribute in veteran’s cemeteries nationwide. Its mission includes raising awareness of the sacrifices veterans make for the country and encouraging more people to remember. Cupertino American Legion Post 642 sponsored its fourth annual WAA ceremony at the Veterans Section of Gates of Heaven Cemetery in Los Altos, California on December 14th. VVA Chapter 201 members, Navy veteran Stephen Thomson (Secretary/Treasurer) and Air Force veteran Rose Herrera, were honored to address the gathering.



Stephen Thompson Delivers Keynote

CHAPTER 201 HOLDS ANNUAL HOLIDAY BANQUET

Over 115 Chapter 201 members and guests attended the annual Holiday Banquet at the Three Flames Restaurant in San Jose on December 16, 2019.



Chapter 201 Annual Holiday Banquet

Chapter 201 was honored to have Becky Thomas, beloved sister of our chapter namesake, Darwin J. Thomas



Becky Thomas

attend this year’s holiday gathering. Becky presented an oral and pictorial memorial to her brother highlighting much of his past and early time in the Navy. The presentation was very emotional, not only for Becky, but for many of the members.

Darwin Joel Thomas, born on April 28, 1943 in Santa Clara, California, flew off the carrier USS Oriskany and was shot down over North Vietnam on October 14, 1966. Ensign Thomas, flying one of two A-1H

Skyriders, was conducting a night armed reconnaissance mission in a hilly area about 25 miles southeast of Thanh Hoa, North Vietnam. When lights were spotted on a road, Ensign Thomas rolled in to attack the target but failed to pull out before the aircraft impacted the ground and exploded. His remains have not been repatriated. He was 23 years old and married. Originally listed as Missing in action, he is now listed as "killed, body not recovered."



Darwin J. Thomas

President Warren Finch presented Becky with a Certificate of Appreciation and eternal gratitude of the Chapter. During Chapter 201's February meeting, Becky was presented with an Honorary Membership in the Vietnam Veterans of America for her continuing efforts to support recovery of those Missing In Action in Vietnam.



President Warren Finch, Becky Thomas and Past President David Sanders

President Warren Finch presented Gerald Arnold, Bob Kadlec and Stephen Thompson with a Certificate of Appreciation for their assistance during the annual Veterans Day Parade. President Warren Finch also presented Certificates of Appreciation to AVVA members Phan T.



Stephen Thompson, Gerald Arnold and Bob Kadlec



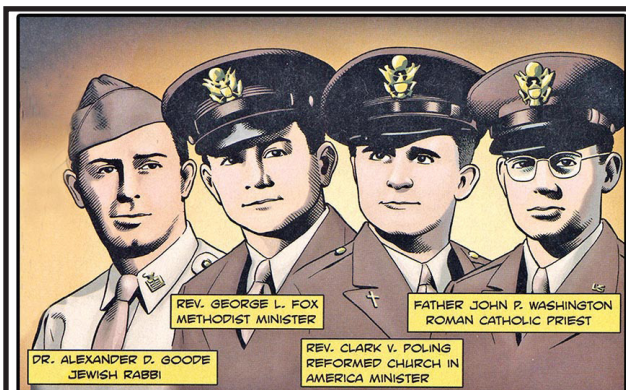
AVVA 201 President Cang Kim Dong and VVA 201 President David Warren Finch

Nguyen, Duc Nguyen and Alexander Cao for their support to the Chapter Color Guard during the Veterans Day Parade.

In recognition of AVVA Chapter 201 support of the patients at the Palo Alto and Menlo Park VA Hospitals, in the form of holiday greetings and entertainment and where over 500 gift bags were distributed to the patients, President Warren Finch presented a Certificate of Appreciation to AVVA Chapter 201 President Cang Kim Dong.

CHAPTER 201 PARTICIPATES IN FOUR CHAPLAINS SERVICE

On February 3, 1943, as the U.S Army troopship, USTS Dorchester, passed through "torpedo alley" some 100 miles off the coast of Greenland, it was struck by a torpedo fired from German submarine U-233. Three torpedoes were fired at the Dorchester at 2:00 AM and the ship sunk within a very short period of time beneath the icy waters along with the majority of those aboard. Many of those who survived attributed their survival directly to the assistance and acts of compassion of the four chaplains aboard that night.



Four Chaplains

The four chaplains, of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faiths aboard the troopship Dorchester in the North Atlantic, were among the first on deck calming the men and handing out life jackets. When the life preservers ran out, they took off their own and placed them on waiting soldiers without regard to faith or ethnic background and understanding the consequences of their decision.

Chapter 201 Members Stephen Thompson (Secretary/Treasurer), David Sanders (Past President) and Gerald Arnold posted the VVA Colors during the American Legion District 13 Four Chaplains ceremony at Saint Frances Cabrini Church in San Jose on February 1st on the occasion of the 77th anniversary of the sinking of troop ship USAT Dorchester sank during World War II after being torpedoed by a German submarine.



Stephen Thompson, David Sanders and Gerald Arnold

CHAPTER 201 MEMBER RECEIVES THE VETERAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Chapter 201 Member Michael Frangadakis was presented with the Santa Clara County Veteran Of The Year

award from District 1 Supervisor Mike Wasserman on February 19, 2020. Michael Frangadakis is the co-founder and President Emeritus of the Veterans Memorial and Support Foundation of Los Gatos, California. Founded in 2012, the Foundation's mission is to deliver honor, gratitude and healing to Silicon Valley Veterans.



Michael Frangadakis and Santa Clara County Su-

CHAPTER 201 MEMBER MG OSTENBERG PRESENTATION TO MOAA

Chapter 201 member Major General Robert Ostenberg was the guest speaker at the February 20, 2020 luncheon of the Silicon Valley Chapter (SVC) of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). More than 50 MOAA chapter members and guests attended the luncheon, including 13 members of VVA Chapter 201. MG Ostenberg provided a presentation about his experience as a Platoon leader with the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry and the 1st Regiment, 1st Cavalry of the 23rd Infantry (Americal) Division in Vietnam between 1971-1972 where he received a Bronze Star with "V" device (with 1 oak leaf cluster) and the Purple Heart.



MG Ostenberg Presentation to MOAA

Following his presentation, MG Ostenberg presented 50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemorative pins and certificates to eligible Vietnam and Vietnam Generation Veterans attending the luncheon.



MG Ostenberg Distributes Commemorative Pins

Chapter 446

Chapter members took part in the Veterans Day Ceremonies in the city of Pasadena and the Field of Valor in Covina. All chapter members were encouraged to take part in ceremonies within their community.

Also, in November the chapter donated two (2) turkeys to the East LA Vet Center for their Thanksgiving banquet.

Five hundred (500) turkeys were donated to the chapter. The chapter with the help of other VVA chapters,



VVA Chapter 47

February 2020 General Meeting - Just about a full house. The chapter membership has been increasing over the last year and a half due in part to community outreach by President George Swift and Secretary Steve Mackey. The Inland Empire has two homeless veteran facilities the chapter has been filling the shelves of their food pantry. Local Vietnam veterans have been coming out to assist with the chapter and have been joining the membership. A local Corvette club has also been getting involved with Chapter 47 activities and their Vietnam veteran members have joined the chapter.



Chapter 47 members (back of shelter) attend a funeral service at Riveside National Cemetery.

American Legion, VFW, and the East LA Vet Center gave these turkeys to needy Veteran families and those in need.

Chapter members attended a concert at Cal Tech. The Concert was free for veterans, but the general public were to bring a donation of toiletries which were donated to the chapter which have been distributed to Veterans and the homeless.

This month’s chapter meeting was a joint luncheon meeting with the Korean Vietnam Veterans. The chapter was treated to a Korean BBQ lunch by our Korean Veteran Brothers many who are AVVA members of our chapter,

Some of members attended the Flag Ceremony at the Orange Plaza in the city of Orange.

Chapter 464

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans 7th Annual Classic Car Show & Program, Saturday, March 28, 2020 at the Veterans Memorial Center, 1455 Madison Ave, Redwood City. Car show is

becoming popular, the showing has been growing each year. Three main awards will be presented “Best in show”, “People’s Choice” and “VVA 464 Veteran of the Year”. Chef Ashley will cook up some BBQ pulled pork for lunch.

Flag planting at “Good Turn Day”, May 23, 2020, Golden Gate National Cemetery at 8:30 am
Memorial Day Services, May 25, 2020 at Golden Gate National Cemetery, 11am.

Old Business & Past Activities:
Super Bowl party at PTSD program, held on February 2, 2020 at Menlo Park VA Bldg. 351. Our friends were served pizza, salads, deserts and soft drinks. Operation Care & Comfort donated “goodie bags” to all of the attendees.

For Good of the Order:
BBQ at San Bruno VA Clinic every 2nd Tuesday of the month; at 11:30AM

Avenue of the Flags committee meeting will be held on March 9, 2020 at 7pm at Golden Gate National Service Building.

BBQ at VA on 3rd Street in downtown clinic in SF every 4th Thursday of the month starting in February, 11:30am – 1:00pm

Chapter 982

March was Women Veterans Month. We paid tribute to 3 women Veterans attending our meeting, Julie Wallace, Dea Cunningham and Shevonne Harris, all US

Army. Thank you ladies and thank you to all Women Veterans, you are forgotten all too often.

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day for Chapter 982 is March 24th with our annual Dinner/Dance. We will have a full house with dancing to "Steppin Out", raffles, silent auction, 50/50 and AVVA baked goods sale. Fun for all

San Luis Vet Center is hosting "The Wall That Heals" on March 29th through April 1, 2018 at the Madonna Meadows in San Luis Obispo. There will an escort for "The Wall That Heals" from Santa Maria to San Luis Obispo on March 28th. Chapter 982 will be doing the opening ceremony for the candlelight vigil on March 30th at 7 PM. Many of our members are standing watch while the Wall is here. Thank you to all at the Vet Center for putting this together.

Coming up we have a garage/yard sale fund raiser in May and a couple of Melowdrama nights planned. Till next time.

JerryKaufman

Chapter 500

VVA Chapter 500, Sacramento, is organizing two events at the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial this spring. All VVA members, Vietnam veterans, veterans of other eras, and their families and friends are invited to attend both events, which are open to the public. The California Vietnam Veterans Memorial is located on the north-east corner of the State Capital grounds, near the rose garden.

The Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day remembrance ceremony will begin at 12 noon on Sunday, March 29, 2020. On that day in 1973, the last combat troops were withdrawn from Vietnam and the last POWs held in North Vietnam were returned. State and local officials, VVA 500, and other veterans’ groups will take part in the ceremony to recognize the sacrifices of Vietnam veterans.

Beginning at 7 a.m., Sunday, May 24, 2020, members of VVA Chapter 500 will begin the solemn reading of each and every one of the over 5,800 names carved on the granite panels of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The reading of the names is an all-day event involving many veterans’ groups and the families of Vietnam veterans. At 12 noon, there will be break in the reading of the names for a ceremony and wreath laying honoring California’s fallen heroes. All Vietnam veterans and their families are encouraged to come to Sacramento to read the names of their brothers and sister in arms.

Chapter 785

The chapter donated to 12 Orange County JROTC High Schools, supported Healing Waters and veterans of Fullerton Junior College and Cal State Fullerton. In lieu of a Christmas Party twelve members donated to our less fortunate veterans.

NORTH DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Butch Frederickson

We are still receiving a little money to help the veterans affected by the Campfire but the help for that has slowed down tremendously. Chapter 582 did receive a grant for \$11,500.00 to buy gravel for people that have been burned out and are living in temporary housing on their property. The mud has been a very big problem for them. There will be more grant money available for this if needed. Chapter 582 has also been working with the Chico VFW to help veterans in the county.

Now that things aren’t quite as intense in the county I intend to resume chapter visits. I’ve been unable to do very many this year.

I am looking forward to talking with the student veterans at the colleges in the area. This is another thing that I have been wanting to do but been unable to.

I was invited to attend a veterans meeting in Davis. These men and women meet regularly but are not affiliated with any veteran organizations. There were vets from WW II up to Vietnam. It was an interesting and enjoyable meeting.



Wheelchair Regatta

The Veterans started arriving around 0900 by bus or van from various VA facilities in Northern California including but not limited to Yountville Veterans home, San Francisco VA (ft. miley), palo alto va, Menlo park va, etc.

In order to get the wheelchairs (with their owners) on to the boats, the Alameda, Berkeley, Oakland, Richmond fire departments and other organizations loaned us their young, strong teams to four-man lift the veterans on to the boats.

Photograph by Freda Lucido



VVA Chapter 53

Vietnam Veterans of America, South Bay, Chapter 53 presented a plaque of appreciation to the City of Torrance as a token of our great appreciation recognizing the outstanding support the City of Torrance has given, and continues to give to veterans. Evidence of the support includes but is not limited to: the magnificent annual Armed Forces Day Parade and Military weekend, it's beautiful Veterans Memorial, the Hometown Heroes Banner program, the Veterans Appreciation Luncheon and Resource Fair, and of course, the establishment of the Social Services Commission with a focus on Veterans' issues. For these and many other reasons, we say THANK YOU. It's very clear that the City of Torrance holds our Veterans in the highest regard.

Chapter 756

- 1. Purshasing 20 movie tickets for Long Beach VA Hospital so Veterans who are there can be treated to Night out at the movies about five to seven Veterans go and with their escorts also includes popcorn, candy and soda pop once a month been doing that for over 14 years. (issue lack of drivers at Long Beach VA)
- 2. In working with the Westminster School District "Price of Freedom Art Contest" which students are working on with Frances Nguyen who is on School Board and the Patriotic Art Contest in Woodbridge High School in Irvine both in May 2020 the project will include interviews with membership.
- 3. Chapter members attended dinner at Wolf Lodge in Garden Groves held by the Vietnamese Multi-Cultural Organization Honoring Vietnam Veterans.
- 4. Chapter takes 6 Veterans from the Long Beach VA Hospital to Knotts Berry Farm for Christmas outing plus chicken dinner. Doing that for 15 years or better.
- 5. Chapter donating help to Patriots and Paws (supports Veterans with furniture and household goods), supporting Veterans Service Officer at Long Beach VA, Vets to Vets a PTSD group at the Long Beach VA and the 13th MEU with Diapers and wipes program and donating funds.
- 6. Helping Chapter #1024 with "Lifesaver" Huey helicopter in restoring for a traveling and educating the public and reminding Vietnam Veterans of the use and the memories it would bring back to them.
- 7. President still meeting with a former Congresswoman Kim Young for review of Veterans issues. (turn-over of doctors at the LBVA Hospital)
- 8. Networking with Cal-Vet in both Los Angeles and Oranges County to find Veterans Service to help the Veterans Community.
- 9. Attended funeral for 81 Vietnamese Paratroopers KIA's and 4 U.S. Air Force crewmen in Westminster since Vietnam would not allow them buried in their own Country. Aircraft downed in 1965.
- 10. Chapter had Christmas luncheon for 51 members that attended great time.

REGION 9 DIRECTOR
Dick Southern

- Since the last California State Council meeting in October I have:
- November 1 -24 – Attended various Veteran and Chapter 887 events in Angeles City, PI.
 - November 14-18 – Attended meetings and events with Chapter 668 in Guam.
 - December 6-8 – Attended the New Mexico State Council meeting in San Antonio, NM.
 - December 13-15 – Attended the Colorado State Council meeting in Castle Rock, CO.
 - January 15-19 – Attended the VVA National Board of Directors in Silver Spring, MD.
 - January 16 – Attended the Conference of State Council Presidents meeting as an alternate.
 - January 17 – Chaired the VVA National Membership Affairs Committee meeting.
 - January 17-18 – Attended the VVA National Board of Directors meeting.
 - January 24-26 – Attended the Arizona State Council meeting in Phoenix, AZ.
 - February 28-29, March 1 – Attending the California State Council meeting in Visalia, CA.
 - I continue to be in contact with Chapters and State Councils in Region 9 by E-mail and telephone.
 - I write 2 columns for The Veteran.
 - I continue to moderate 2 VVA Talk Lists and 1 AVVA Talk List.
 - Serving as VVA National Membership Affairs Chair.
 - Serving on one VVA National committee - Veterans Benefits.

POW/MIA COMMITTEE
Bob Chaney, Chair

Committee discussed the recent recoverees none of which were in Vietnam. The POW/MIA article in the "The Journey" Chapter 227 or New York article which included a report on the Vietnam Veterans Initiative program. And how effective it is. A discussion POW/MIA day and ways to honor that date. I told the group that as soon and I know the 2020 poster is approved and ready to be ordered I would send out information through Dick Southern.

2ND VICE PRESIDENT
Dick Southern

- Since the CSC meeting in October I have:
- Sent out E-mails on various subjects keeping CSC chapters, the BOD and committees informed.
- Continue to administer the CSC Veteran Service Officer program.
- Sought funds in the form of sponsors and grants for CSC programs.
- Monitored the Household Goods Donation Program for any changes or updates.
- Been involved in many Chapter 391 activities.

VIETNAM MEMORIAL WALL
ERECTED IN OZARK
By Carmen Fuentes

- Vietnam memorial wall in Ozark to honor the vets who lost their lives during the war.
- More than 58,000 paid the ultimate sacrifice with their lives.
- 50 of those who died are from here in the Wiregrass.
- Now they are being remembered in Dale County.
- USMC retired Master Sergeant, Harry Grainger got the idea for the memorial wall from the National Memorial in Washington D.C.
- "We got a lot of veterans and families that have never



- been able to make that trip. So we wanted to do something here in the state of Alabama to recognize these people" Grainger explained.
- Those people are 50 veterans from Dale, Coffee, Geneva and Houston counties who bravely fought in the Vietnam War.
- One name that didn't make the wall- US Army retired Master Sergeant John Lowry - who passed away yesterday from cancer caused by Agent Orange used in Vietnam.
- Grainger says "In order to be on the wall, in the granite, you must have died in Vietnam or a direct result of an incident in Vietnam."
- The wall, which cost \$13,000 was made possible thanks to donations from the community.
- Now the wall sits in front of the Dale County Commission building for everyone to see.
- "We wanted to put it some place that, number one, would be easy access for the people that want to come down and view it" said Grainger.
- Although the wall is up, the project is not 100 percent complete.
- The 373 chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America are selling brick pavers that can have messages written on them and will then be laid as a walk-way around the wall.
- "We are selling those to individuals and businesses, anybody that would like to honor the vietnam veterans" Grainger explained.
- Vietnam veteran, retired E6 James Johnson of the US Navy knows what it's like to support those who have served.
- "When desert storm took place the first people to welcome those young people home was Vietnam veterans" Johnson said
- It is because of sacrifice that Johnson is grateful to have a wall that honors those who served in Vietnam.
- "I'm a firm believer that veterans should be recognized. We were not recognized when we came home" Johnson continued.
- Now Vietnam veterans from around the Wiregrass will always remember the men and women who sacrificed their lives for ours.
- "Our motto is 'we'll never let one generation forget another generation' of veterans like they forgot us. And doing things like this makes that happen" Grainger concluded.
- If you would like an order form to purchase a brick

paver, you can contact the Vietnam Veterans of America chapter #373 at (334) 598-8804.

10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW
ABOUT THE THREE SERVICEMEN
STATUE
By VVMF



- The Three Servicemen Statue is a heroic, traditional depiction of those who served in Vietnam. The statue is part of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site and was unveiled on Veterans Day in 1984, two years after The Wall's completion. A flagpole that flies the American and POW/MIA flag was dedicated at the same time. Through the years, the Three Servicemen Statue has remained a powerful tribute honoring Vietnam veterans. 2019 marks its 35th Anniversary.
- Here are 10 things you should know about the Three Servicemen Statue.
- 10. The Three Servicemen Statue was born out of controversy



- When the design was chosen for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The Wall), it was the unanimous choice of the judging committee. However, its unusual and abstract design did not appeal to everyone. The controversy over the Vietnam Veterans Memorial design threatened to derail it ever being built, so a compromise would have to be reached.
- In January 1982, there was a compromise. The Wall would be built as planned, but two traditional elements would be added to it—a flagpole and a statue.
- 9. The designer was Frederick Hart
- Frederick Hart sculpts the Three Servicemen Statue while a model, James Connell III, sits for him.

- On July 1, 1982 Frederick Hart was selected to design the sculpture. Hart was a well-known and respected sculptor whose team had placed third in the open design competition for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.
- Hart spent two and a half years completing the statue.
- 8. The statue is made of bronze and is eight feet high in its entirety
- The Three Servicemen Statue is cast in bronze, differing from other monuments and memorials in Washington, D. C. It is finished with a patina which provided a variety of subtle color variations. The flesh areas are a rich caramel bronze and the uniforms are a slightly olive color. High polish is accented on the eyes, hair, buttons,



Three Servicemen Statue, Veterans Day 2008. (Photo credit: Quentin Miles)

and pieces of military equipment.

Hart used 2,500 pounds of clay to make the statue. The statue itself is placed on a granite base, which makes it eight feet high.

7. Five men modeled for the statue – none were Vietnam veterans



Pictured L to R: Guillermo Jose Smith-Perez de Leon, Sculptor Frederick Hart, U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. James Connell III, and U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Terrance Green

The three figures that make up statue represent American racial and ethnic diversity. They are purposefully identifiable as Caucasian, African-American and Hispanic-American. The selection of the models was done in an unconventional way.

Three men modeled for the African-American figure. The first was selected when Hart was walking the streets and surveying the pedestrians and found the face he long sought. The second model was selected during a search through the Marine Corps Barracks in Washington, D. C., and the third was found in a hospital while Hart was visiting a sick friend.

The African-American figure evolved over the study of three men: Corporal Terrance Green who served in the U. S. Marine Corps, Rodney Sherrill, and Scotty Dillingham, a 15-year-old Washingtonian.

The Caucasian figure was modeled after James Connell III, then a Corporal in the U. S. Marine Corps.

The Hispanic figure was modeled after Guillermo Jose Smith-Perez de Leon, a resident of Maryland at the time.

Each model sat for two to three hours at a time for two months.

6. Hart wanted the statue to convey “youth and innocence”



The common characteristic Hart sought in all of his models were youth and innocence. The balance between childhood and manhood was the essence of the sculpture. Hart’s use of young models rings close to the war experience. The average age of a service member who was killed or MIA was 22 years old.

Hart said this in describing the sculpture: “They are young. The contrast between the innocence of their youth and the weapons of war underscores the poignancy of their sacrifice. There is about them the physical contact and sense of unity that bespeaks the bonds of love and sacrifice that is the nature of men at war. . . Their strength

and their vulnerability are both evident.”

5. The Three Servicemen is located approximately 150 feet away from The Wall



It was decided that the statue should be placed in a plaza to the southwest of The Wall. It is positioned so it looks as if the three figures are emerging from a grove of trees. Some visitors say they appear to be looking for their friends on The Wall. Others feel they are looking for their own names there.

Once they had determined the location for the statue, Cooper-Lecky, VVMF’s architect-of-record, reworked the walkway system so that the flag could be placed at an intersection in order to create an entranceway.

Hart was confronted with how to work with the simplicity of The Wall. His solution was to keep the figures of smaller scale – as to not interfere with The Wall’s much larger scale. He also wanted the statue to withdraw from The Wall so the men would not infringe upon it.

4. The weapons and uniforms are true to Vietnam service

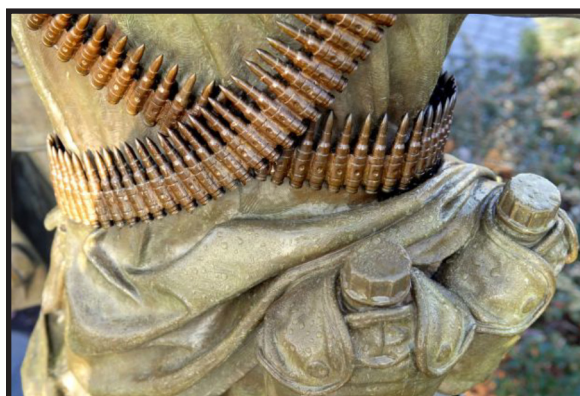


Hart wanted to ensure accuracy for the details on the uniforms and weaponry. He relied heavily on historians. He was advised by members of the Army Institute of Military History and the Marine Corps Historical Society. Along with employing the help of several experts, he borrowed military gear from Vietnam veterans.

The three figures wear cracked boots and crumpled and tightly rolled fatigue pants. One figure is wearing a worn hat, an overstuffed jacket, and a bandolier full of bullets draped across his chest.

The uniforms are representative of all branches of the military and each figure wears a variety of gear.

3. The depiction of ammunition on the statue has come under scrutiny



The bandolier on one of the figures of the Three Servicemen Statue. (Photo Credit: Dan Arant)

The bandolier, which holds ammunition, is a design feature that has come under scrutiny. The ammunition is facing upwards, which some claim is inaccurate.

In Dec. of 1993, Frederick Hart wrote a letter to Robert Horton, then the Regional Director of the National Capital Region for the Department of Interior, defending the way he positioned it.

He said that trying to dress and equip the figures was difficult because of the diversity in service member’s hab-

its. He said that units would use things and wear things different from another unit at different places and different times. He met veterans who argued vehemently for the bullets pointing up as for those who argued for the bullets pointing down. He was also further advised that wearing a bandolier was not done at all, since the ammo should be transported in its case. Exceptions would include combat or near-combat situations where it would be slung over one shoulder to be able to quick-feed it into the gun. The wearing of the bandolier crisscrossed “poncho villa” style was not desirable or practical.

While Hart said he did his best to remain faithful to realistic details, his ultimate goal was to “capture the spirit of the Vietnam experience.”

As a result, the ammunition on the bandolier is faced upwards.

2. The statue is cared for and maintained four times a year



Rusty Bernabo, Object Conservator, cleans the Three Servicemen Statue in August, 2019.

As The Wall requires regular cleaning and maintenance, the Three Servicemen Statue needs special care. The statue is exposed to pollen, insects and pollution throughout the year. It receives preventative conservation cleaning four times a year. Russell Bernabo, an Object Conservator, is responsible for cleaning the statue. The cleaning involves buffing with gentle non-ionic detergents and applying corrosion inhibitors.

As time passes, bird droppings can eat through the patina and the patina must be carefully re-coated to not damage the sculpture. Bernabo’s job also involves retrieving spider nests in crevices, usually in the helmets carried by the soldiers. There is also the occasional retrieval of coins from the side pockets of the servicemen where tourists have come to drop spare change.

“My job is to maintain the artist’s intent,” Bernabo told VVMF in 2014. “Restoration means having made the artist happy.”

The Three Servicemen statue also underwent a \$100,000 restoration in 2010.

Through the support of our generous donors, VVMF pays for care and maintenance provided to the Three Servicemen Statue and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site.

1. The statue and flagpole were dedicated on Veterans Day 1984



The flagpole and Three Servicemen statue were dedicated on Veterans Day 1984, when the entire Vietnam Veterans Memorial site was turned over to the U.S. government by VVMF as a gift to the American people.

Today, the 12-foot-by-8-foot flag flies from a 60-foot pole, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in honor of the men and women who served in Vietnam. The flagstaff, donated by The American Legion, features an inscription and the seals of the five branches of military service at its base: Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy. An inscription on the flagpole base reads: “This flag represents the service rendered to our country by the veterans of the Vietnam War. The flag affirms the principles of freedom for which they fought and their pride in having served under difficult circumstances.”



Vietnam Veterans of America

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A Not-For-Profit Veterans Service Organization Chartered by the United States Congress

MEMO

TO: VVA
FROM: John Rowan, National President
DATE: April 6, 2020
RE: Impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) National Emergency

The last couple of weeks within VVA and the country at large have been difficult for all. Regardless of where we live, all of us have been affected in some way by the virus that is infecting our world's population. As you are aware by now, VVA's membership, because of our age and our underlying health issues, are considered to be in the most critical group, should we contract COVID-19.

No matter whether your state is under a stay-at-home order from your Governor, please, I urge you, stay home.

These are extraordinary times. Many businesses--including VVA--have been forced to close in order to protect employees and the general population. On March 25, VVA National Treasurer Jack McManus informed everyone that our largest funding source, the Household Goods Donation Program (HGDP), has ceased its operations throughout the U.S. All HGDP thrift stores, deemed non-essential entities, are now temporarily closed. Our HGDP buyers have since laid off over 4,000 employees. The shutdown is expected to last 20 weeks. Given this unexpected loss of a major source of our revenue, VVA's national officers have acted quickly in order to preserve whatever we could.

Life as we have known it in VVA is changed. Working in concert with department directors and staff, the officers have directed that all aspects of VVA's expenditures be and continue to be analyzed for possible savings.

In order to move forward, VVA's budget--prepared by our Directors and reviewed by the VVA Finance Committee--was submitted to the BOD for approval by an E-Vote procedure. However, the budget that was recently approved included income that was expected BEFORE we knew that our revenue had taken a hit.

This budget, as passed by the board, will serve as a baseline for further changes to the organization. To be blunt, there may be many more cuts down the road. At this point, I need to acknowledge and thank the members of the Finance Committee for doing a job that no one would frankly envy or want. Proposed cuts will need to be made to most all segments of our operations. No one or no department will be exempt from this. This situation will impact everyone. An amended budget, with subsequent adjustments based on our new reality, will be proposed to the BOD shortly.

Normally, upon passage of the budget, we would have allowed you to commence incurring bills and spending your budgets. However, Treasurer McManus has announced a spending freeze for all respective cost centers. He stated "Do not incur any expenses without express written email approval from your executive officer (meaning the officers of the corporation that each department head reports to) or the VVA National Treasurer. Understand that if you incur ANY expenses without authority, our organization at this time WILL NOT be able to reimburse you for expenses that you have incurred. Period."

As you know, I have cancelled our upcoming National Board Meeting. Instead, we are making plans for a virtual board meeting, to be held on April 16, 2020. Details will be coming out about the procedures that we will use to hold this meeting. This is a new experiment, so bear with us.

The Board will be addressing the challenge of the National Leadership Conference. With all that is going on, it is likely that this will be cancelled or, at the very least, postponed. You will be advised ASAP. Most of the staff are now working remotely from home. This has been deemed necessary for their safety. The Officers are maintaining constant contact with the them.

You should also know that VVA has filed an application under the Paycheck Protection Plan or "PPP" program that was recently passed by Congress. Our Finance Department worked hours to prepare the proper documents to apply for this loan, which we hope will eventually be forgiven by the government. We were actively preparing for this program, even before it was formally approved by Congress. Our application was submitted to our bank the day before funds were released for this program. We are on top of this.

We ask everyone within VVA to pull together during this unprecedented time of disruption to our lives. We thank our members for their understanding, as well as for their kind words of encouragement and their recommendations to us as we move forward. We are not sure what the future holds for us, however, I can assure you that your officers, Tom, Jack, Bill, and myself, as well as staff, have been working almost around the clock, or so it seems, to deal with this situation. Measures are in place to keep the staff safe, the workflow constant, and everyone informed about what is taking place as we attempt to secure our immediate future and ensure that our work on behalf of our veterans and their families will continue.

Meanwhile, we urge everyone to stay safe and protect yourselves until this pandemic is over.

As we proceed, we will keep you informed as much as possible.

Thanks for your continued support.

VA EXTENDS FINANCIAL, BENEFITS AND CLAIMS RELIEF TO VETERANS

WASHINGTON - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced, April 3, a number of actions to provide Veterans with financial, benefits and claims help amid VA's COVID-19 response.

"As all Americans come together to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, we want Veterans to be focused on their health and safety," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "That's why we're taking action to give those with pending debts, claims and appeals greater flexibility during these challenging times."

The financial relief actions include the following until further notice:

Suspending all actions on Veteran debts under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department.

Suspending collection action or extending repayment terms on preexisting VA debts, as the Veteran prefers.

For benefit debts, Veterans can contact the VA Debt Management Center at 1-800-827-0648 to make arrangements.

For health care debts, Veterans can contact the Health Resource Center at 1-888-827-4817 to make arrangements.

The benefits and claims relief actions include giving Veterans the option to submit their paperwork late for the following actions:

- perfecting claims
- challenging adverse decisions
- submitting Notices of Disagreement
- submitting Substantive Appeals
- responding to Supplemental Statements of the Case

Veterans requesting claim extensions can simply submit them with any late-filed paperwork and Veterans do not have to proactively request an extension in advance. For added convenience, VA will also accept typed/digital signatures instead of wet signatures on its forms. Those with questions can call 1-800-827-1000.

For Veterans who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and need immediate action on their appeals, as opposed to a filing extension, the Board of Veterans' Appeals will Advance their appeal on Docket (AOD). Click here to find out how to file for AOD and what documentation is required.

VA LOMA LINDA

Cardiology Clinics have moved out of the 1st Floor, Module 3 area of the Medical Center and have been relocated to make room for the expansion of our Emergency Department. Starting Monday, April 6 new Cardiology Clinic locations is:

Heart Failure Clinics is now located at the Ambulatory Care Center, 1st Floor - Tango Clinic.

Arrhythmia and Cardiology Clinics is now located at the Medical Center, 2nd Floor - Clinical Research (2F-10).

Cardiac Testing (Echocardiograms Stress Testing, EKG) has not moved and still located on the 4th Floor (4E-51).

You can contact the Cardiology Clinic at (909) 583-6041.

SUSPENSION OF VISITOR HOURS

In order to protect our hospitalized Veterans, their families and our staff, VA Loma Linda Healthcare System is taking the necessary steps to reduce the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. As a result, we are implementing the following temporary precautions:

All visits to the facility are suspended until further notice. We recognize connecting with loved ones is a critical part of any treatment plan, and we encourage the use of cell phones to stay connected.

Long-Term Care (Community Living Center/Hospice): No visitation is authorized at this time.

-Exceptions may be made for end-of-life situations.

Inpatient Areas: Visitors are limited to those who have medical power of attorneys, are health care proxies or health care surrogates for Veterans who are incapacitated and unable to make their own decisions and when phone consent cannot be obtained.

- No visitations are authorized for inpatients who are Presumptive or Confirmed Positive COVID-19.

- Exceptions may be made for end-of-life situations.

Outpatient Visits: Only one caregiver per Veteran will be allowed to enter the Medical Center for those Veterans that REQUIRE assistance.

VETERANS: VA IS HERE FOR YOU DURING COVID-19 — CALL US

WE WILL SEE AND TREAT YOU EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT YET ENROLLED IN VA HEALTH CARE

VA has always been here for Veterans, and we will continue to be here for you during the COVID-19 crisis. We will see and treat any Veteran — even if you are not yet enrolled in VA health care — but please call us first. Here is a message from Dr. Richard Stone, Executive in Charge of the Veterans Health Administration and a former U.S. Army combat physician.

My name is Rich Stone, and I have the honor of serving as the Executive in Charge of the Veterans health care system. My message today is for America’s Veterans.

We know that this is a time of great concern, and for many of you that are in communities that may not get all of your health care from us — that go to community physicians — some of your community physicians are not available.

We want you to call us. Even if you haven’t come in to get care from us for the condition you’re concerned about, call us. We’re here. We will continue to be here every day. And we will work to make sure that your health care needs are taken care of. And if we need to see you, our doors are open. We will be happy to see you.

For those Veterans that haven’t enrolled in care yet: if you are in need of care, come in and see us. Call us first, but come in and see us and we’ll work on your enrollment after we take care of your acute health care need.

This COVID crisis can create a lot of anxiety, and one of the things we’re trying to do is to take down that anxiety by making sure you know that across this nation, that we are here for every Veteran that needs us. Thank you.

For the latest VA updates on COVID-19, visit va.gov/coronavirus.

VA DEPLOYS MOBILE VET CENTERS TO INCREASE OUTREACH DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) began deploying Mobile Vet Center units, the week of March 16, to expand direct counseling, outreach and care coordination to Veterans in communities affected during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first of the mobile units was dispatched to various cities to include boroughs in New York City, a second unit was sent to San Francisco, followed by mobile centers going to New Orleans and Los Angeles.

VA’s Mobile Vet Centers can also refer active duty service members, Veterans and their families to VA care or other care facilities in the community. They serve as an extension of VA’s 300 brick-and-mortar Vet Centers across the country that provide a range of services, including individual, group, marriage and family counseling.

These mobile units help VA reach those who may not otherwise seek VA services for counseling and mental health support. Vet Center staff can assist those who may be facing extreme isolation during this period of “social distancing”—a practice that is needed to reduce the COVID-19 infection rate—but one that may likewise increase the vulnerability of some Veterans.

“While all Americans are being instructed to limit their contact with others, our duty to protect the nation’s Veterans has not ended,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Our Vet Center staff will help ensure we keep in contact with those Veterans who need our care and attention and help reduce the anxiety some may be experiencing during this unique national emergency.”

VA Mobile Vet Centers are available to help affected communities now and in the upcoming weeks. Vet Center employees, who volunteer for these missions, deploy in the wake of emergency response situations such as hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires, shootings and other events. When engaging the public, VA employee volunteers are provided the necessary protections to keep them and those they help safe.

“In times like this it’s important to stand shoulder to shoulder with our local communities, support their local needs and ensure them they are not alone in navigating this crisis,” said Brooklyn Vet Center Director Gabe Botero, who volunteered for five days in New York City.

Veterans, active duty service members and their families are encouraged to find their nearest Vet Center and call to get connected to counseling services or reach out to the 24/7 Vet Center Call Center at 1-877-927-8387. Many Vet Centers are currently utilizing telehealth services through VA Video Connect and can also speak to individuals via phone to reduce any barriers to seeking necessary help.



VVA CA State Council (contact info inside - page 2)

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To:

In this issue:

- Chapter/Council Activities-Events/Photos
- Council Officer/Committee Reports
- Legislative News
- Veteran Info
- And more...

CSC Meeting Dates & Events

April Council Meeting Canceled

State Convention June 12-13, 2020, Location TBA
July 31-August 2, 2020, Location TBA
October 23-25, 2020, Location TBA

Zephyr deadlines 2 weeks AFTER to each CSC meeting