



# The California Zephyr

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An Organization Chartered By The U.S. Congress



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## There is a convention in your future.

The VVA California State Council will be holding their 17th biennial convention at the Wyndham Visalia July 31 and August 1. The weekend starts out with a pizza party sponsored by the California Veterans benefits Fund on Thursday, July 30, that features early registration for those that have sent in the delegate registration by the July 10 deadline. There will be vendors showing their items for sale. The Corn Hole game sponsored by the CSC will be a fun event to take part in and there will be some prizes for high scores.

On Friday, July 31, the convention begins with the opening ceremony with a color guard, a guest singer for the National Anthem, and some guest speakers and invited guests. Then we are on a mid-morning snack break sponsored by the California Veterans Benefits Fund. After the break, the convention is called to order and the convention committees will do their reports. The convention will then recess until Saturday morning.

At Noon, The Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America will host a luncheon with a number of meal selections for your dining experience. Following the luncheon AVVA will hold their meeting. For VVA there will be Amendment and resolutions hearings along with some educational sessions. The day ends with a POW/MIA ceremony and the Candidates forum.

Saturday, August 1, the activities for the day start with breakfast with the president and then the convention reconvenes with reports from the convention committees. After the lunch break the CSC elections will be held. Then the convention reconvenes with the final reports from the convention committees. After the closing ceremonies the convention will be adjourned.

Saturday night will be the CSC Awards Banquet reception sponsored by the California Veterans Benefits Fund. The Banquet hall is then opened for the banquet and the awards program to follow.

The Convention Planning committee is working to make your convention delegates experience a great one. Send your delegates!

Convention delegate registration, AVVA Luncheon and VVA Banquet reservation information and other needed forms will be handled through the appropriate Convention Committees and are available on the CSC web site [http://www.vvacalsc.com/pages/stateconv/2020/2020\\_state\\_conv.html](http://www.vvacalsc.com/pages/stateconv/2020/2020_state_conv.html)

Dick Southern  
Chairman  
Convention Planning Committee



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Okay all, this will be my last President's message.

We are sorry we had to cancel the June Convention, but it was for the best. We will now have the convention in Visalia, from July 31st to August 2nd at the Wyndham Visalia. Arrive in Visalia on July 30th, convention will be July 31st to August 1st, depart on August 2nd. Go to the CSC web, [vvacalsc.com](http://www.vvacalsc.com), site for registration forms and convention information. Please try to send all of your delegates as there will be some very important amendments to the constitution that will be voted on.

A very important note to all. VVA National and CSC have been hit with a huge funding deficit. The CSC Finance Committee has been hard at work reworking the CSC budget for the remainder of the fiscal year. The CSC BOD met in an online meeting to discuss the budget cuts recommended by the finance committee and to review the revised budget proposal. The following day an e-mail vote was then taken and the newly proposed budget was approved.

There have been a lot of budget cuts. One of those being affected is the printing and mailing of the CSC Newsletter "The California Zephyr". CSC will no longer print and mail the Zephyr. It will only be available by e-mail and online at the CSC web page. So if someone contacts you asking why they did not receive the newsletter in the mail please direct them to the web page. They will find it posted there.

I hope to see a lot of you at the convention in July-August.

Steve

## VETERANS ON ACTIVE DUTY FOR VETERANS

**VETERAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS FIGHT FOR AND SUPPORT VETERANS AS NEW CONCERNS ARISE, INCLUDING VETERANS' ISSUES RESULTING FROM OUR PRESENT COVID-19 PANDEMIC.**

By Eileen C. Moore



*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)*

Many veteran service organizations, or VSOs, exist throughout the country. During or after each of our wars, VSOs were formed to address specific issues then-current veterans faced. They advocate for veterans and provide various resources and services.

Some are federally chartered or otherwise recognized by Congress. Most are private nonprofits run by volunteers. Many VSOs have withstood the tests of time. They fight for and support veterans as new concerns arise, including veterans' issues resulting from our present COVID-19 pandemic.

### After the Civil War

Because it's the longest-running veterans service organization out there, Jewish War Veterans of the USA deserves mention. JWV was founded by Jewish Civil War veterans in 1896. At that time, it was named the Hebrew Union Veterans. JVA held its 124th annual national convention in Richmond, Virginia last August.

Its website asks: "And why a Jewish veterans organization?" Its answer: "There is something distinct about the experience of Jewish service members. For instance, many Jews in the military have concerns about how they would be treated as a Jew if captured -- whether by Nazis during World War II or Islamic extremists today.

Sometimes the experience of maintaining their religious obligations in the field was a point of discussion. And of course -- any Jew who has served in the Middle East must have sensed the presence of being near somewhere significant to their roots."

JVA established the National Museum of American Jewish Military History in Washington, D.C. The museum has exhibits of Jewish military service all the way back to the American colony in New Amsterdam in the 1650s.

The Jewish veterans group has been active in the law over the years. Regarding bias against Jewish military heroes, in 2001, the House of Representatives introduced the Leonard Kravitz Jewish War Veterans Act of 2001. The bill was written to direct the secretary of each military branch to review the service records of each Jewish American veteran from the time of World War II who was awarded the Army's Distinguished Service Cross or the Navy or Air Force Cross, or whose name was submitted for such purpose by JVA, in order to determine whether such veteran should be awarded the Medal of Honor. As a result of that effort, 24 Jewish service members were awarded the Medal of Honor.

Its national commander is an experienced litigator from Boston named Harvey Weiner. He spent the last 47 years trying cases. He is a Vietnam vet.

### After the Spanish-American War

Various small groups of veterans formed informal organizations at the end of the Spanish-American War in 1899. The soldiers arrived home without any medical care for the wounds and illnesses they sustained and with no pension benefits. By 1913, the groups merged into the Veterans of Foreign Wars, or VFW. Membership is restricted to any active or honorably discharged person who is a citizen of the United States and who has served in its armed forces in any foreign war, insurrection or expedition. The purpose of the VFW is to speed rehabilitation of disabled and needy veterans, promote American patriotism and do service in local communities.

The VFW was instrumental in the founding of the Veterans Administration, now known as the Department of Veterans Affairs. To this day, the VFW monitors veterans' experiences with health care provided by the VA and assists disabled veterans when their



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claims are denied by the VA. The VFW was also influential in the development of the national cemetery system, in the fights for compensation for Vietnam vets exposed to Agent Orange and for veterans diagnosed with Gulf War Syndrome. In 2008, the VFW was to a large extent responsible for a long-fought victory with the passing of a GI Bill for the 21st century. That bill gave expanded educational benefits to America's active duty service members, and members of the guard and reserves.

The organization has also been active in court battles concerning veterans. *Salazar v. Buono*, 559 U.S. 700 (2010), is a case involving the legality of the Mojave Memorial Cross placed atop a prominent rock in San Bernardino County by the VFW in 1934 as a memorial to veterans who died in World War I. In 2001, an employee of the National Park Service filed suit against the secretary of the Department of the Interior, contending the cross erect-

ed on federal land violates the establishment clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The matter was heard at various court levels, and Congress got involved with a land exchange to the VFW. In 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the cross may stay on the land owned by the VFW. In the opinion, Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote: "The goal of avoiding governmental endorsement [of religion] does not require eradication of all religious symbols in the public realm."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the VFW has been active. Its website gives tips to veterans on how to stay connected with family, friends and clergy while isolated. Among its many other efforts, it has organized buddy checks and food donation locations.

*After World War I*  
The American Legion was chartered by Congress

in 1919. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. and other war-weary veterans of World War I proposed the idea for the Legion. Its website says it's one of the most influential nonprofit groups in the United States, both nonsectarian and nonpolitical. The only requirements are honorable service and an honorable discharge. Today's membership stands at nearly 2 million in more than 13,000 posts worldwide. The oldest continu-

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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.





ously operated American Legion post is in Tulsa, chartered on June 19, 1919. In 2017, Wisconsin's Denise H. Rohan, was elected national commander, the first woman to hold the role in the history of the American Legion.

The Legion is committed to mentoring youth and sponsoring wholesome programs in our communities. In 1950, the American Legion voted to contribute funds to the field of mental health, thereby playing a key role in launching the National Association for Mental Health. In 1982, the Legion was the largest single contributor to the construction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall when it presented the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund with a \$1,000,000 check. The American Legion fought hard to have the VA raised to Cabinet-level status, accomplishing its mission in 1988. The Legion's position was that veterans deserve representation at the highest level of government.

Since 1925, the Bladensburg Peace Cross has stood on public land in Maryland as a tribute to 49 area soldiers who gave their lives in the First World War. The cross has been under the auspices of an American Legion post. Opponents to the cross claimed they were offended by the sight of the memorial on public land and the expenditure of public funds for maintenance, contending a violation of the establishment clause. A federal court granted summary judgment to the American Legion. The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals found the cross was in violation of the First Amendment and reversed. In *The American Legion v. American Humanist Association*, 139 S. Ct. 2067 (2019), the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the 4th Circuit, stating: "The cross is undoubtedly a Christian symbol, but that fact should not blind us to everything else that the Bladensburg Cross has come to represent. For some, that monument is a symbolic resting place for ancestors who never returned home. For others, it is a place for the community to gather and honor all veterans and their sacrifices for our Nation. For others still, it is a historical landmark. For many of these people, destroying or defacing the Cross that has stood undisturbed for nearly a century would not be neutral and would not further the ideals of respect and tolerance embodied in the First Amendment. For all these reasons, the Cross does not offend the Constitution."

Throughout the decades, the Legion has fought for pension and retirement rights and the elimination of the Disabled Veterans Tax. The Legion also backed the Post-9/11 GI Bill that took effect in 2009, sending an unprecedented number of veterans to college.

During our current crisis, the American Legion has been very busy in the community. It is teaching its members how to connect with others through Skype and Zoom. One post recognized the efforts of truck drivers in keeping America fed with a free lunch on April 1. An American Legion post in Nebraska organized a drive-thru Easter egg hunt, and in Minnesota, the post is distributing activity packets for shut-in kids. In Arizona, American Legion members are assisting a court with bailiff duties. An American Legion Post in Rochester has been distributing food, clothing and other supplies to needy veterans during this crisis.

## After World War II

When soldiers who served in World War II swelled into the millions, it became evident they needed some sort of assistance in their transition into civilian life. The American Veterans of World War II, AMVETS, was the first World War II organization to be chartered by Congress. Since that time, its charter has been amended to admit as members those who served in different eras. Its website states it is the nation's most inclusive congressionally chartered veterans service organization. Today, membership in AMVETS is open to anyone who is currently serving, or honorably served, in the U.S. armed forces from World War II to the present, including in the National Guard and Reserves.

AMVETS' constitution states that it aims "to serve our country in peace as in war; to build and maintain the welfare of the United States of America toward lasting prosperity and peace for all its inhabitants." The organization has been very active in several different areas, particularly with assisting veterans with their VA claims.

AMVETS has a network of trained national service officers accredited by the VA. They provide advice on compensation claims at no charge to veterans, processing 74,000 claims a year. Concerned with the inability of the VA to process claims, AMVETS was instrumental in Congress' forming the United States Court of Veterans Appeals, which court judicially reviews claims after they have gone through the VA claims process.

But AMVETS does so much more. Across the country, it has legal clinics assisting veterans. Upon request, AMVETS has two service members fold and present the American flag to surviving family members at veterans'

funerals while a bugler sounds "Taps." AMVETS annually gives scholarships to high school seniors. It bestows various awards, all having to do with humanitarian efforts. One is the Silver Helmet Award to "recognize excellence and achievement in Americanism, defense, rehabilitation, congressional service and other fields. Sometimes called the "Veterans Oscar," the award is shaped like a silver WWII helmet. Many famous Americans have been recipients of the award through the years, including Presidents Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon and both Bushes. Singer, actress and nurse Martha Raye was also given the award; in Vietnam, she was an honorary Green Beret after she stepped in whenever she could to treat wounded soldiers.

Because of isolation during the pandemic, AMVETS provides veterans with online mental health treatment. Also, recognizing that in 1982 Congress expanded the VA's role to include caring for anyone in times of crisis, as it did after Hurricane Katrina, AMVETS has been calling upon the VA to assist with the current COVID-19 crisis.

## After the Vietnam War

Vietnam Veterans of America was founded in 1978. It is the only organization chartered by Congress and dedicated to Vietnam veterans and their families. Its founding principle is "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another." Today, there are about 85,000 members with over 650 chapters throughout the country.

VVA's website says the return of the hostages by Iran in January 1981 was a pivotal time for Vietnam vets: "The question was asked why parades for the hostages but not for Vietnam veterans? Many veterans complained about the lack of recognition and appreciation for past national service."

In 1983, VVA created a legal services entity to assist Vietnam vets pursue their benefits from the government. It quickly became the most competent and aggressive advocate for veterans. VVA published the first comprehensive manual for veteran service representatives to use to assist veterans to obtain services and benefits.

VVA has been active in the courts on behalf of veterans. Actions concerning Agent Orange and its contaminant dioxin were filed. A class action against the Navy involving discharge upgrades was filed in the 1980s. In *Vietnam Veterans of America v. Central Intelligence Agency*, 811 F.3d 1068 (9th Cir. 2016), VVA brought suit alleging the government unlawfully failed to notify veterans who were the subjects of chemical and biological experiments of new medical and scientific information relating to their health. An injunction requiring the Army to comply with its duty to warn veterans of such new scientific information was ordered.

After a two-year study, in 2019, VVA published a report entitled "An Investigation Into Foreign Entities Who Are Targeting Servicemembers and Veterans Online." The report states that in addition to screening military and veterans groups, social-media companies should aggressively hunt for criminals using their platforms and report suspicious activity "rather than simply rely on reports submitted by users."

Now that Vietnam veterans are in the twilight of their lives, VVA is facing a unique issue. The March/April edition of VVA's national publication, *The VVA Veteran*, has a column about the possibility of changing the organization's name to something that does not have the word "Vietnam" in it.

VVA is critical of the VA's April 1 change of policy. Prior to that time, VSOs had 48 hours to review and ask for correction of a VA decision, a process which often negated the need for a veteran having to file an appeal. On April 1, however, the VA ended that 48-hour policy. This is what VVA's president said in a press release: "While every other governmental body in the nation is working hard to ensure that Americans are spared undue hardship during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Veterans Affairs is doing just the opposite, making this damaging policy decision amid the chaos of the pandemic."

During this crisis, VVA has sent out a warning to Vietnam vets. Because so many were exposed to Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam, VVA has counseled its members they may have co-morbidities which make them susceptible to the most severe complications or death if they contract the virus.

## Iraq/Afghanistan

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, IAVA, was founded by an Iraq veteran in 2004. IAVA has been very involved with connecting veterans with resources and with the community. The organization has also been active in pursuing legislation. In 2014, IAVA launched the Convoy to Combat Suicide legislation to alert the public

about the alarming number of veterans who are committing suicide. The legislation significantly increases veterans' access to mental health treatment. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention Act, signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2016 as Pub. L.114-2 was named after Marine Clay Hunt who returned from combat only to have to battle with the Department of Veterans Affairs over his disability rating. He committed suicide in 2011.

IAVA's Policy Agenda lists its big six issues: combat suicide; reform the VA; initiate support for injuries from burn pits; defend education benefits; recognize and improve services for women veterans; and, establish support for veterans' use of medical cannabis. The agenda states that in 2014, 31% of its members reported suicidal ideation; by 2018, reports were up to 43%.

IAVA has been quite vocal. After Iran launched numerous ballistic missiles at the Ayn al-Asad Air Base in Iraq last Jan. 8, President Donald Trump reported that the Iranian attack resulted in no casualties, despite the fact that 34 service members suffered traumatic brain injuries. The president stated: "I heard that they had headaches and a couple of other things, but I can report it is not very serious." IAVA's CEO, Jeremy Butler, responded to the president: "Rather than diminishing the severity of the combat injuries our service members received and rather than reducing the necessity of seeking medical care by comparing their relative importance with other injuries that 'he has seen,' the Commander in Chief should be ensuring that our military members receive the best medical care possible and that they and their families are afforded the respect and honor that our military members deserve and earned on the battlefield."

Currently, IAVA notes that increasing numbers of National Guard and Reserve components, who rely on the VA for health care, are recalled to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, IAVA has been pressuring the VA to get its act together, stating: "As the largest integrated health-care network in the United States and with a legal designation as the backup health care system in national emergencies, the VA must be a leader in the US government response efforts but, to date, does not appear organized to meet the current or forecasted demands that this current healthcare crisis requires nor is the agency clearly articulating its strategy moving forward."

Specifically, with a majority of its veteran clients in the 'at risk' group for COVID-19, either due to age and/or underlying health conditions, VA must be equipped and empowered to screen, test and care for veterans exposed to COVID-19. However, this cannot be achieved by failing to meet the non-coronavirus related urgent health needs of the community."

## Conclusion

VSOs perform many valuable services for veterans. Most importantly, they give veterans a voice by holding the feet of the VA, politicians and the military to the fire when it comes to delivering hard-earned benefits to our country's veterans.

## RATS

By Jim Doyle

Between 1964 and 1975, "the Sixties," roughly 9 million young Americans experienced the endless demands on an individual's ability to retain focus while subjected to harsh physical, mental, and emotional hazing during grinding 20-hour days over a period of weeks. The Army called it Basic Combat Training. The Marines, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard call it by other names, but most refer to it simply as, Boot Camp.

It's the place where you learn you aren't who you thought you were. If you're the scrawny stereotypical 90-pound weakling you'll gain weight and muscle and bulk up over your two plus month ordeal.

If you're overweight from a sedentary lifestyle during and after high school you're going to lose weight, gain muscle mass, and be the guy who kicks sand in the 90-pound weaklings' face at the beach.

That is where we had our first taste of "Army Chow." Part of the drill was the food. Military chow.

The days when you slept in and Mom took orders for eggs, with bacon and toast, and asked, "what kind of jam would you like, honey?" were gone forever.

It was calorie, carb and protein balanced so that if you were a 90 pounder or Tubby the Tank you got exactly what you needed, nutritionally.

A Mess Sergeant was once overheard telling a Recruit that there was no difference between the food your Mother served you and the food you were served in the Army, except the Army shit in it before serving.

Reveille sounded precisely at 0530 hours and chow



began serving at 0600.

A variety of items resembling food were scooped, ladled, tossed, and slopped onto our trays each morning. Different things on different days, but it always seemed the same. Powdered eggs ala scramble, semi-cooked bacon sometimes, pancakes, real eggs on the grill, cooked to order as long as you ordered them partially-cooked and runny. Dry cereal, as well as white and chocolate milk were always available.

And then there were the grits. Always grits.

One-third of the 9 million served in Vietnam, and many of them spent their one-year tour, 13 months for Marines, eating “prepared” food in a lightweight cardboard box. Meal Combat Individual. C-Rations.

Each complete meal included a canned meat, bread, and dessert course, depending on how fast you could reach through the tangle of arms, all reaching for the, Beans, with Frankfurter Chunks in Tomato Sauce.

C-Rats ran the gamut from Turkey Loaf, Chicken and Noodles, and Beef Steak to Spaghetti and Meatballs, to Beef Slices and Potatoes with Gravy to Chicken, Boned. And for the braver among the troops, Ham and Lima’s, known colloquially by a moniker unsuitable for the family hour, Ham and Motherfuckers.

With a little creativity, you could cobble together a pretty good meal by swapping and sharing. You could manage a nearly-almost-kind-of could be gourmet meal as long as you had a little bottle of McIlhenny’s Tabasco Sauce and a chunk of C-4 out of your Claymore for heat.

On a cold, damp morning in a remote ambush site, cut the top of the can of a can of Pound Cake with one of the four P-38 can openers contained in a case of 12 C-Rats. Poke a hole in the center of the Pound Cake, splash a little water in, add the jam from a B-3 Unit, light the C-4 and heat it up and you’ve got a half-assed replica of a warm Danish pastry. Mix up the instant coffee, pull a smoke out of one of the 4-packs of cigarettes in the ration box, and except for a copy of the Sunday New York Times, Toledo Blade, Des Moines Register, Times-Picayune or Visalia Times-Delta, it’s just like you’re back in The World. Improvise, overcome, adapt.

The accessory packs were filled with useful items, typically unavailable out in the boonies. Toilet paper, a plastic spoon, matches, and candy-coated chewing gum resembling Chiclets. The toilet paper was useful in the most minimalist way. It consisted of half a dozen squares of 4” x 4” pieces of 180 grit sandpaper.

On the rare occasion we were extracted from the field and brought to the rear for a one- or two-day stand down, we typically had a hot meal in the Battalion Mess Hall, complete with steak, potatoes, vegetables, beer, sodas, and more beer.

I remember one trip to the rear after several weeks in the field.

Our company, understrength as always, had just begun to eat, half of us at tables and the other half in line when SSG Ruda, our Platoon Sergeant walked in and at the top of his lungs hollered, “Saddle up! We need to be on the pad in 10 mikes.”

Groaning, moaning, and bitching was like a sound track. Trays were slammed down on table tops, thrown into the trash, and generally thrashed. Everyone was pissed off.

“Fuckashitpiss! Fuckashitpiss! The sound of anger bounced off the walls as the Vietnamese women serving the food looked bewildered at this bunch of American soldiers, mostly still teenagers, cursing and swearing and throwing the food in the trash.

Long story short – we waited on the helicopter pad for 3 ½ hours, until it was dark. The choppers came in and we loaded up for our ride to wherever. No one had told us where or why we were going, but we were going somewhere.

It seemed no one told the chopper pilots either because after lifting off, we circled the base camp at Di An and landed right back on the pad. 90 seconds later we lifted off again.

After about 15 minutes in the air we could see green and red tracers zipping back and forth across what was our Landing Zone.

I hate when that happens.

## LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATE

By: Seth Reeb, Reeb Government Relations

I would like to first thank the Council for its continued trust in Reeb Government Relations to advocate on your behalf. Thank you for your years of dedication to veterans, their families, and our amazing country.

All Vets Day at the Capitol:

Unfortunately, All Vets Day at the Capitol had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Impact of COVID-19 on legislation in 2020:

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a big impact on the Legislature; however, business has been progressing with legislators, staff, consultants, and lobbyists. The Legislature has a constitutional requirement to pass a state budget and deliberate on the business of the people. The impact of the pandemic will undoubtedly set the tone of debate for the rest of the year. The state faces a \$53 billion budget deficit; it is still uncertain at this time what the budget will look like. The Governor's office is set to release the revised budget on May 14, 2020. We will keep you up to date as the budget hearings progress.

Senate leadership is asking Senators to "reconsider their priorities and reduce the number of bills they carry accordingly." The Senate Leader has also directed policy committees to compile a list of issues within their jurisdiction that need immediate attention as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Assembly leadership is leaving it to the committees to decide which bills will be heard and will best respond to the crisis.

We had been tracking just over 50 veteran-related bills for the Council. The Council has taken active positions on many of those bills and we wrote letters, met with staff, sometimes suggested amendments, and prepared to testify in committee on them. However, this was cut short by the Coronavirus pandemic, which caused the Legislature to go into a protracted recess. Because of the pandemic, the Legislature had to shelve many of its bills in order to deal with the post Coronavirus recovery. However, some of the previously introduced bills will continue to move forward. Also, many legislators and committee's have sprung into action, amending or introducing new bills to address the impact of this pandemic on veterans in California. Currently, we are tracking and or have taken positions on 17 veteran bills that are making their way through the legislative process.

There is still important legislation concerning veterans, the National Guard, CalVet, and the military Families continuing to move through the process. Now in mid-May, we are still getting reports of which veterans and military-related bills will continue to move forward. Below is a list of bills we have compiled so far, which will continue to need your support. As you will see below, some bills are still being reviewed by the Governmental Affairs committee. We can not thank the committee enough for all of their hard work.

### 2020 LEGISLATION AS OF MAY 14:

AB 1935

(Voepel R) Veterans: mental health.

Summary: Would require the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish a program to fund, upon appropriation by the Legislature, an academic study of mental health among women veterans in California, as specified. The bill would require the department to submit a report summarizing the findings and recommendations of the study to the Legislature no later than July 31, 2022.

Position: Support

AB 2046

((Voepel R) Family law: child support.

Summary: This bill would prohibit the order/notice to withhold income for the liquidation of the arrearage from exceeding 5% of a person's total monthly disability compensation if the person who is required to pay child support is a disabled veteran receiving disability compensation from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs who meets specified income requirements and has supplied the local child support agency with proof of receipt of disability compensation and other income and assets.

Position: Still being considered by Governmental Affairs Committee

AB 2192

(Committee on Veterans Affairs) Governor's Military Council.

Summary: Current law establishes the Governor's Military Council that advises the Governor on efforts to retain military installations and operations within the state. Members of the Council are appointed by the Governor and include bipartisan representatives from both houses of the Legislature, as specified. Current law repeals the law establishing the Council on January 1, 2021. This bill would extend that repeal date to January 1, 2026.

AB 2193

(Committee on Veterans Affairs) Military: State Guard.

Summary: Current law authorizes the Governor to organize and maintain the State Military Reserve when necessary to defend and for the security of the state during a period in which any part of the National Guard is in active federal service, or when Congress consents. The Governor is authorized to maintain the State Military Reserve at cadre strength at any time. The State Military Reserve is part of the active militia of the state along with the Na-

tional Guard and the Naval Militia. This bill would change the name of the State Military Reserve to the State Guard and make technical changes.

AB 2494

(Choi R) Postsecondary education: course credit for prior military education, training, and service.

Summary: Would require the Office of the Chancellor of the California State University, in collaboration with the Academic Senate of the California State University, and request the Office of the President of the University of California, in collaboration with the University of California, Academic Senate, to develop, by September 1, 2021, a consistent policy to award military personnel and veterans who have an official Joint Services Transcript course credit similar to the policy developed by the Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges under current law.

AB 2549

(Salas D) Department of Consumer Affairs: temporary licenses.

Summary: This bill would expand that requirement to issue temporary licenses to include licenses issued by the Veterinary Medical Board, the Dental Board of California, the Dental Hygiene Board of California, the California State Board of Pharmacy, the State Board of Barbering and Cosmetology, the Board of Psychology, the California Board of Occupational Therapy, the Physical Therapy Board of California, and the California Board of Accountancy.

AB 3045

(Gray D) Department of Consumer Affairs: boards: veterans: military spouses: licenses.

Summary: This bill would require boards not subject to the temporary licensing provisions described above to issue licenses to an applicant if the applicant meets specified requirements, including that the applicant supplies evidence satisfactory to the board that the applicant is an honorably discharged veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States or is married to, or in a domestic partnership or other legal union with, an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States, as provided.

AB 3371

(Committee on Veterans Affairs) Veteran suicides: report.

Summary: Current law requires the State Department of Public Health to implement an electronic death registration system and to access data within the system to compile a report on veteran suicide in California that includes information on the veterans' ages, sexes, races or ethnicities, and methods of suicide. Current law requires the department to provide that report annually to the Legislature and the Department of Veterans Affairs. This bill would require that report to include information on the counties of residence of the veterans, and would authorize the report to include additional information.

SB 907

(Archuleta D) 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.

SB 1007

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

Summary: The Personal Income Tax Law imposes a tax on individual taxpayers measured by the taxpayer's taxable income for the taxable year, but excludes certain items of income from the computation of tax, including an exclusion for combat-related special compensation. This bill, for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2021, and before January 1, 2031, 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.

SB 1177

(Jones R) Veterans' Home of California system.

Summary: Would require the Department of Veterans Affairs to promulgate regulations that define the types of short-term uses of Veterans' home property that are in the best interests of the homes, including the residents. The bill would prohibit the department from approving short-term use agreements that do not meet that definition. The bill would require all short-term use agreements to include conditions that protect the state's best interests. Finally, the bill would also require the department to develop and implement a fee schedule for short-term third-party uses



of veterans' home property.

It has been an honor to continue to serve our veterans in the Vietnam Veterans of America-California State Council.

For God and Country,  
Seth Reeb  
Legislative Advocate  
Reeb Government Relations

## THE WALKING DEAD'S LOST PATROL

By Jack Wells, (LtCol, USMC, Ret), VVA Chapter 201

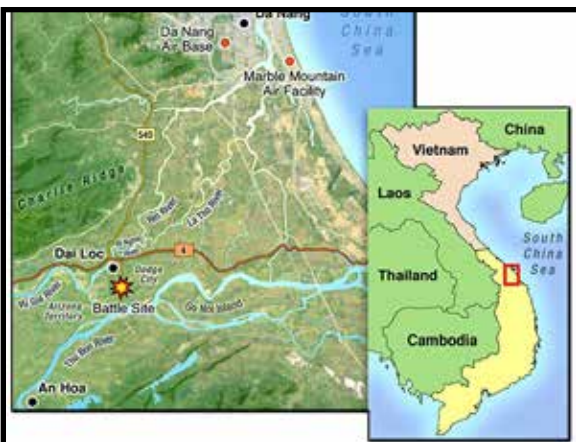
### OUTNUMBERED AND OUTGUNNED, MARINES COURAGEOUSLY FOUGHT FOR THEIR LIVES ON A KILLING GROUND NEAR DA NANG

At 6:30 in the morning on May 12, 1966, a 14-man reinforced squad from Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, left the company perimeter near the village of Bao Tran, about 15 miles southwest of Da Nang, on a routine security patrol in a broad valley east of the Vu Gia River. A May 11th intelligence report stated that a company from a Viet Cong battalion had moved into Do Nam, a hamlet near a small finger lake, about a mile northeast of Bravo Company's position.

About an hour later, the Marine squad, designated BP10, approached a village and came under small-arms fire from the east. The squad, led by Sergeant Dallas Young, responded with 20 rounds of small-arms fire and five rounds from an M79 grenade launcher. It then advanced toward the enemy. Later, Young radioed Bravo Commander Captain Norman Henry and told him the squad had apprehended a suspected Viet Cong. Young added that his men were moving toward a tree line to check out a small group of VC they had spotted. At 8:30 the patrol was near the bank of the Vu Gia and reported a water buffalo blocking the path. Henry ordered the men to avoid the animal if possible but shoot it if attacked. At 9 a.m. the Marines reported that they had killed the water buffalo.



The patrol came under harassing fire at 9:15. The Marines returned fire and reported that the VC were fleeing. During the pursuit Young requested fire support, and Bravo's mortar section shot an 81mm spotting round. The patrol could not see where it fell, so Captain Henry ordered a cease-fire to be sure the rounds didn't hit his own men. About that time, radio communications with



BP10 ended

When the transmissions stopped, the Bravo patrol had been moving through rice paddies northeast of where the Vu Gia and Thu Bon rivers flow together on their path east toward the sea. The Marines dubbed the area "Dodge City" because of the many "shootouts" that occurred there. An area of rice paddies on the west side of the rivers' confluence was called "Arizona Territory," after the rugged and sometimes dangerous terrain of the Southwestern badlands in the 1800s. The region had been flooded with the blood of gun battles almost since the day the Marines arrived in South Vietnam the previous spring.

On March 8, 1965, about 3,500 Marines from the 3rd Marine Division's 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade

landed at Red Beach in Da Nang. The landing force, the first U.S. ground combat unit in Vietnam, consisted of troops from the division's 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, and 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines. The battalions were sent to Da Nang to protect an air base there, which the South Vietnamese and U.S. air forces had been using to launch attacks on North Vietnam since Operation Rolling Thunder began on March 2, and the airbase needed added security.



Initially, defense of Da Nang outside the air base was primarily in the hands of South Vietnamese troops, who also served as the main force fighting the Viet Cong-led insurgency. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff had directed that the Marines "will not, repeat will not, engage in day-to-day actions against the Viet Cong."

But U.S. officials became increasingly concerned about the stability of South Vietnam's government and the effectiveness of its military. On April 1st President Lyndon B. Johnson permitted the Marines to become "more active" under conditions approved by the secretary of defense.



The Marines then started aggressively patrolling VC strongholds around Da Nang Air Base. The Viet Cong controlled an estimated one-third of the villages and hamlets outside the city. They routinely confiscated part of the local rice crop to support their troops and taxed villagers based on their food production or yearly income. Village chiefs and family members who did not comply were assassinated, and homes in the village were burned down.



The 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, arrived by ship in June to take over responsibility for the defense of the Da Nang Air Base from the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines. On July 1st, an 85-man Viet Cong force breached the base's southeastern defensive wire. The attackers destroyed three U.S. Air Force aircraft and severely damaged three others.



While patrolling about 9 miles southwest of the air base on July 12th, two teams from Alpha Company, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, were

ambushed by 50 to 100 Viet Cong at An My. Alpha's commanding officer, 1st Lt. Frank Reasoner, was killed while running to help a wounded Marine. He became the Marine Corps' first Medal of Honor recipient in Vietnam.

Another Viet Cong attack hit the Marble Mountain Air Facility, south of Da Nang, on Oct. 28th, when an estimated 90 VC penetrated the northwest perimeter wire. The intruders destroyed 19 helicopters, damaged 35 other aircraft and a section of a U.S. Navy Hospital being constructed at Marble Mountain.



By then Viet Cong forces in the Da Nang area had been joined by North Vietnam Army units arriving via the Ho Chi Minh Trail. In September 1965 elements of the NVA 308th Division came out of the mountains southwest of Da Nang to join the 1st VC Regiment. By the end of 1965 the intelligence section of Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, estimated that more than 26,000 NVA soldiers had arrived in South Vietnam.

Legend has it that in early spring 1966, at a ceremony in Hanoi, General Vo Nguyen Giap promised President Ho Chi Minh he would wipe out the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, as a present for the leader's birthday (May 19). In

describing the fate that awaited the Marines in Arizona Territory and Dodge City, Giap allegedly used the term di bo chet, translated as the "walking dead": The Marines should be considered already dead, just not buried yet. The 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, proudly and defiantly adopted "The Walking Dead" as its nickname.



In May, the Marines started an offensive called the Ky Lam Campaign, designed to clear the enemy out of a broad swath south of the Thu Bon River all the way to the coast (one of the other rivers in that region is named Ky Lam). The 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, under Lt. Col. William Doehler, was responsible for the western portion of the campaign around the Dai Loc District, where BP10 was patrolling on May 12th.

When radio communications with the BP10 patrol stopped on May 12th, Captain Henry, the Bravo Company commander, sent a reaction squad from 1st Platoon to find the lost patrol. Moving quickly east, the reaction force tried to follow BP10's route.



Around 10 a.m. the reaction squad, led by Staff Sgt. Earl Davis, was moving through a small village "trying to regain radio contact as we went along," recalled Lance Cpl. C.R. "Ray" Maurer, a member of the squad. "We came into a large open graveyard. Almost immediately we were brought under heavy small-arms and mortar fire." Davis requested mortar fire from Bravo, and the squad moved forward. "As our requested mortar fire came in, the enemy mortars ceased," Maurer said.

Then at 10:30 the reaction squad heard a heavy volume of small-arms fire, M79 rounds and hand grenade ex-



plosions east of its position near Do Nam. “We were only receiving sporadic sniper fire, which led me to believe the heavy fire was coming from Sergeant Young’s squad,” Maurer said.

Thinking the reaction squad had found the missing men, Henry requested an aerial observer. By chance, a U.S. Army AO was flying nearby and spotted the reaction squad moving toward Do Nam. The pilot made a low pass over the squad and fired four rockets into a trench line in front of the Davis’ unit. On another pass, the AO dropped a smoke grenade to the Marines. Written on it in grease pencil was a message: “10 VC in trench.” Davis figured his men could handle 10 VC and continued toward the village. A few minutes later the AO dropped a second smoke-grenade message: “10-20 VC in tree line, I’m calling Arty” - artillery fire. Davis ordered his men into trenches next to a nearby road and advised Henry of the warnings. Bravo made contact with the AO, and Maurer heard him say, “Your point is catching hell, you’d better get up here fast.”



“We guessed that the AO had seen Sergeant Young’s squad forward of our position,” Maurer said. “Davis contacted the AO and was told that a trench line by Loc Thuan village, to our front, was swarming with VC.”

Around 11:45 Henry sent the rest of Bravo Company to rescue the embattled Marines, with 1st Platoon commander 2nd Lt. Bruce Capel and his remaining squad as the point element.

Meanwhile, Davis’ reaction squad was unable to reach Young’s BP10 because it ran into another VC force and was pinned down. “The rest of the day was chaotic, with airstrikes, artillery and gunfire going on all around us,” Davis said. “Luckily, we found shelter in another trench line. The rest of Bravo came up from our rear, and we were able to pull back into their lines.”

By 12:30 p.m. all of Bravo was heavily engaged, but the company’s 81mm and 60mm mortars failed to silence the enemy’s weapons. Henry asked for additional artillery and air support. After an artillery barrage from 2nd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, the action died down for about 20 minutes, and then the enemy opened up again with small arms and mortars.



By this time, however, McDonnell Douglas F-4B Phantom IIs from Marine Fighter Squadron 542 were overhead. The jets’ first runs on the entrenched VC in Do Nam temporarily silenced the enemy guns. “At that time we reorganized and went back out to locate BP10,” Davis said.



At about 1:20 p.m. Maurer, in the reaction squad, spotted two members of BP10, PFC. James Binkley and PFC. Reuben Morales, crossing an open field about 150 yards in front of him. Maurer, PFC. Robert Mettert and Lance Cpl. Bernard Triano ran toward the two men, who

were severely wounded, and helped them back to the safety of the Bravo perimeter, while other Marines provided covering fire. “When we finally got inside the perimeter,” Morales said, “the first thing we asked for was water.”



Morales and Binkley were also given first aid. Binkley had been shot through both arms and could not move either of them. Captain Henry asked the two men, before they went under sedation, where the rest of the squad was. Morales and Binkley pointed to the northeast and said they were all dead.

Binkley and Morales later recounted the tragic story of the lost patrol. BP10 had been lured into an ambush by two or three Viet Cong companies, estimated at 250 soldiers, from the R-20 Main Force Battalion, who were equipped with machine guns and a 57mm recoilless rifle. During the battle “the radio was hit and we couldn’t call the company,” Morales said.

BP10 was crossing a rice paddy when its point man was shot, followed by the Navy medic and a Marine on the right flank. As bullets poured into the patrol, one struck Morales in the head, and he went down. The Marines’ only shelter was a small paddy dike. “When someone tried to run, he was hit,” Morales said.



One who tried to make a run for it was Lance Cpl. Edgardo Caceres, the machine gunner, who had only two days left to serve in Vietnam. Caceres was hit in the back, got up and started running, only to be hit again. “I knew he was running for help,” Morales said. “He fell three different times. After being shot, I stood up. I was dizzy but could see the Viet Cong coming toward us. The other guys who could stand stood up, firing away. The wounded were shooting too.”

By the time the VC reached the dike, a low mound of dirt in front of the Marines, Morales was out of ammunition. “I was ready to start swinging my rifle, when I got hit in the neck,” he said. “I fell on my back, but I was not unconscious. I heard all the noises - the mortars and grenades. A few seconds later, it stopped. Then the shooting started again. I opened my eyes and saw the Viet Cong shoot two other guys out in front of me on the second paddy dike. I heard them coming toward me and closed my eyes.



“They took my rifle, a grenade I had, and ammunition. Then one picked me up by my shirt to search me, but dropped me back. I was waiting, thinking, ‘When will he pull the trigger?’ More shooting started, and the two VC near me started moving away when our mortars started fir-

ing. I looked and saw them running back into the tree line. I heard another Marine calling, ‘Corpsman. Over here!’”

Navy Corpsman “Doc” Pedro Muñoz, the medic, was constantly moving up and down the perimeter during the battle. Wounded more than once, he continued to treat the men until he was killed.

“I heard our troops [men from the reaction squad] trying to get to us, but they couldn’t,” Morales said. “After a while, the other Marines stopped hollering. I was scared. I thought we had been abandoned.”

Binkley, like Morales, had feigned death when the Viet Cong overran the Marines. As the sun got higher, temperatures rose above 100 degrees that day, and the two men lay in the blistering heat for more than three hours.

When the Marine artillery and mortars forced the VC back into the tree line, Morales saw Bravo in the distance and decided to take a chance. He crawled around the paddy looking for other survivors. “As I started to crawl,” he said, “I expected the VC to shoot me in the back. There was a Marine with his legs over the paddy wall. He said he couldn’t move, and I told him I’d be back. I could see our troops across the rice paddies, but they were moving very slow.” Morales saw three others face down. He figured they were dead. He then crawled over to Binkley. The two lone survivors headed toward their Bravo comrades and safety.

The other Marines of Bravo Company continued their fight that afternoon. “Using the information we got from Morales and Binkley, we moved forward,” Davis said. “As we were approaching the tree line, the VC opened fire with mortars and small arms.” Lieutenant Capel was maneuvering 1st Platoon when he “was hit both from the side and the front,” Davis said. When Capel fell, fatally wounded, Davis assumed command of 1st Platoon and rallied his men as they crossed more than 200 yards of open paddy under intense automatic weapons and mortar fire.



The commander of 2nd Platoon, Lieutenant Bob Jadlow remembers Capel, who had reported to the Marines just two months earlier, as a “brave, hard charging, gentle giant.” Capel had been on the University of Illinois football team that won the 1964 Rose Bowl and had played on the Quantico Marines team in 1965.

Shortly after 1:30 Doehler, the battalion commander, reinforced Bravo. He moved Company D and a platoon from Company A to link up with Henry’s company. By 6:15 Henry established a defensive line near Hoa Tay, a village not far from the lost patrol battle site. He ordered the reaction squad, which had suffered five heat casualties, to pull back to company lines. The three units were then consolidated in a 360-degree defensive perimeter around the village.

Meanwhile Marine aircraft were arriving: F-4s, Vought F-8 Crusaders and Douglas A-4 Skyhawks joined Bell UH-1 Iroquois “Huey” gunships in close-air-support missions. Nine airstrikes were run at half-hour intervals. Marine artillery fired 242 supporting rounds. The enemy force became disorganized and broke into small groups.



“The final outcome was that 175 VC were killed and a large number wounded,” Davis said. “We found out through our interpreter the next day that the VC forced people from three villages to help them carry away the bodies.”

The next morning, May 13, Doehler moved his command post to Hoa Tay and ordered search-and-clear operations. Early that afternoon Bravo Company recovered the bodies of the 12 dead Marines from the lost patrol near



the western tip of the finger lake.

Sergeant Davis said it appeared that a dying Caceres had made sure the enemy could not use his M60 machine gun to kill other Marines. He had placed a grenade in the breech and lay on top of the gun after pulling the pin.

Caceres was awarded a posthumous Silver Star, as was Doc Muñoz. Davis received a Silver Star for his actions after Lieutenant Capel was killed.

The 9th Marines of the 3rd Division operated in Arizona Territory and Dodge City until early April 1967, when the regiment moved to Quang Tri, South Vietnam's northernmost province. The 5th and 7th Marine regiments of the 1st Marine Division then took over responsibility for the Arizona Territory, Dodge City and Go Noi Island, an area (not actually an island) on the south side of the Thu Bon River across from Dodge City.

In 1968 - which began with the enemy's Tet Offensive at the end of January - Arizona, Dodge City and adjacent areas became even more dangerous. It would be the deadliest year of the entire war for the Marines.

After repeated operations to clear the Viet Cong and NVA from Arizona, Dodge and Go Noi, the patience of 1st Marine Division ran out. On June 1, 1968, a flight of nine C-130 Hercules aircraft, on what was called an "inferno mission," dropped 55-gallon drums containing a combined 31,000 gallons of fuel, which was then ignited in an attempt to burn down the thick foliage that the enemy used to its advantage. A heavy thunderstorm, however, made the effort ineffective.



Marines from the 1st Engineer Battalion arrived at Go Noi on June 6th with bulldozers to clear all foliage and structures. The commander of the 2nd Battalion, 27th Marines, Lt. Col. Albert Keller, reported that after 18 days the area looked like a "parking lot for a major ballpark in the United States."



Jack Wells served in Vietnam during 1968-69 as a first lieutenant and artillery forward observer with Alpha and Bravo companies, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, and later as executive officer of H Battery, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, at Fire Support Base Six-Shooter north of Da Nang.

## CHAPTER NOTES

### Chapter 53

Arnie Goldstein (proud USAF Vietnam Vet) has a heart of gold! Arnie is a member of Chapter 53, South Bay (Torrance area). He owns Postal Solutions, a mail stop and much more. In May 2020, Arnie obtained PPE (Personal



Protective Equipment) that included gloves, masks, and hand wipes and he offered each Chapter member a free kit containing a generous selection of the much needed items. He also provides many services for the Chapter at low or no cost. We cannot thank Arnie enough. Postal Solutions is located at 4733 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance CA 90503.



### Chapter 201

AVVA Supplies Face masks

Chapter 201 AVVA family members have been busy making cloth masks in response the COVID-19 Coronavirus crisis. AVVA 201 members have donated over 1,000 face masks face shields to the patients at the VA hospitals in Palo Alto and Menlo Park California. In addition, they have also provided an additional 1000 Face masks and more than 200 face shields to the VA hospital in Livermore, California.

In conversation with the staff at these facilities, it is noted that they are extremely grateful for this level of support and generous contribution for all of the patients that are using the VA facilities. This offers a huge level of protection for the patients and some of the support staff and is a welcome addition to the overall safety protocols being employed at each of these facilities.



Chapter 201 AVVA is largely populated by former South Vietnamese veterans, spouses and family members that have become a huge part of the San Jose community and Chapter 201 as a whole. They have continuously shown an unselfish desire to pitch in and help in an unsolicited manner for veterans throughout the Bay Area.

Their desire is to continuously give back to the United States and all veterans as a small way to say Thank You for supporting their efforts during the war with North Vietnam and attempting to save their country. Although South Vietnam does not officially exist as a country, it remains forever in the hearts and minds of the South Vietnamese people.

Chapter 201 AVVA continues to work on masks and face shields for donation to other locations and to our veteran community as a whole. They have done this completely and have never requested, nor do they expect to receive, any level of reimbursement for their selfless efforts.

Chapter 201 members and leadership thank them for their selflessness and their continued support of our community, veterans and members.

### Chapter 47

Feeding the Veterans

Since July 2019 chapter 47 has been involved in supplying food to veteran villages in the Inland Empire. First there was the March Veterans Village at the March air reserve base, then there was the new Loma Linda Veterans Village and then the new Beaumont Veterans Village. These facilities house 300 to 400 previously homeless and at risk veterans, they are really nice modern facilities but they don't feed the veterans. So together with the Volunteers for Veterans we decided to start feeding these veterans and establish a pantry at the facilities. We went into the community and ask for donations of food or money to help fill up the pantries. We did not get a lot of donations so we are limited to what we can do each week. Right now Chapter 47 pays for milk and eggs to be delivered every week at these facilities and we get a great break on

the price and we still spend close to \$1000 a month on just milk and eggs. There are several families who live in these facilities and therefore their children have been home in this pandemic, so they've been going through a lot more food. We have reached out two other foundations for financial support and we are waiting. Also they are building another facility in Pomona and they are expanding the facility at March Veterans Village and next year they will break ground on a new facility in Redlands.

At Christmas time we gave out 350 frozen turkeys and all the fixings courtesy of Feeding America and we also came across some live Christmas trees that were donated to us and we gave those out along with all the lights and ornaments. We gave out gift cards from Target along with some toys for the children. We were involved in two barbecues for the villages at Christmas time which was donated by some private companies. We've also supplied shelving and refrigerators.

Other items we supply are hygiene products including toilet paper, toothpaste, deodorant, soap and etc., some of which we got donated to us from Amazon.

This is a big project for Chapter 47 because its every week and takes a lot of help from our members.

Only about 1/3 of the veterans in these Veterans Villages are Vietnam Vets the rest are the most recent wars and they can't believe what we're doing for them because of the way we were treated when we came home.

### Chapter 535

Chapter 535, like many VVA Chapters, is drifting into its new service year via online Zoom connectivity. The membership is adapting to the technology and

Chapter Officers and Directors hope for an uptick in connectivity at its June meeting.

Even if protocols were to permit physical meetings, the Nevada County Veterans Memorial Hall would be unavailable because the county has turned the facility into an area COVID-19 testing center. It is anticipated the building will be unavailable for public use through at least the end of June 2020.

The Chapter's membership has increased to 88, which includes 4 AVVA members. Additional new prospects are in the wings, but the present membership is the greatest in the history of the Chapter's existence.

The Chapter has awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to a local graduating high school senior. This scholarship is the first Harold K. Graves Memorial Scholarship awarded. Harold K. Graves, Jr., deceased January 30, 2018, was a decades long member of Chapter 535 and twice served as the Chapter 535 President. He was an Officer and U.S. Army Ranger who served in Vietnam 1966-67 as a platoon leader. Harold Graves was the recipient of the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Vietnam Service Ribbon, Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star, Air Medal with 11 Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Combat Infantry Badge.

The Chapter membership is brainstorming potential future fundraising projects and contemplating continuance of long-time projects, including staging a booth at the Nevada County Fair. Uncertainty exists as whether the fair will occur at the normally scheduled mid-August date.

## DUMB AS A BOX OF ROCKS

By Jim Doyle

Preface: This article was originally written a year ago when the college entrance exam cheating scandal first broke. Now that Lori Laughlin and her husband have plead guilty, I think it is fair to revisit this article, first published in The Fresno Bee.

As someone who settled for an Army issued GED in place of a real diploma from Fresno High School (I was awarded an Honorary Diploma years later), and who squandered numerous opportunities at higher education, I occupy a unique vantage point to watch the unfolding college entrance scandal.

A little background would be helpful.

I spent the majority of my high school years screwing around, ditching classes, and looking for the next good time. I actually went through the graduation ceremony in June 1967 but was told I had to attend Summer School for 6 weeks to finish what I had neglected to finish in the three previous years.

Summer School. You mean like, school, in summer? What're you, nuts? You don't go to school in summer unless you received an empty diploma case, and were a few credits short of the minimum number of credits for graduation. So, what did I do? I partied like it was 1999 and ignored the chance to get a real high school diploma.

Long story short, in late Fall of '67 I asked the Army to call me for service and they obliged, ordering me to



# VIETNAM VETERANS GOLF CLASSIC

**Friday, September 18, 2020**

**Teleli Golf Club**



- ★ *Win a new car from Sonora Ford or Subaru of Sonora*
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**Entry Fee \$105.00**

**Includes 18 hole scramble, shared cart,  
complementary range balls, tee bag and dinner**

*Course contest include:*

*closest to pin, longest drive, and team putting*

**Mail to: PO Box 5391, Sonora, CA 95370**

**Registration opens at 7am**

**Shotgun start at 9am**

*For more info, contact:*

**JOHN MARRS (209) 532-2052; j.marrs@att.net**

*Vietnam Veterans Chapter 391, of Sonora, CA, will be presenting our 19th Annual Classic Golf Tournament, to be held Friday Sept 18th of this year at Teleli Golf Club (formally Mountain Springs) on Lime Kiln Rd, Sonora. Our tournament welcomes all golfers, you don't have to be a veteran, Registration will begin at 7am with tee time of 9am. All players will receive a patriotic tee bag of goodies, complementary range balls, a free team putting contest, and a deluxe dinner. There will be a raffle drawing to include a 55" TV and other interesting items and a silent auction. Prizes will be awarded for closest to the pin all par 3's. On Par 3 hole #7 a new Ford or Subaru of Sonora could be won with a Hole in One and a Long Diving contest will be held for Men and Women. You can check us out on our web site as well, and or mail to our PO Box 5391, Sonora CA.*

The scat hasn't even begun to hit the old fan yet.

Sure, there will likely be more celebrity names involved, and more coaches and administrators will be given the axe, along with the latest crop of enhanced application students.

What about the board rooms across the country?

Human Resource directors should be scouring their files to find out if they hired any graduates whose college applications were a pack of lies and whose real SAT score was room temperature.

Given the incestuous nature and the networking that is part and parcel of higher education, it is not beyond possibility that many of these phony students obtained jobs in prestigious firms in every sector of the economy because of their networking connections.

How many of these horrible people are in the public sector, assessing our taxes, making our laws, and affecting the everyday lives of our neighbors?

And how many of these kids didn't have a clue their parents were doing manipulating the system, and have to face the daunting task of learning how to row, play soccer or lacrosse, swim? How many of them have the ability to function at the level of a Yale or USC or Wake Forest if the only way they would be accepted was to submit a spurious application?

Surely there must be a few who knew full well what was happening and went blithely along, secure in the knowledge they were entitled to special treatment, because that's all they've known their entire lives.

At the end of the day the most disgusting reality in this whole story is, if they lied to get into school, they must lie about everything else in life in order to cover it up.

## EDUCATING PAR- ENTS & LOVED ONES ABOUT RETURNING WAR VETERANS

By Clyde R. Horn, PHD, VVA Chapter 201

Almost no parent or loved one is able to be prepared for their veteran returning home from a war zone. Often the returning veteran is a shell of the person he or she used to be. The stress of being under the constant anxiety of not knowing if you will live or die is tremendous. The trauma of seeing fellow soldiers die or be maimed is hellacious. If the veteran has been in firefight, there are no words that can describe the violence and terror.

In addition, if the veteran has been wounded or lost limbs it enhances their trauma. Finally, even if the veteran was in a "safe place" or a noncombatant it doesn't mean they were not affected by the fact that they were still under constant danger of being bombed, attacked or even wit-

report to the Armed Forces Examination and Entrance Station (AFES) in the 1900 block of "H" Street on 18 January 1968. Me and about 600 other guys.

While in the Army I took the required "remedial" courses with other recruits and passed the battery of General Education Equivalence (GED) tests and am considered equivalent to a high school graduate. I even include it on my business cards, Jim Doyle, HsE.

After leaving the Army I was a little restless, my legs and brain were in constant motion, taking me in and out of Fresno City College, staying long enough to make the GI Bill check last through the next few hours of class until the next check. It was a repeat of high school, but with ashtrays, as the saying went.

What does all this matter in relation to the current college admission scandal?

It means I put a high value on education because I pissed away every formal educational opportunity I had.

While I was in Vietnam, every letter I wrote to my younger brother included a statement to the effect of, "keep your ass in school or you'll end up like me..."

He took me so seriously, 50 years later he is still in school. Oh sure, he's a PhD professor preeminent in his

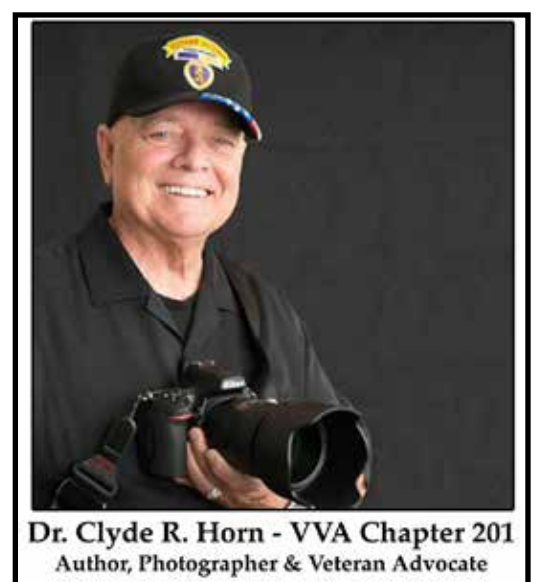
field but really, 50 years? His success puts me in the position of being able to claim, "If not for me..."

Our son followed a similar path, graduating from Fresno State and then doing his post-grad work at the University of Washington in Seattle, where he taught Political Science for several years before moving into IT.

Both my brother and son got into college the old-fashioned way, like the overwhelming majority of college students, hard work. Mommy and Daddy did what they could, free room and board and a lot of support and encouragement. Brother and son both worked their fingers to the bone, saved what they could, and earned their own way through school.

Now we learn about hundreds of families, some very prominent, who have been gaming the system by working with groups who enhance their kids' chances of getting into the Ivy League or other elite universities by lying and cheating.

Parents paid tens of thousands of dollars for bogus athletic histories, honked-up SAT exams, and who knows what else to push their kids to the front of the line, ahead of kids who were likely more qualified, and eager to get an education, not just a slot in a fixed lottery, a charade.





nessing the carnage that happens in war zones.

I'm one of the above veterans. I came back from war with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder where no treatment was available for decades. I've been in recovery for a number of years, but it has taken tremendous efforts to get the help I desperately needed. It took me two years learning and navigating the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability system to reach 100% disabled veteran status in spite of being a combat veteran and Purple Heart recipient. When I returned from Vietnam in 1968, I was told by the VA in Los Angeles, CA I was not entitled to any disability benefits. I didn't realize until 2008 that benefits were being provided since the Civil War but 1980 was when the political forces began to change. I found out through my own research I had rights. I received no notice from the VA letting me know I could apply for benefits.

The VA system has improved, but it can still be a challenge. There's more to be done, not just for veterans, but also for families and loved one's of



SGT Clyde Horn (middle)  
Iron Triangle of Vietnam 1968

veterans. I realized early on that a major key that is missing is the matter of educating parents and loved ones on what to expect when a veteran returns from war.

I propose there are some veteran types that might help you understand some things you need to know in order to prepare or help the returning war veteran in your life. These veteran types are of my own design based on my personal experience. The types are not all inclusive and are suggestions to help educate loved one's of veterans. It is possible for a veteran to fit into a number of categories I have listed:

1. The Functional Veteran. Some Veterans come home from war with no changes. They are able to function, interact with family, finish school or get a job. They are just like the family remembers them. It could be that they were able to fend off trauma. It is also possible that they had the internal energy to keep the demons of war at bay. However, demons are good at waiting. It could take years or decades until the defense systems break down and PTSD or medical issues surface connected to military service experiences. It is not uncommon for the VA to see soldiers for treatment after they retire from full-time work. I was one of those soldiers,

2. The Angry Explosive Veteran. War can make a person angry. No one can know the horror of seeing others die around you or the helplessness of feeling bullets wiz by your head in combat. The deep fear or the destruction of human beings by explosions and bodies riddled with violence changes the soldier's DNA. Yes, a veteran can return angry and vomit that anger upon loved ones and family until they get the help they need. This can be shocking to the family and appear to the family that the veteran is not appreciative of the family's love. The veteran is significantly traumatized. Until the trauma can be addressed the veteran and family will suffer.

3. The Introverted Veteran (Won't Talk or Feel). This type of veteran is similar to an alcoholic but instead of substance abuse he or she becomes silent. All the trauma is stuffed inside the body to be carried deep within the psyche. This is what past generations of veterans did because there was an unwritten code to not talk or feel about your war experience. The science was not there to help veterans address their trauma. Some of our returning veterans today still hold to the belief that you must "man up" around war experiences. Women and male veterans who have been sexually molested may feel ashamed and hide within themselves. Veterans who killed the enemy in battles may have moral guilt along with survivor guilt.

# Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 391

P.O. Box 5391, Sonora, CA 95370



## ANNUAL RIFLE RAFFLE



**DONATION: \$10** *Only 300 tickets will be offered*  
**Drawing to be held**

**September 19, 2020**

**The rifle is a Savage Arms 110 Apex Hunter XP 308 Caliber, case and sling included, with a Vortex Crossfire 3-9x40 scope.**



Features include silky smooth bolt operation, a rugged synthetic stock, and factory-mounted, bore-sighted 3-9x40mm Vortex scope. Plus, the matte blued, carbon steel barrel is button rifled for long-lasting accuracy.

**CALL OR EMAIL:**

**Dick Southern**

**(209) 768-9841**

[dick.southern@gmail.com](mailto:dick.southern@gmail.com)

**Or any VVA-391 Member**

Not talking or feeling creates numbness and distance from loved ones.

4. The Reclusive Veteran (Isolating/Depressed). Some war veterans do not feel like they fit into society anymore. They choose to be alone, have no friends and refuse support. They get to like being isolated and might decide to find places to "hide" from their war experiences. In addition, they are usually depressed. Depression can lead to suicidal thoughts and even suicide attempts. When a veteran begins to isolate, it is a serious symptom that needs to be addressed immediately through local VA agencies, therapeutic programs or medical care.

5. The Addicted Veteran (Self-Medicating with Alcohol, Drugs, Sex, Gambling or Numerous Acting Out Behaviors). Anything that can decrease the anxiety and trauma of war can grab onto veterans who have addictive tendencies. Unfortunately, our society has an availability of substances that can be secured rather easily to help mask symptoms of deep trauma. If the family has a history of substance abuse, the family can become enablers of the disease leading the veteran to a destructive lifestyle. It's not uncommon for there to be overdose episodes, blackouts or even death. Substance abuse treatment is essential to get to the root of the addictions.

6. The Anxious & Compulsive Veteran. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a trauma disorder. High anxiety is a major symptom, Night terrors, hypervigilance, war flashbacks, psychological distress, physiological reactions to internal and external cues, internal negative beliefs, feelings of detachment and many more symptoms impact trauma victims. The veteran can be constantly scanning the

environment for threats of danger, feeling uncomfortable in crowds, not enjoying social gatherings, jumping at being touched or hearing loud noises. Compulsive behaviors can begin like checking locked doors multiple times or being upset if something is not in a designated place. Unless the anxiety is decreased this becomes self-destructive.

7. The Aggressive Dangerous Veteran. Some veterans have been significantly damaged from war. Their whole belief system, including their moral inventory, is gone. They have lost their name and have the potential to be extremely violent. Any weapons in the home should be secured including household knives. They need immediate intervention because they can be lethal to themselves or others. Some counties have Veteran Courts for veterans who are arrested for a crime. Entrance into these programs are tailored to help traumatized veterans receive the help they deserve in spite of criminal behavior.

**HOW CAN FAMILIES HELP THE VETERAN?**

1. Learn About Trauma. Read articles and books to help you understand the complexity of how this changes a person. Understand the pain, tendency to withdraw and need for family support without ongoing pressure to demand the veteran "return to normal." Trauma can happen to anyone at any age. It is not just a veteran issue. Any type of ongoing abuse, life or death situation, terrorist attack, death in a family, loss of health, disease can paralyze a person with trauma.

2. Learn About PTSD. It's amazing how Post Traumatic Stress wasn't known by veterans and was considered a weakness in character in past wars. There are many good articles on the subject. The family needs to be edu-



# KEY MAP

## Proposed Flyover Route:

1. Formation pass-up over Loma Linda Medical Center 12:00P.M.
2. Riverside National Cemetery 12:05P.M.
3. Turn Point 12:15P.M.
4. St. Joseph, Choc Hospital 12:19P.M.
5. KSHS 12:22P.M.
6. Pacific View Memorial Park 12:24P.M.
7. New Port Beach 12:25P.M.
8. Long Beach VA Hospital 12:32P.M.
9. Queen Mary 12:35P.M.
10. USS Iowa 12:37P.M.
11. Green Hills Memorial Park 12:38P.M.
12. XTOA 12:39P.M.
13. KLAX 12:43P.M.
14. KJAO 12:45P.M.
15. LA National Cemetery 12:46P.M.
16. UCLA Medical Center 12:47P.M.
17. USC Medical Center 12:52P.M.
18. City of Hope 12:58P.M.
19. KONO 1:07P.M. (Landing at Chino Airport)

Starts

MON ★ MAY 25TH

12:00P.M.

#LOOKUP

# MEMORIAL DAY

## "OPERATION SO CAL STRONG"

Organizer Inland Empire Wing Commemorative Air Force

### Add Partners:

Flabob Express, Flabob Aviation Associates    Spirit Of Benovia, Benovia Winery

**A Memorial Day flyover salute to Veterans and Frontline Covid-19 Health Care Workers.** This 90-minute flyover of several WWII era aircraft as a salute to all veterans who gave the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms we enjoy today and to honor Frontline Covid-19 Health Care Worker heroes of today. We will be performing a flyover tribute with WWII era aircraft, over Southern California's 2 National Cemetery's, VA, USC, UCLA, CHOC, Loma Linda, City of Hope Medical Centers and Hospitals, and the Battleship USS Iowa. Onboard the lead aircraft CAF Inland Empire Wings D-Day Doll, Veterans from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam will be invited to join us as our special guest of honor for the flight. Additionally, our goal is to signal to all Southern Californian's to remain vigilant during these challenging times as past generations have.

Contact: Steve Rose IEW Wing Leader (714) 403.9052 [swrose17@gmail.com](mailto:swrose17@gmail.com), Bill Prosser IEW Business Officer (951) 212.7904 [bill@canfab.com](mailto:bill@canfab.com)

Chapter 47 members got the word spread via text message about a flyover taking place over Memorial Day. During the COVID-19 "shelter at home" orders it was a way to "get out of the house" and experience a shared event in the skies of Southern California.

than if I had tried to do it on my own. The typical forms of therapy, medication, employment aids and alternative treatment is available through local VA's. For me, I wanted to find therapy that allowed me to express myself without too many words. I found art therapy helped me. Each person is unique and finding the right treatment depends on who the person is and what the person feels is the right fit.

Loving family or friends can re-traumatize a veteran by being ignorant in what they say or think. Statements like “Just Get Over It,” “Let The Past Be The Past” and “Just Be Who You Used To Be,” are demeaning and hurtful because they do not represent the whole veterans experience. Be nice, patient and supportive. Give the veteran space with kind prompts to get support. If you find yourself getting overwhelmed seek professional help. Please be careful of getting advice from those who have no experience with war trauma because advise out of ignorance harms rather than heals.

Be aware that holidays can be hard on the war veteran. Some veterans can't be around fireworks on the 4th of July. Some were in battles on Christmas or Easter or a major holiday that remind the veteran of death rather than joy. Be sensitive of these cues and don't force your loved one to be happy when it may trigger a negative memory.

This is just a brief overview, but I hope you have learned that the road to recovery for returning war veterans is a long one but can be successful with family, VA and loved one's support. YOU are the best support a veteran can have because you have the love and understanding. Be there but also be or get educated.

# BROTHERS... AND SISTERS TOO,

Today is my birthday. My new birthday. Fifty years ago, exactly, I was wounded up on the Cambodian border. It was meaningful, in the most profound way, as it defined what I was willing to give to somebody whom I did not even know. It defined not just what was important, but what was not.

Human life is precious, but hon-  
or more so. Most of us have gone,  
and not a small number because they

felt that they needed to leave. Having an ideal that you refuse to relinquish, or a task that is temporarily unpopular that others wish you would stop, fits into the huge question of our personal involvement in Viet Nam, or with other Viet Nam Veterans.

We have all been bombarded with negative advice and belittlement from those who chose not to go.

I know of very few of us who have escaped harassment at work, home or school. From those who we wish had known better.

And fifty years has reawakened the questions that were shouted in our ears back then. They were more like proclamations and accusations. As an honest man, I will stand in front of the shaving mirror and ask them of myself, again. And I come up with the same, positive answer, possibly affirmed by fifty years of living an honest and honorable life, as best I felt I was able.

No, we weren't there to terrorize and take over the country. No, we didn't come back with duffel bags full of cash or gold. And NO, I am NOT ASHAMED of my Service.

We went not because we were sent, but because we thought that we could wrest another human being from the jaws of the evil that was trying to own him. Please look at the photo that I have included. No, don't look at me, I'm not in charge of the group. I just know how to call cadence, so that is my function. Look at the men

cated on the symptoms and treatments for this disorder. Some VA's have family programs that can be helpful.

3. Lower Your Expectations. You want your son or daughter to be the same person they once were. That's not realistic. Give the veteran time to heal. My guess is it takes 2-3 years to get better once you engage treatment. Remember, the person you once knew has changed. A part of the family or loved one may need to grieve over the loss but there is also the flip side that the veteran is alive and there is hope.

4. **Expect There To Be Employment Problems.** Not all returning veterans will fail to get employment or keep a job but for many it is difficult if not impossible to do work for months or years. Too much emotional and physical damage has happened. The person may seem like a failure or is “giving up” but this is common with individuals who have suffered severe trauma. Be very careful about judging since it can trigger deep resentment by the veteran. Calling the veteran irresponsible only makes matters worse and it’s not the truth.

5. **Help The Veteran.** This may include financial support if you can. Emotional support, positive reinforcement and, after a short time of being back from war, help them link up with the VA, local Veteran Organizations, or Community Based Programs.

6. Realize the veteran may return with health issues due to exposure to dangerous toxins. A medical evaluation

for heart disease, traumatic brain injuries, neurological disorders and diabetes are a must.


7. Participate in Veteran Based programs for the family. Being around other families that have returning veterans can be a wonderful realization that you are not alone. You are a key person in the veteran's life that can give love unconditionally. You are important in spite of the trauma your child or loved one suffered. You are special because you are family.

Finally, the returning veteran needs to get a VA ID (Identification Card).

This can happen through the VA or a local Veteran Service Office. The most important piece of information for any veteran is the Military Form DD214. This form has the record of the veteran's military history including enrollment, discharge dates, along with military rank, medals and assignments. This form is available on-line, but my suggestion is to go to a local VA Service Office and get help by seeing a Veteran Service Officer (VSO). The VA will need to access a soldier's DD214 form prior to a veteran receiving a VA ID Card. The VA card opens doors to treatment, discounts in the community and recognition as a veteran.

There are a host of treatments available to veterans. I was personally helped by being with other veterans in a group treatment program through my local VA clinic. Support from fellow veterans helped me heal much quicker





Friday 17 April 2020

Dick Cunningham, Vietnam Veterans of America, South Bay Chapter 53 Treasurer and Roger Munoz Assistant Manager of Big 5 El Segundo store load tents and ponchos for donation to the Covid-19 Homeless Veteran Program at the Veterans Administration Greater Los Angeles Hospital campus in Westwood.



Saturday 18 April 2020

Doctor Steven Capone-Newton and Doctor Anjani Reddy along with Vietnam Veterans Dick Cunningham and Steve Crecy begin to unload 25 tents, tarps and ponchos for the Covid-19 Homeless Veteran Program at the Veterans Administration Greater Los Angeles Hospital campus in Westwood. The donations were made by members of Vietnam Veterans of America, South Bay, Chapter 53.



Saturday 18 April 2020

A view of the "tent city" recently established at the West Los Angeles Veterans Administration Hospital campus. Veterans are screened before being allowed to enter this program that offers them security, food, toilet facilities, showers, counseling, and medical care. The program was developed in response to the Covid-19 crisis and to "reintegrate" Homeless Veterans into society starting by getting off the streets to this safe setting.

If you or your organization are in a position to assist, please contact  
VHACO10B2Astaff@va.gov

marching. They have spent fifty years bearing their honor. Fifty years bearing up under criticism by those who had no knowledge of Viet Nam. Who were never even there. Now fifty years have proven those criticizing words hollow. And of no importance.

I define the men in this photograph as Honorable. I define them as Brave. And I define them as My Brothers. My Family. I live and die in their care. And the care of those who have understood from the beginning. My wife, Bonnie, who knows no end of patience. Or no depth to the

Painted red, white & blue




Chapter 218


10 May 28, 2020

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Alameda Sun




# MEMORIAL DAY




Vietnam Veterans of America  
Chapter 400  
John DiLillo at  
johnd@myclassicyachts.com



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calsam600@gmail.com



American Legion  
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Kurt Winkowski at  
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Sam Moriana at smoriana@att.net



ELKS Lodge 1015  
Howard Weinman  
Lodge Secretary  
510-522-1015 x 11

Members of American Legion Posts 9 and 647, Alameda Elks Lodge 1015 and Vietnam Veterans of America that Passed in the last year

Thomas J. Costa  
Paul C. Schmidt  
John Williams  
James B. Saulovich  
James Blamire  
Angelo Parrinella  
Fred R. Murray

William E. Dickerson  
Gene R. Maurice  
Jesse B. Medeiros  
Floyd Hunter  
Ralph Bertlesen  
Cathleen Cordova  
Doug Dressel

*"It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather we should thank God such men lived."*

- George S. Patton

*"Those who have long enjoyed such privileges as we enjoy forget in time that men have died to win them."*


- Franklin D. Roosevelt

*"Freedom makes a huge requirement of every human being. With freedom comes responsibility."*

- Eleanor Roosevelt


*"I believe our flag is more than just cloth and ink. It is a universally recognized symbol that stands for liberty and freedom. It is the history of our nation and it's marked by the blood of those who died defending it."*

- John Thune




Floyd Hunter Pvt USMC  
July 22, 1925 – March 18, 2020

Floyd fought in WWII's first landing for the battle of Guam and a few months later landed on the beaches of Iwo Jima. He was injured by a mortar shell during that battle, was medically retired from the United States Marine Corps and awarded a Purple Heart for his injuries.




Gene Maurice  
Seaman PO 3rd Class USN  
August 24, 1926 – April 8 2020

Gene was on the maiden launch of the USS Saginaw Bay in 1944. The ship sailed to the Pacific, and was involved in the Battles of Palau, Leyte, Lingayen, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Finally involved in Operation Magic Carpet Ride, which transported ground troops fighting in WWII in the Pacific back to the States.



Ralph Bertlesen CMDR USN  
July 15, 1926 – April 22, 2020

Ralph began his career in the United States Navy as a signalman aboard the USS Moore during the Battle of Iwo Jima. He decided to serve 30 years in the United States Navy and retired a Commander.



Bill Dickerson TSgt USAF  
August 22, 1933 – March 11, 2020

Bill served as a Navigator in the United States Air Force. He attached to Strategic Air Command. When Bill left his career in the USAF he went back to school, earned a Law degree and became a dedicated Elk member right here in Alameda.


IF YOU TRULY WANT TO THANK A VETERAN, BE THE KIND OF AMERICAN THAT IS WORTH DYING FOR.

This ad was the brainchild of Joe LoParo (USMC), a Chapter 400 member. Chapter 400 spearheaded this to partially make up for not being able to put on our regular Memorial Day ceremony.

well of Love that God has provided her with. Few of us could survive without these blessings. To steal a Biblical phrase from Hebrews 12: 1, this relationship we have might be called our "Clouds Of Witness". Those around us strive to allow us to return. To become what we maybe cannot. Normal. Unbroken.

Look at these men in this picture. And then look to those whom you know. Consider them honestly in your heart. Then go see them or call them on the phone. If they ask you why you suddenly had a need to reconnect, just tell them that it was someone's birthday, and it made you think of them.

SGT Hap (Desimone)



Chapter 223 - a group of us getting together in this new era of social distancing..meeting for coffee..tailgating ...

Summer 2020 page eleven



# MEMORIAL DAY TOOK SOME INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY TO COMMEMORATE HOLIDAY IN VETERANS HOMES DURING COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

By Jeff Jardine · CalVet Team

If necessity is, indeed, the mother of all invention, and desperate times require desperate measures, then add this new adage to the mix:

COVID-19 demands innovation and imagination to maintain our traditions.

Indeed, Zoom feeds replace crowded graduation ceremonies. Well-wishers now drive by to offer socially distanced birthday greetings to the recipient out on his or her front porch.

Likewise, it required new ways to remember the fallen who died defending this nation, due to the cancellation of traditional Memorial Day parades and other large gatherings across the country. Memorial Day is a poignant and deeply meaningful day to many veterans; some lost friends in battle, others fought with the knowledge that they too could become a casualty.

Additionally, residents in CalVet’s eight Veterans Homes of California have been restricted to visiting family members only by video and phone chats over the past three months. They maintain social distancing within the homes, foregoing the usual camaraderie of daily meals in the dining halls and other events off campus.

Here are some of the creative ways staff members helped residents observe the day:

The weekend ceremonies launched early when on Thursday the veterans in all of the homes watched a concert specifically in their honor by the Navy Band Northwest, via video feed.

Veterans at the Lancaster Home enjoyed a custom

car parade as part of their Memorial Day commemoration.

Members of the True Memories Antelope Valley Car Club paraded in front of the Lancaster Home earlier in the week. The veterans sat outside and watched them go by before the club went on to Joshua Memorial Park to lay a wreath in the veterans’ section of the cemetery. The wreath-laying ceremony is one of the events the Home’s veterans normally would have attended.

The Ventura Home staff created a virtual tribute to the 93 veterans who have lived and died at the Home over the years. The tribute was shown on monitors situated throughout the facility. Instead of reading the governor’s Memorial Day proclamation to an assembly, Home administrator and Army veteran Julian Bond visited the residents throughout the facility to read the proclamation. Finally, the veterans saw a motorcycle parade involving several local clubs pass by the campus.

At the Barstow Home, veterans enjoyed a midday barbecue, and then observed a moment of silence throughout the Home at 3 p.m.

In the Fresno Home, two centenarian veterans celebrated birthdays five days apart – one celebrating his 100th birthday and the other his 104th milestone, while all residents honored fallen comrades or POWs through the “Missing Man Honors Table. The National League of POW/MIA Families describes the table poignantly: “Set for six, the empty chairs represent Americans who were

or are missing from each of the services – Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard – and civilians, all with us in spirit.”

Redding Home administrator and uniformed Air Force veteran, Steve Cope read the proclamation in each of the Home’s five “neighborhoods.” Before each reading, staff member Nedalyn (Lynn) Bennett sang the national anthem.

At the Chula Vista Home, members of the local Garden Club sent chocolate bars as desserts for the special barbecue that the veterans enjoyed in their rooms or six feet apart.

At the Yountville Home, staff members sang patriotic songs that aired over KVET, the Home’s veterans/ residents-operated closed-circuit TV station. Yountville administrator Lisa Peake received wreaths from the local community at the entrance of the Home.

The Wounded Warriors organization provided ice cream to the veterans in the West LA Home, they watched a parade of more than a dozen custom cars, and enjoyed a patriotic presentation via Zoom.



Veterans at the Lancaster Home enjoyed custom car parade as part of Memorial Day commemoration.



Missing Man Honors table in Fresno.



Wreaths sit at the entrance to Veterans Homes of California-Yountville on Memorial Day.

It might not have been the same as in previous years, obviously. Memorial Day in the time of COVID-19 took some alternative thinking, and CalVet staff came through.



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

VVA Chapter 223 - Postal Permit  
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Santa Rosa, CA 95402

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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**

State Convention July 31 - August 1, 2020 - Visalia  
Full Council - October 23-25, 2020 - Visalia  
Full Council - January 2021 - Visalia

**Zephyr deadlines 2 weeks AFTER to each CSC meeting**