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Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day 2011



more photos throughout the issue from other events across the state

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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.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On several occasions over the last several months I have had the pleasure to stand alongside Robert Rosebrock and many other Veterans at the West LA VA to help protest the Land Grab on the WLAVA land. March 6, 2011 Elayne and I went to the West LA VA for the Spring Celebration which was held on the grounds of the VA. There was a very good turn out with numerous VVA members in attendance. After the speakers were finished there was a nice BBQ at the site where everyone was well fed. Thanks

to Robert Rosebrock and all the Veterans who provided a good day.

One of the big highlights of the celebration was the fact that I was able to meet and speak to one of the guest speakers, Col. Joe Fer, USAF (Ret). Col. Fer, along with 5 other crew members, were shot down over North Vietnam on February 4, 1967. Col Fer, along with two other crew members, were captured and held as Prisoners, then released in the spring of 1973 after spending 6 years as a POW in Vietnam. What a wonderful man.

I was invited to Chapter 391's "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" in Sonora where the chapter hosted the American Veterans Traveling Tribute Moving Wall. They had a standing room only crowd for their opening ceremony on Friday March 25. During the entire 4 day visit, we were

working the Wall in cool, cloudy and rainy weather. Despite the bad weather I was able to meet and assist a lot of visitors. Even in the rain it was a joy to help the visitors find the names they were looking for on the Wall.

On March 30, 2011 I celebrated Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day at the State Capitol where VVA CSC held their Second Annual California Legislative Day. We had 60 registered guests for VVA CSC Legislative Day this year and over 50 attended. This was a wonderful turnout for our second Legislative Day at the Capitol. During the morning we presented Assembly Member Jim Nielsen (R-Gerber) with one of our "Legislator of The Year Awards." We then presented Senator Lou Correa (D Orange County) with the other "Legislator of The Year Award." Both have been strong supporters of Veterans issues within the State of California and they, both, deserve these awards.

At 11:30 am we went to the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial for our Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony. There were close to 100 in attendance for the ceremony including several Legislators. The Legislators were not there for any political reasons; they were there to support us, the Vietnam Veteran. This was a very productive day for everyone.

Please try and stay current with the CA. Legislative issues. There are many that can affect the veteran. Also, a big thank you to all of the CSC Officers, Board Directors, CSC Chapters, Delegates and Associates for the great jobs that they are doing. Thank you to our membership for your support and keeping your chapters productive.

Welcome Home and God Bless America! Steve

SANCHEZ INTRODUCES LEGISLATION

Linda Sanchez Introduces Legislation Honoring Vietnam War Veterans

Washington, DC =ADCongresswoman Linda T. Sanchez=20 has introduced legislation (H. Res 184) giving=20 long overdue recognition to thousands of Vietnam=20 War veterans by designating March 30, 2011 as=20 "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day". March 30 is=20 intended to commemorate the day when the last=20 U. S. combat troops completed their service and left Vietnam.

"When our troops returned from Vietnam after=20 honorably serving our country, too many of them=20 never received a proper homecoming", said=20 Congresswoman Sanchez. "Many returning veterans=20 faced hostility, harsh ridicule, and criticism=20 from the American public. We owe it to these=20 veterans to honor them for their dedicated service to our country".

Congresswoman Sanchez, a member of the House=20 Veterans' Affairs Committee, has introduced this=20 resolution every Congress since she was elected=20 in 2002. "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" has=20 received broad bipartisan support by the House of=20 Representatives after Congresswoman Sanchez=20 introduced it in the 108th, 109th, 110th, and 111th Congresses.

Local veterans, in cooperation with Congresswoman=20 Sanchez, host a Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day=20 Celebration event annually in her district. The=20 event helps honor and recognize the many Vietnam=20 veterans who returned to the United States=20 without receiving the formal "thank you" or=20 "welcome home", which returning service members=20 in our nation traditionally receive. This year, =20 the event will take place Sunday, March 27 in=20 Whittier, CA at the California High School=20 Football Field from 11:00 a. m. - 6:00 p. m. For=20 more information on this event, please call=20 Congresswoman Sanchez's district office at (562) 860-5050.

Congresswoman Sanchez work to honor Vietnam=20 veterans began in 2003, following a meeting with=20 constituent Jose Ramos, a Vietnam veteran from=20 Whittier, CA, who has worked tirelessly to recognize his fellow veterans.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

By: Pete Conaty, VVA-CSC Legislative Advocate

The 2011-2012 California Legislative Session is underway. The state's dire fiscal crisis and the formulation of the state's Fiscal Year 2011-2012 budget is overshadow-

ing all other legislative business. The new Governor and the Legislature hope to reach agreement on a budget plan in time to qualify an initiative for the June ballot which will ask the voters to extend the \$12 billion of temporary tax increases initiated a few years ago. Amidst this budgetary furor, the annual cycle of legislation is proceeding in the background. Currently, we are tracking 59 pieces of state legislation regarding veterans and military related issues. My office has been working with the Council's Legislative Chairman, Ken Holybee to take positions on these bills.

The council is sponsoring two bills (see below). Please bring these bills to the attention of your local legislator and ask for their support on them when they come up for a vote.

AB 167 (Cook), California Stolen Valor Act

- Names the existing law which provides that any person who falsely represents himself or herself to have been awarded any military decoration, with the intent to defraud, is guilty of a misdemeanor as the California Stolen Valor Act.
- Requires that certain elected officers forfeit their office upon conviction of a crime pursuant to the California Stolen Valor Act, that involves a false claim that the person is a veteran or a member of the Armed Forces.
- AB 201 (Butler), Veterans Courts
- Authorizes superior courts to develop and implement veterans courts for eligible veterans of the U. S. military with the objective of, among other things, creation of a dedicated calendar or a locally developed collaborative court-supervised veterans mental health program or system that leads to the placement of as many mentally ill offenders who are veterans, including those with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, substance abuse, or any mental health problem due to military service.

Co-sponsored by Student Veterans of California

Also, a very important bill is AB 1209 by Assemblyman Paul Cook (R-Yucaipa). Mr. Cook, Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Veterans Affairs and retired USMC Colonel has introduced AB 1209 which seeks to restore the full funding for the County Veterans Service Officers (CVSO's) and the Veterans Re-integration Project, aka Operation Welcome Home (OWH). The \$600,000 set aside for grants to Veterans Service Organizations (VSO's) is part of this funding which we are working to restore.

During January and February the fight to restore the funding for CVSO's/OWH took place in the legislative budget process. However, on March 2 the Joint Legislative Conference Committee took action which resulted in the funding currently allocated for CVSO's/OWH to be reduced by \$5 million and for the next Fiscal Year's funding to be \$2.6 million for CVSO's only. This is the same level of funding the state has been allocating since 2006. For all practical purposes, this is the same amount the state has been allocating since 2000. In other words, the level of funding found to be sufficient during peace time in 2000 is the same level of funding the state feels is sufficient to assist the swelling numbers of veterans being discharged from OEF/OIF service.

During the January and February budget fights, the VVA-CSC and other major California veterans service organizations were fully engaged in urging the Legislature and the Governor's office to fully fund the CVSO's/OWH programs. The key budget sub-committee hearings were attended by numerous veterans leaders and individual veterans from the surrounding area. Theirs and my own testimony and attendance was invaluable in showing the support of the veterans community.

Legislators who went above the call of duty in helping us fight to restore the funding were: Senator Mike Rubio (D-Bakersfield), Senator Doug La Malfa (R-Butte), Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan (D-San Ramon), Assemblyman Jim Nielsen (R-Biggs), Assemblyman Don Wagner (R-Irvine), and Assemblyman Dan Logue (R-Chico).

Therefore, the battle we must now fight going forward is to convince the Legislature and Governor to fully fund the CVSO / OWH budget. Assemblyman Cook's AB 1209 is now the legislation to rally around in the battle to restore the CVSO / OWH funding!

To give the bill the political punch needed to effect this

change we need to get as many of Mr. Cook's fellow legislators to join him as co-authors on the bill. To date the following legislators have joined as co-authors on AB 1209:

Assembly

Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) Bill Berryhill (R-Stockton) Marty Block (D-San Diego) Joan Buchanan (D-San Ramon) Tim Donnelly (R-Hesperia) Nathan Fletcher (R-San Diego) Martin Garrick (R-Carlsbad) Jeff Gorell (R-Camarillo) Shannon Grove (R-Bakersfield) Linda Halderman (R-Clovis) Kevin Jeffries (R-Riverside) Steve Knight (R-Lancaster) Dan Logue (R-Chico) Fiona Ma (D-San Francisco) Brian Nestande (R-Palm Desert) Jim Nielsen (R-Biggs) Richard Pan (D-Natomas) V. Manuel Perez (D-Cathedral City) Jim Silva (R-Huntington Beach) David Valadao (R-Hanford) Donald Wagner (R-Irvine)

Senate

Tom Berryhill (R-Stanislaus) Ron Calderon (D-Montebello) Lou Correa (D-Santa Ana) Tom Harman (R-Huntington Beach) Doug La Malfa (R-Butte) Ted Lieu (D-Torrance) Mike Rubio (D-Bakersfield) Sharon Runner (R-Antelope Valley)

Please call your local legislators if they are not on this list and urge them to co-author AB 1209-Cook.
ss

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

By: Ken Holybee, Chair, Legislative Committee

On March 30 the VVA California State Council held their second annual legislative day at the State Capitol in Sacramento. This legislative day was in conjunction with Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day (WHVVD). WHVVD is recognized by proclamation of the Governor each March 30. Vietnam veteran and State Assemblyman Paul Cook (R-Yucaipa) carried the legislation to annually recognize WHVVD.

We had a good turnout for this event with more than 40 council members attending. In addition to hearing from legislative and CA Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) speakers and taking part in the WHVVD ceremony, attendees also visited their local legislators and urged support for veterans legislation.

During the morning, Assembly and Senate members stopped by to introduce themselves to the Council and to speak about veterans related legislation they are carrying. The Council provided a full breakfast and lunch to attendees. The legislative portion of the day was spent in the Capitol's basement dining area, an ideal location for legislators, committee consultants, staff and members of the Administration to visit the group. During the morning program, the Council awarded its 2010 Legislator of the Year awards to Senator Lou Correa (D-Santa Ana) and Assemblyman Jim Nielsen (R-Gerber) for the outstanding work they did advancing the veterans cause in 2010. CDVA Acting Secretary Rocky Chavez and Deputy Secretaries Ted Puntillo and J. P. Tremblay attended both events. Secretary Chavez spoke eloquently about a theme he calls "standing on the shoulders", whereby the lessons learned by yesterday's veterans benefits the men and women fighting in today's conflicts.

The following legislators stopped by to speak to the VVA to introduce themselves, their support for veterans, and to brief attendees on veterans legislation they are currently running:

Senate Veterans Committee members:

Lou Correa (D-Santa Ana)
Michael Rubio (D-Bakersfield)
Sharon Runner (R-Lancaster)
Ted Lieu, (D-Torrance)

Assembly Veterans Committee members:

Paul Cook (R-Yucaipa)
Richard Pan (D-Natomas)
Toni Atkins (D-San Diego)
Marty Block (D-San Diego)
Jim Nielsen (R-Gerber)
Mariko Yamada (D-Davis)
* Jeff Gorell (R-Camarillo): Lt. Cmdr Gorell (USNR) has been mobilized and is currently serving in Afghanistan for 1 year. Mark Timmerman, Gorell's Chief of Staff, spoke on the Assemblyman's behalf.
Other legislators who also stopped by:
Roger Dickenson (D-Sacramento)
Shannon Grove (R-Bakersfield)
Donald Wagner (R-Irvine)

From last year to this year there was a noticeable change regarding the number of legislators that stopped to see us

and speak to our members. Pete Conaty and Associates did a great job in putting this event together. Our members have been doing great work in making contact with their legislators and getting our messages out. In the past we have had numerous workshops on how to speak to legislators but I think hands-on experience like this is the best training. I think our members are getting more comfortable and learning who to speak to about the issues. Although most of the work is best done at the local offices of the legislators, they appreciate us stopping by. Although these meetings are brief, we are letting them know that the support they give us is appreciated and that we are active in legislative advocacy.

At 1130 we took a break from the legislative portion of the Capitol Day to go to the Vietnam Memorial for a short ceremony for Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day and the reading of the Governor's proclamation. Our speakers for this ceremony included Secretary Rocky Chavez, Assemblyman Paul Cook, VVA-CSC President Steve Mackey, Senator Correa, Assemblyman Pan, and the invocation was given by Vietnam veteran Chaplain Christopher Garrett (COL. CA). VVA Chapter 500 and the California State Council laid wreaths at the memorial to honor our fallen brothers. After the ceremony it was back to the capital for lunch and meetings with legislators. The California State Commanders Veterans Council (CSCVC) met at the CDVA offices to hold their quarterly meeting. The CSCVC is a statewide umbrella organization of 20 veterans groups of which the VVA-CSC is an active participant. President Mackey, CSC and lobbyist Pete Conaty attended the meeting. Some of the commanders joined us during the morning and at the Memorial. Our Capitol Day, the WHVVD ceremony, and the CSCVC meeting made for a full day. I would like to thank all who attended that day's events and for the unique perspective they bring to our advocacy efforts. Also, when veterans from across the state meet with their legislators and help to show our strength, it brings home the importance of veterans issues to our elected officials.

Since this was only our second legislative day I would like to hear from some of the participants to get guidance on how we can improve in next year's event. Hopefully we can work it out so more members from the southern part of the state can attend. A lot of the members of the Veterans Affairs committees are from the LA and San Diego areas of the state. It would be very beneficial to have some of the leaders of our Southern California chapters attend next year's event so that they may communicate our message to the crucial LA and San Diego delegations.

CONATY RECEIVES AWARD

Pete Conaty, Governmental Advocate For Veterans Receives Cdva Secretary's Award For 2010

CDVA Secretary Roger Brautigan (right) presents Pete Conaty (left) the Secretary's Award for 2010

Pete Conaty, Veteran's Governmental Advocate, was awarded the California Department of Veterans Affairs Annual Secretary's Award for 2010. The award was given in recognition of Mr. Conaty's distinguished service to the nation and in acknowledgement of his invaluable contributions to California's veterans over the past 15 years as a legislative advocate.

Mr. Conaty is a lobbyist in Sacramento whose firm, Pete Conaty and Associates, represents the interests of California's veterans, as well as other clients, before the State Legislature and state agencies, boards, and commissions. Mr. Conaty, on behalf of veterans service organizations, advocates for the benefits and services that California's 2.1 million veterans and their families have earned by virtue of their service to this country.

"I am deeply humbled and honored by this award" stated Conaty. "Advocating on behalf of veterans is the greatest job in the world".

Conaty has also been honored for his work by the California chapters of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Jewish War Veterans, Military Order of the Purple Heart, and the National Guard Association.

Pete Conaty (Lt. Col. USA-Ret) retired from the Army in 1985 and pursued a second career in the California Legislature. Pete served as a legislative staff person in a variety of positions in the State Assembly. In 1995 Conaty left the Legislature to start the lobbying firm of Pete Conaty and Associates. Pete, who is a Vietnam veteran, is passionate about veterans issues and is known around the Capitol as the "go-to guy" on all things related to veterans and

the military. Pete represents the American Legion, AM-VETS, CAL-MOAA, California State Commanders Veterans Council, California Association of County Veterans Service Officers, Student Veterans of California, and the Vietnam Veterans of America.

In 2010 Pete was instrumental in helping to push through increased funding for the County Veterans Service Officers, and helping to broker agreements with the CDVA regarding the Gold Star License Plate Fund and Native American outreach. Pete and his firm monitor close to fifty pieces of veterans and military related legislation each legislative year as well as assisting veterans clients in the formulation of legislation. Pete is also one of the principal organizers of the State Assembly's Annual Veteran of the Year luncheon.

VVMF'S CALL FOR PHOTOS

I wanted to brief you on VVMF's progress in our Call for Photos campaign.

VVMF's National Call for Photos campaign is in the process of putting faces to the 58,267 names memorialized on The Wall. To date, we have obtained roughly 18,000 photographs for these names. Collected photographs will be displayed in the prospective Wall of Faces exhibit in the Education Center at The Wall and they will also appear online on The Virtual Wall. To learn more about the Education Center, please visit www.buildthecenter.org

To date, only New Mexico, Maryland and North Dakota have surpassed the 90% collected mark. NM has been successful thanks the leadership and initiative of VVA Chapter 996. The attached document is a brief summary of how VVA Chapter 996 organized a grassroots effort to collect all of the NM photographs. MD also achieved a high rate of collection thanks to VVA Chapter 451's ongoing Operation Remember, an effort to put faces to all of the MD names on The Wall.

For recent news in the Call for Photos, please visit <http://www.vvmf.org/pafwan>

Many thanks.
Regards,

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CA ASSOCIATES

At the April 2011 CSC meeting the Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America, CA. Association - State Council elections were held. The results are:

- President: Elayne Mackey Chapter 47 Riverside/Inland Empire, CA.
- Vice President: Chelli Croucher Chapter 368 Mariposa, CA
- Secretary: Nina Schloffel Chapter 391 Sonora, CA.
- Treasurer: Carol Southern Chapter 391 Sonora CA.

CA. AVVA was incorporated in 2004. We are a 501(c)(4) organization with our own Bylaws, while adhering to AVVA National Policy and Procedure.

- 501(c)(4)s can do an unlimited amount of lobbying

Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America are a national nonprofit membership and service organization. Working through the 600 local chapters of Vietnam Veterans of America, and working independently, AVVA supports the needs of veterans, their families, and their communities.

March 24 – March 31, Steve and I traveled to Sonora CA. for Ch. 391's presentation of the AVTT Traveling Wall and Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting. An AO Town Hall meeting was held March 26 & 27. As a member of the AVVA National Health Committee, I had the honor of serving on the Agent Orange panel, along with Sonja & Ken Holybee, Mokie Porter, VVA National Communications, Sandie Wilson, VVA At large Director, and Chelli Croucher joined us on Saturday. CA. Associate Secretary Nina Schloffel, expressed the desire to join our panel as

a member and will be appointed to the AVVA National Health Committee. The National Health Committee now has three (3) CA. Associate Officers as members; Carol Southern, Nina Schloffel and myself.

The 4 days at the Sonora Fairgrounds were wonderful and many contacts were made with families that are seeing intergenerational effects of the dioxin - Agent Orange.

Has your chapter considered having an Agent Orange Town Hall meeting? Please, do your Chapter members and community a life saving favor and offer them a chance to learn about the effects of Agent Orange, speak out about their family concerns and the opportunity to talk to someone that is concerned about the same issue we all are, that being, what has Agent Orange done to our children and grandchildren?

Wednesday March 30, 2011 we were in Sacramento for the CSC Capitol Day and Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day. The Welcome Home was held, with a gathering, at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Capitol Park grounds. It was a beautiful day befitting to the occasion.

Great speakers, good friends and many from surrounding communities were proud to gather for this day of remembrance and honor.

One last note, CA. AVVA, for the last 3 months, has the #1 AVVA State membership in the country with 807 members. Thank you all for your continued membership and please keep recruiting. Even though AVVA receives no funding from our membership, the more AVVA & VVA members that we have; the more we have to offer our veterans, their families and communities.

Thanks as always & Welcome Home!
Elayne

VA BUDGET

ROWAN'S COMMENTS

VVA President Warns: Don't Balance the Budget on Veterans, But Do Focus on How the VA Spends the Funding It Gets

WASHINGTON, D.C. – John Rowan, National President of Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), told a congressional hearing today, "Just because veterans, and our families, have sacrificed, this does not mean that we are willing to sacrifice in this way again."

"While we understand the need to address the deficit," Rowan said, "We stand 100 percent behind this statement by Congressman Tim Walz: 'Attempting to balance the budget on the backs of veterans who have risked life and limb in service of our country is unacceptable.'"

At the same time, Rowan said at a joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees, "A very bright light ought to be shined on the operations of the Department of Veterans Affairs to probe for redundant or duplicative services, poor acquisition management, and staffing inefficiencies. This synchs with one of VVA's overarching priorities: accountability."

The other "top priorities" for VVA, Rowan said, are expanding and enhancing the VA's outreach efforts to inform veterans and their families, not only of the benefits they have earned by virtue of their military service, but also of the potential long-term health effects of toxic exposures; the addition of questions about a veteran's military medical history in all electronic health records; and the creation of a Veterans Economic Opportunities Administration in the VA to "consolidate various currently separate yet interrelated programs whose mission is to assist veterans obtain and sustain meaningful work, or training, or education that will lead to a decent job at a living wage, and will enable veterans to achieve their American dream." Of particular concern, Rowan said, is the lingering legacy of Agent Orange. "We are alarmed for our children and their children who present with birth defects or learning disabilities never before seen in the father's or the mother's family history," Rowan said. "We need research into the long-term effects of toxic exposures, and just as importantly, we need treatment and care for the progeny of veterans exposed to a toxic fog in a combat zone."

VETERANS DECRY PROPOSED CUTS TO COUNTY SERVICES

By John Simerman
Contra Costa Times

State lawmakers can expect a bitter greeting next week from military veterans over nearly \$10 million in proposed cuts to already strained local veterans services.

The budget that Gov. Jerry Brown proposed last month would cease state support for the small, backlogged county offices that connect veterans with federal benefits, medical care and counseling.

In Contra Costa County, the cuts could mean the loss of \$90,000 and one of the office's four employees, said Phil Munley, the county's veterans services officer. The impact is uncertain in Alameda County, where a \$360,000 budget funds five staffers, said Michael Ennis, who heads that office.

The January budget also calls for an end to Operation Welcome Home, an outreach program for soon-to-be-discharged military personnel. That program, launched under former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, employs 18 people statewide.

The numbers pale to the state's \$25 billion budget shortfall, about half of which Brown seeks to narrow with cuts. Veterans advocates say the administration is wielding the knife in the wrong place, given the amount of federal money the county offices draw into California for veterans.

The county offices helped veterans collect \$125 million in one-time benefits and about \$170 million in recurring benefits last fiscal year, according to the California Association of Veterans Service Officers. Contra Costa County ranked fifth in the state, drawing nearly \$5 million in one-time federal benefits for 1,180 veterans and an annualized \$6.65 million in recurring benefits.

"I don't blame Governor Brown because he's certainly got huge problems to deal with," said Pete Conaty, legislative advocate for the association. "Our problem is, the Department of Finance just doesn't seem to want to acknowledge that we bring revenue to the state."

With more troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, waiting times continue to grow at the county offices. In Contra Costa, demand increases 10 percent or more each year, said Munley, who hopes to increase staffing in outlying areas.

"We're barely holding on with what we got here," Munley said. "I'm not sure the Brown people coming in had a full understanding of what county veterans service offices did, and what we provide. I think they have a better idea now. I have a pretty good feeling this stuff will work out."

Asked about the cuts last week, Brown told a reporter for the San Diego Union-Tribune, "We'll take a look at that."

J.P. Tremblay, deputy secretary of the state Department of Veterans Affairs, said the governor focused on preserving funding for the nearly 2,000 veterans in state veterans homes.

"We did not get hit as hard as some other departments," he said. "It's a tough budget, and we've got to do something."

Veterans advocates are pushing to at least allow the department flexibility over funding the county offices, which also receive money from the counties and veteran license plate revenue. Conaty said veterans plan to swarm budget hearings next week in the Senate and Assembly.

In Alameda County, where the county offices assist a large homeless veteran population, the county is looking for new funding sources, including the VA. The office relies on the county for about 80 percent of its funding, Ennis said.

"We're getting pretty good at begging."

Contact John Simerman at jsimerman@bayareanews-group.com

Please use as talking points when talking with legislators about the budget cuts to the CVSO's Local Assistance funding.

TEA PARTY PROPOSAL LEAVES VETS ~TWISTING IN THE WIND"

By Mike Cundiff

Chief Master Sergeant, U.S. Air Force (Retired)
Menomonié

The Tea Party may be right in its concern over the growing U.S. deficit, but its latest proposal to rein in spending is upsetting conservatives and liberals alike.

Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., is widely seen as a leader and key spokesperson for the Tea Party. She has proposed reducing health care benefits and disability compensation for America's disabled veterans as part of the Tea Party plan to cut federal spending.

It's no surprise that Veterans for Common Sense, a center-left veterans group, has criticized the Tea Party plan, saying it "would leave veterans twisting in the wind." But even the very conservative Veterans of Foreign Wars panned the Tea Party proposal as "totally out of step with America's commitment to our veterans."

The American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans have also voiced strong criticism about Bachmann's Tea Party plan.

It's been reported that, due to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as many as 10,000 new disabled veterans a month are seeking care from Veterans Administrations medical facilities. Due to their service-connected disabilities, these veterans will suffer greatly reduced income earning potential and quality of life for as long as they live.

Haven't they sacrificed enough already? Not according to the Tea Party which seems to be radically indifferent to the needs of people.

Many Americans won't fret over this too much as they are not veterans and have nothing to lose in this plan. But if the Tea Party would do this to veterans while the nation is at war, where will that leave them when their interests (such as Social Security and Medicare) come under review?

Those who trust the Tea Party do so at their peril.
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BACHMANN REMOVES VETERANS BENEFITS FROM SPENDING CUT DISCUSSION

Washington, Feb 4 - Congresswoman Michele Bachmann (MN-06) released the following statement about her spending cut discussion plan:

"I am against another increase of the government's debt ceiling. Instead of making it easier for Washington to spend more of your tax dollars, Congress must do the hard work of making real and necessary cuts in federal spending. The total debt held by the public is now \$14 trillion and rising, and we must take decisive action to bring it down. Toward that end, I have put a list of more than \$400 billion in cuts on the table for discussion and I've been calling on other members of Congress to do the same.

"I am pleased that this discussion is generating valuable conversation. Many of my constituents have called to weigh in on the possible cuts.

"One point on my discussion list was a \$4.5 billion proposal that would affect payments made to our veterans. That discussion point has received a lot of attention and I have decided to remove it from consideration. The problem of government spending must be solved, but not on the backs of our nation's war heroes. I have always been a proud supporter of the United States military and I continue to stand with our veterans. In the months ahead I look forward to working with our Veterans Service Organizations to ensure that we fulfill our commitments to those who sacrificed so much in their brave service for our country."

WHVVD - ROWAN COMMENTS

Statement by John Rowan, VVA National President
On "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day"

(Washington, DC) -- Today has been designated as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" by a resolution of Congress, thanks in no small measure to the efforts of Senator Richard Burr, Ranking Member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, and Representative Linda Sanchez in the House. However belated the recognition of the service and sacrifice of those of us who served in Southeast Asia during the years of what was then Ameri-

ca's longest war, it is appreciated.

For far too long, citizens of all political persuasions blamed those who served for the failures of those led, those officials whose military as well as political policies failed. Returning veterans were not welcomed into the bosom of a grateful nation; instead, many were ignored at best, scorned at worst. The psychological issues faced by many Vietnam vets can be traced not simply to what they experienced in Vietnam, but to this unwelcome home.

Perhaps America has grown up. Today, Americans embrace those who have volunteered for military service and have placed themselves in harm's way - whether they agree or disagree with the mission in Iraq or Afghanistan. These newly minted veterans, and those who continue to serve despite deployment after deployment, are offered a variety of opportunities and events across the nation by Americans who want to say in some way, Welcome Home, and Thank You for Your Service.

Americans belatedly embrace Vietnam veterans as well, having come to the realization that those who served fought as well as their fathers and uncles did in World War II and in Korea. As we approach 50 years since the beginning of that ill-fated venture, events are being planned nationally as well as locally to honor those who served, and to remember those who were lost to the war. "Better late than never" may be a cliché, but it's never too late to say Thank You for Your Service, and Welcome Home.

VETERANS INCARCERATED VA Extends Post-Incarceration Health Care

Measure Would Help Reduce Repeat Offenses

WASHINGTON (March 30, 2011) - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will extend health care to eligible Veterans in halfway houses and other temporary, post-incarceration housing under a new program aimed at cutting back on repeat offenses.

"There's hard evidence that lack of access to health care, including mental health care, for newly released inmates is a factor in people becoming homeless or returning to prison and jail," said Jim McGuire, director of VA's Veterans Justice Outreach Programs. "These are Veterans who otherwise qualify for VA health care."

A long-standing rule has barred VA from providing health care to Veterans for whom another federal, state or local government has an obligation to provide health care. Frequently, that means inmates of prisons and jails.

Under the changed rule, that prohibition would be amended and VA would be allowed to provide health care to Veterans in halfway houses and other temporary, post-incarceration housing.

An Urban Institute study in 2008 found that good health care in the first months of community reentry played a key role in easing readjustment and reducing recidivism.

About 29,000-56,000 Veterans are released annually from state and federal prisons, and at least 90,000 Veterans are released each year from city and county jails, according to Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics.

MIA SEARCH IN CAMBODIA

Teams to Search Cambodia for Vietnam War MIAs
From a Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command News Release

WASHINGTON, Feb. 4, 2011 - Two archeological teams from the U.S. Joint Prisoners of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command are scheduled to arrive in Cambodia soon to search for Americans unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War, and physicians and nurses from military commands in Hawaii will accompany them to participate in a health engagement mission.

As part of the recovery portion of this dual-purpose deployment, more than 40 recovery team members will excavate a burial site and an underwater aircraft crash site in search of four missing Americans in Cambodia's Kampong Cham and Kracheh provinces.

The deployment, expected to last about 40 days, marks the command's 44th joint field activity in Cambodia, officials said.

“WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY”

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, CHAPTER 500
JOINED WITH ALL VIETNAM VETERANS, THEIR
FAMILIES AND FRIENDS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ALL
THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE US, AND TO
“WELCOME HOME” ALL VETERANS WHO HAVE
SERVED OUR COUNTRY.**



**CSC AWARDED ITS 2010 LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARDS
TO SENATOR LOU CORREA (D-SANTA ANA)(RIGHT) AND AS-
SEMBLYMAN JIM NIELSEN (R-GERBER) (LEFT) FOR THE OUT-
STANDING WORK THEY DID ADVANCING THE VETERANS CAUSE
IN 2010.**



Recovery teams search for human remains, life-support items and other material evidence that may further the identification of Americans missing from past conflicts.

In addition to recovery efforts, U.S. and Cambodian personnel will participate in a medical engagement outreach event, treating 4,000 to 8,000 people in rural and highly underserved communities, officials said. The specialized 12-member team of experts in various medical specialties will provide basic health assistance, laboratory services and optometry examinations.

The U.S. medical team members are from Tripler Army Medical Center, the 18th Medical Command and the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command. U.S. and Cambodian physicians will reinforce medical capabilities by participating in an information exchange, benefitting both countries educationally and socio-culturally, officials added.

"[Tripler] is sending physician residents from OB/GYN and family medicine to conduct expert exchanges with local physicians, and will be invited to work alongside the Khmer physicians and treat their patients," said Army Capt. Drew Webb, a Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command physician assistant.

This will be the first time a Tripler resident program has deployed to a foreign country on a humanitarian outreach mission, Webb added.

"The big takeaway for all of this is that the [Tripler] residents will get training and experience in such a unique environment," he said.

Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command is a jointly manned U.S. Pacific Command organization of more than 400 military and civilian specialists that has investigated and recovered missing Americans since the 1970s, officials said, noting that 1,702 Americans still are listed as missing in action from the Vietnam War.

CA HIGHWAY WAITING FOR VIETNAM VETS SIGNS

The Associated Press

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. — Drivers would never know a portion of a highway near Bakersfield was renamed for Vietnam veterans in 2006. Signs marking Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway have never gone up. Some residents are trying to change that.

A group that includes veterans has launched a fundraising campaign to finally erect the signs on the roughly 13-mile stretch of Taft Highway between Highway 99 and Enos Lane.

They say people in the community should always remember the sacrifice those veterans made.

"We want to honor all Vietnam veterans in the Kern County area," Mario Muniz, who received a Purple Heart as a Marine in 1968, told the Bakersfield Californian.

The group will need between \$3,000 and \$4,000 to put up the signs. The goal is to raise another few thousand dollars for ongoing maintenance and repairs.

By law, the state is not allowed to contribute to such signage, said Nicolas Esquivel of the California Department of Transportation.

A Vietnam veterans group previously raised money to erect the signs but then folded. Muniz said that group was led by his friend Barney Cadena, a fellow Marine who died in a motorcycle crash a few years ago. Muniz wants to realize his friend's vision regarding the signs.

"Marines take care of their own," he said.

Organizers said any funds raised will go into a tax-exempt account held by Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 7216.

WEST LA VA "LAND GRAB"

From Robert Rosebrock.....

Fellow Veterans and Friends of Veterans:

It is with enormous pride that another memorable and Patriotic day in American history is announced.

Please read the following and know that America's Military Veterans continue to make strident progress in taking back our deeded land at the Los Angeles National Home, and to begin the dutiful responsibility of bringing our fellow Veterans who are exiled and homeless... HOME!

God Bless America and the Veterans Revolution!

On February 23, 1945, six Marines climbed Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima and posted the American Flag

"Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima"



On February 1, 2011, led by four members of Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), six fellow Veterans climbed the stairs of the Brentwood Library and Posted the American Flag at the monthly meeting of the Brentwood Community Council, that heretofore did not have an American Flag present, nor did they recite the Pledge of Allegiance at these public meetings held at a public Los Angeles County Library, while discussing the fate of Veterans' land at the neighboring Los Angeles National Home for Disabled Veterans.

"Raising the Flag at Brentwood Library"

Left to Right: Jerry Yamamoto, from Harbor City and Na-



tional Board Member of Vietnam Veterans of America, (VVA) ; Randy Dillenbeck, Vice President of Long Beach VVA, Chapter 756; Ernie Hilger, Legislative Chairman of Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 13, San Fernando Valley; Larry Kegel, Vietnam-era Veteran from Santa Clarita; Conrad Gomez, Secretary of Long Beach VVA, Chapter 756, James Maddox, President of Pasadena VVA,



Chapter 446. All are members of the Old Veterans Guard as well.

Pledge of Allegiance

Vietnam War Veteran Conrad Gomez, bottom left photo, leads the Brentwood Community Council and attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. On this same historic day for Veterans, Conrad's daughter also gave birth to his third Grandchild, Emma.

Join the Veterans Revolution Sunday Rallies every Sun-



day from 1:00 - 4:00 PM Northeast corner of Wilshire and San Vicente Boulevards West of the 405 Freeway - Adjacent to Brentwood.

Loyal Patriots at the historic 150th Sunday Rally outside the chained and locked gates of the Los Angeles National Veterans Home.

SEN. FEINSTEIN CITED IN HOMELESS VET HOUSING SCAM - VA POLICE SAY "ORDERED TO LIE, HARASS VETERANS"

Billion Dollar "land Grab" Illegal, Report States
By Gordon Duff STAFF WRITER/Senior Editor

There are over 20,000 homeless veterans in the Los Angeles area alone, where the National Veterans Home been broken up, given away and "lent out," piecemeal, to prep schools, a powerful and wealthy Brentwood homeowner and Veterans Park Conservancy, even dotted with oil wells and used to store rental cars. Veterans, however, are locked out and as this reporter has learned from interviews with VA police, arrested, harassed and threatened at "orders from above," orders that tell police to lie, falsify documents, violate jurisdictions and spy on veterans.

The "scam," police abuses, crimes, threats, spying, accusation of fraud, present a mosaic of abuses, some administrative, some wealthy groups using the cover of a "veterans charity" to block housing meant for homeless vets and turn the land into a "country club." It isn't just homeless groups but members of congress, VA officials and even veterans organizations such as the American Legion who chosen to side against veterans in favor of a land use program now found to be illegal, a program harmful to veterans.

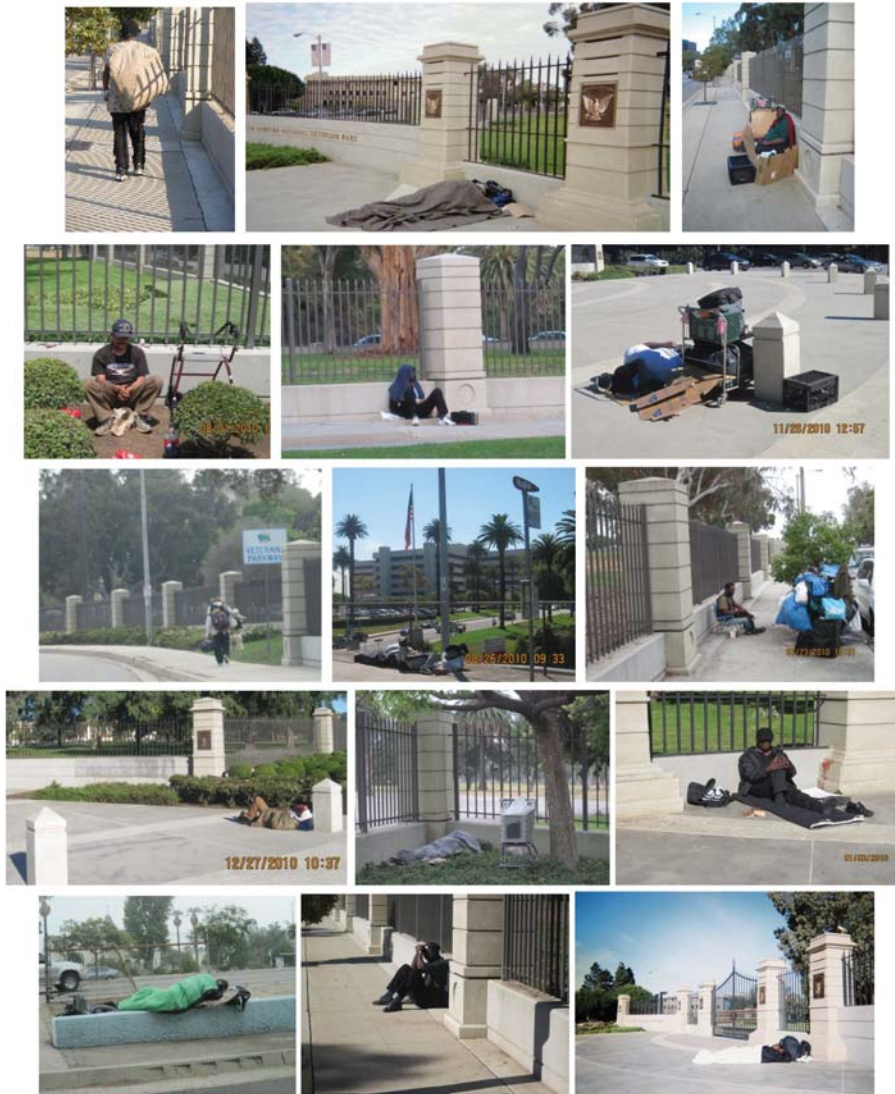
Police say they stand ready to testify to criminal acts by VA officials but no one will listen, including VA Secretary General Shensiki who has been informed of this scandal and others including evidence of more charges, phony vendors, financial fraud in the millions.

"Lt. Montero came to us and said he had been ordered by Captain Treadwell to have us falsify citations, make illegal arrests and lie in court. We had been ordered to harass, threaten and spy on veterans. Montero told us it was wrong and that he had to pass it on but wouldn't support it. 15 of us refused but not all, some of the officers went along with it. Many of us are veterans and what we were ordered to do isn't just a felony and violation of our oath and a betrayal of veterans. We wonder who ordered Treadwell?" (statement by VA police officer confirmed and documented in writing)

Secretary Shinseki has ignored repeated entreaties to act, even when suit was filed by the ACLU and when contacted by attorneys for the Annenberg Foundation. Shinseki's silence in face of the endless scandals to plague the nations largest facilities under his authority. A spokesman for the Secretary told (leaked to) Veterans Today (semi-off the record)

"We inherited a mess here, corruption everywhere. You

The Brentwood WALL OF SHAME



DISPOSSESSED VETERANS -- HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION!

Homeless Veterans sleep alongside the pretentious multi-million dollar wrought iron fence built with \$1 million of Veterans healthcare money to "beautify" the entryway into Brentwood, one of the wealthiest ZIP codes in the nation..

On the other side of this shameful wall is the Los Angeles National Veterans Home, deeded 123 years ago to be permanently maintained as a Home for disabled and disadvantaged Veterans. There should never be a homeless Veteran in Los Angeles, yet there are more homeless Veterans in Los Angeles County than any other county in the nation.

The Department. of Veterans Affairs has breached its fiduciary duty to honor the Deed of 1888, forcing U.S. Military Veterans to live in exile outside the gates of their Los Angeles National Veterans Home, thereby making Los Angeles County the homeless Veteran capital of America.

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veterans have come against is the "West Los Angeles Political Machine," the modern version of Tammany Hall, Congressman Henry Waxman, Senator Diane Feinstein who run the Department of Veterans Affairs out here like hand puppets."

Attorney Richard Fox, representing the Annenberg Foundation, agrees with Rosebrock.

Any private use of this land, for a park or oil wells, it doesn't matter, is not allowed in accordance with deed restrictions and California law. This is our legal opinion, submitted to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in a 30 page paper. We received a one page answer from Veterans Affairs citing a single court case they say supports their use of the land. In fact, the case said nothing of the sort, a very inappropriate response to an issue so vital to America's veterans."

Additional reports indicate that VA funds are being channeled into a money laundering operation, according to whistleblowers inside the Los Angeles VA.

"Phony contracts with non-existent vendors are paid out to an empty office down the street. This has been going on here for years, hundreds of thousand missing, maybe millions and it is all being covered up. Payments were made to dummy corporations for lab work outsourced by the VA. This is still going on."

Veterans Today has received reports from VA police and other personnel, including audit and accounting, that tell of missing monies, irregularities and fraud.

WEST LOS ANGELES VA IS FAILING BOTH VETERANS AND ITS LEGAL OBLIGA- TIONS

Los Angeles, the city of Angels, has long been known as a place where people come to watch their dreams come true. Sadly, for many it has become a city where they have watched their dreams die on the streets, literally.

It is utterly wrong that those who have served their country in the military now must sleep on concrete sidewalks. The ACLU of Southern California (ACLU/SC) is deeply committed to alleviating the plight of all homeless men and women in California, including those who have served their country in the armed services and now find themselves on the streets.

We have litigated many cases on behalf of homeless men and women; we have challenged the practices of the Los Angeles Police Department in enforcing laws criminalizing sleeping on the streets when there are insufficient shelter beds available and the practice of illegal stops and searches against homeless people in Los Angeles Skid Row.

Our veterans, who are heroes, have been victims of these practices and deservedly should have shelter they can call their own.

have no idea how much we have done to clean things up and how much we are doing every day."

Veterans Today reporter, Robert Rosebrock, an advocate for homeless veterans, was singled out, according to statements from the 15 officers. Rosebrock was illegally arrested based on falsified complaints and perjured statements submitted to the US Attorney in Los Angeles and the Federal District Court. The charges were dropped and Rosebrock later freed.

The ACLU has filed suit against the Department of Veterans Affairs for violating Rosebrock's civil rights in this issue. Attorney Peter Eliasberg represents the ACLU and was not available for statement.

Rosebrock states, "The powerful Brentwood Homeowners Association and Veterans Park Conservancy have illegally diverted a project for homeless veterans to private use, over a billion dollars of land, while veterans sleep on the sidewalk. For 3 years, without fail, veterans have legally protested this while being harassed, threatened and even assaulted. What

In addition, I have personally been working to protect the First Amendment rights of Robert Rosebrock, a 68 year-old veteran, who regularly demonstrates in front of the Veterans Administration in West Los Angeles, protesting its failure to use the land in the manner required by the 1888 deed of land to the United States government for a home for veterans.

The ACLU/SC supports the request for an investigation into whether the VA is failing to abide by the terms of the 1888 deed. That request was made by the Metabolic Studio, LLC, a direct charitable activity of the Annenberg Foundation. Certainly, leasing portions of the VA land to a rental car company to store its cars, and leasing other portions to a local private school for use as tennis courts appears flatly inconsistent with the terms of the charitable document.

The VA's failure to abide by the terms of the charitable grant is not only inconsistent with the government's legal obligation to abide by the restrictions imposed by the grantor as part of a charitable grant, but it also has enormous human costs.

According to the Los Angeles Homeless Authority (LAHSA) Commissioners 2009 Greater Los Angeles Homeless count, there are approximately 42,694 homeless people in the County of Los Angeles, excluding Long Beach and Glendale. Homeless veterans number about 6,540 or approximately 15% of the homeless population of the area, according to the same count.

An article in the Los Angeles Times stated, "Los Angeles remains the nation's homelessness capital." See "Solving Homelessness Will Require Cooperation," Los Angeles Times, November 9, 2010. This crisis is a shameful reality. Indeed, the sight of homeless veterans sleeping on the sidewalks outside the VA land in West Los Angeles not only highlights the necessity of an immediate investigation of how the VA is using this land, but serves as a reminder of the plight of many veterans who have made great sacrifices for this country.

The ACLU/SC believes that requiring the VA to abide by the terms of the 1888 deed could be an important component in realizing Secretary Eric K. Shinseki's vision of ending homelessness for veterans, at least in the Los Angeles area. Our veterans who sacrificed so much should not receive so little. Providing shelter is the very least our government can do for them.

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ACLU JOINS THE FRAY: CALLS FOR INVESTIGATION INTO HANDLING OF WEST LA VETS LAND USE DEAL

VA Director Pulls The Plug
By Katharine Russ

The American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California (ACLU) has added its support to the Metabolic Studio, a direct charitable activity of the Annenberg Foundation led by artist Lauren Bon, in calling for an investigation into alleged multiple breaches of fiduciary responsibility surrounding the 1888 deed for land donated by Senator John P. Jones and Arcadia Bandini de Stearns Baker for a Veterans' Home, now known as the West Los Angeles VA (WLA VA).

Bon and her team ran a widely acclaimed, fully funded and compensated work therapy (CWT) program for veterans, known as Strawberry Flag, for over a year on the WLA VA campus.

This work was located between three under purposed buildings, 205,208 and 209. The work was allowed under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement with Asset management. The MOU was signed by the Director, Donna Beiter of the WLA VA, and was extended due to its popularity with both clinicians and veterans.

Despite the success and many benefits it offered to veterans, Beiter abruptly pulled the plug on the Strawberry Flag project in October 2010.

Bon's support of veterans didn't end, however, when her Strawberry Flag project was terminated. Instead, the Metabolic Studio focused on the VA's failure to meet its fiduciary responsibilities to our country's veterans imposed on

the use of the WLA VA land under the 1888 deed for land.

The Metabolic Studio recently, released a 30-page "position paper," supported by an historical background, USGS maps and extensive case law, asserting the VA's breach of trust in failing to use the WLA VA as a "permanent home" for veterans as required under the 1888 deed and outlined several impermissible uses of the land.

The position paper states "Access of veterans to at least 110 acres of the land at the WLA VA is either forbidden or restricted by land-sharing agreements that the VA has entered into with commercial and other organizations. This use of the land is not in conformity with the requirement under the 1888 Deed that the donated land be used in a manner that directly contributes to its use as a home for veterans, and is therefore not permissible." Richard L. Fox, of Dilworth Paxson LLP, a recognized legal expert in the fields of philanthropy and charitable giving, assisted in the preparation of the paper.

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook 1820.1 Section 4(k) states that if a Sharing Agreement exceeds five years, such agreement does not qualify under Title 38, U.S.C. Section 8153 that permits only the sharing of "health care" resources. Nearly all the sharing agreements shown in the Draft Master Plan published in the Federal Register on January 19, 2011 exceed five years and are not health care related.

Among the questionable sharing agreements is the 16-acre tract of land that is to be "Veterans National Park"- a public park to be open to the neighboring Brentwood community. The land was awarded rent-free to the Veterans Park Conservancy (VPC), which is not a Veterans Organization, for a period of twenty years.

An agreement signed by Sue Young, Executive Director of the VPC and Ralph Tillman, Director of Asset Management of the WLA VA, incorrectly describes the 235.5 tract of land conveyed to the "National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers" when, in reality the proposed site is on a portion of the 300 acres of land donated under the 1888 deed.

The Sharing Agreement signed by Young and Tillman for a 20-year period is clearly not permitted under Title 38 U.S.C. Section 8153.

But according to the VPC website, "The Park is in the development stage in compliance with the legal requirements set forth by Federal rulings, Veterans Administration Policies and Guidelines established by the General Services Administration (GSA)." The GSA is shown on the VPC website as a direct supporter of the VPC.

Neither Tillman nor Young would avail themselves for comment.

Recent tax returns filed with the IRS, that are public record, reveal that Young is paid an annual salary exceeding \$100,000 plus expenses by the VPC, a relatively tiny organization with rather limited activities. Young resides in Tucson, AZ.

According to her office, U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein, listed as a VPC supporter, has not had contact with VPC for a few years but rather has focused her attention on Building 209 on the WLA VA campus which the VA has committed \$20 million for conversion into a homeless facility which may house 80 veterans- a building that in 2008, the

VA said would require \$7.2 million to repair. U.S. Congressman Henry Waxman, who supports the VPC, also did not respond to requests for comment.

Robert Rosebrock, Director- Old Veteran's Guard, along with several Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) have denounced the use of sharing agreements and have fought the VA for many years over these issues. Outside the proposed park that was scheduled for completion in 2008, Rosebrock and several veterans have stood in protest to the use of the land as a public park for 153 consecutive Sundays.

Rosebrock emphasized that The Act of Congress of March 2, 1887 and the language of the 1888 Deed clearly indicate the intent for a National Home for veterans- not a public park where HOMELESS veterans are likely to be ostracized.

Rosebrock points to the 20,000 homeless veterans in the Los Angeles area whom he says, "have been exiled and dispossessed from their rightful Home and are forced to survive, hungry and homeless, on the dangerous streets of Los Angeles while the very people who have exiled them, live in multi-million dollar mansions."

Peter Eliasberg, ACLU Managing Attorney, who is defending Rosebrock in a Free Speech lawsuit against the VA, wrote in a February 2011 letter to General Eric K. Shinseki (USA Ret.) Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, "The Veterans Administrations failure to abide by the terms of the charitable grant is not only inconsistent with the governments legal obligation to abide by the restrictions imposed by the grantor as a part of a charitable grant, but also has enormous human costs.

"The sight of homeless veterans sleeping on the sidewalks outside the VA land in West Los Angeles only highlights the necessity of an immediate investigation of how the VA is using this land."

The Annenberg Foundation which gave \$1,000,000 to the VPC to complete the Women's Rose Garden, dedicated on December 5, 2010, but which remains locked to this day, has pulled its support for the VPC.

A letter from Bon, who is a Director of the Annenberg Foundation, to Young, requested that they not be identified in any manner as a donor to the VPC or the National Veteran's Park. It said, "While we support the creation of public parks and the preservation of open space, the use of the land donated under the 1888 deed for a public park does not directly contribute to the use of the land as a permanent home for veterans and is contrary to the 1888 deed restriction."

The Veterans Caucus and Executive Board of the of the California Democratic Party took a stand similar to the Annenberg Foundation, notifying the VPC that it does not endorse a public park on the WLA VA land and that the land should be limited only for veteran uses.

Carolina Winston Barrie and Ricardo Bandini Johnson, direct descendants of Senator John P. Jones and Arcadia Bandini de Stearns Baker, questioned, at length, the provisions of the VA's recently released Draft Master Plan which confirms the continued use of the WLA VA land for non-veteran purposes.

In a letter to the VA, Barrie and Johnson said, "This is not what our ancestors intended when they contributed this

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Individual membership is open to Veterans who served on active duty in the US Military (for other than training purposes) from February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975 or from August 5, 1964 and May 7 1975 for Vietnam-era Veterans.

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ + _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Individual membership or Associate membership Dues:

\$20 for Annual ____ / \$20 for Renewal ____ / \$50 for 3 Year Membership ____

Life Memberships:

\$250 ____ (age 49 and under) \$225 ____ (50-55) \$200 ____ (56-60) \$175 (61-65) \$150 (66+)

For individual membership a DD214 is required if not already on file.

Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America is an adjunct organization with VVA, Both Veterans and non-Veterans may join. If joining AVVA you are eligible to be a member of VVA Yes ____ No ____

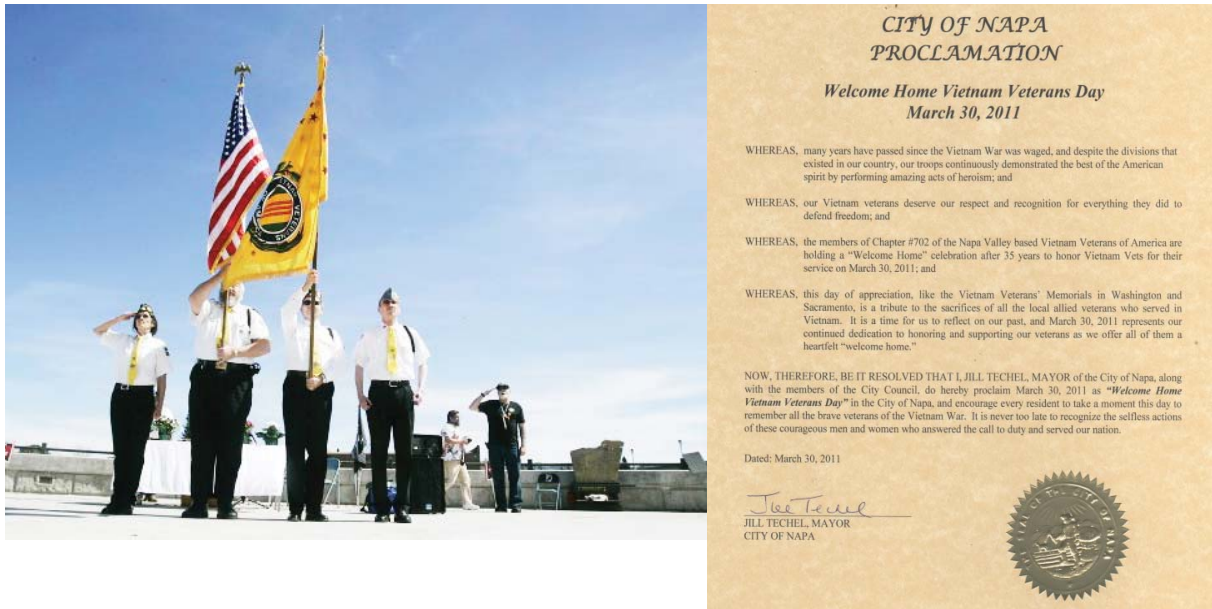
Print this page and fill out and mail with DD214 (if needed) to our address above.

If you are a current member, to renew provide your Membership # _____ Chapter _____

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2011
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA



NAPA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA



land. They made it crystal clear by placing a specific restriction in the 1888 deed that limits the use of the land for the sole purpose of providing a home for veterans."

Barrie, who served on the Board of Directors of the VPC, recently resigned her position stating, "My role as a director of the VPC was meant to honor the legacy of my great aunt in seeing her intentions were followed. Unfortunately,

ly, the park that the VPC intends to establish on the West LA VA campus will not be limited to veteran use but will, in essence, be a public park."

Barrie chastised Young and characterized her response to Bon as cursory and unresponsive. Rosebrock who fully supports Bon's position paper got in the last word saying, "The Draft Master Plan is null and

void because there has already been a legal Master Plan in place for nearly 123 years and it's called the Deed of 1888."

The VA Draft Master Plan can be viewed here: <http://www.documentcloud.org/documents/27188-draft-master-plan-for-west-la-va-medical-center.html>
Bon's Position Paper can be viewed here.

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY - ESCONDIDO, CALIFORNIA

Chapter 1031, Escondido, CA, held their first WHVVD picnic at the Escondido Moose Lodge on March 27. The weather was gray and cool, so we decided to have our picnic inside the Moose Lodge.

Below Left - Scott Wolf (Chapter 1031 VP) was the grillmaster for burgers/dogs/brats.

Below Right - Sunny Farand (right rear) from Chapter 472, San Diego, and guests.

Below Right - Chapter 1031 members & guests (John Gonzalez, Gina Chandler, Ray Fisher, and Don Jones)

On March 22, Chapter 1031 had a WWII guest speaker. John C. Vroman was with the 21st Photo Recon Sqdn, 14th USAAF, Flying Tigers, in China and Burma from 1944 to 1945. John spent an hour recounting his stories about life in China, making boats from P-38 belly tanks, and his thoughts on MajGen Claire Chennault.

Bottom Right- John Vroman at age 21 (photo) and now at age 88

Bottom Left- Chapter 1031 President Dan Papp shaking hands with John Vroman



CHAPTER 702 MEMBER'S WIFE PASSES

It is my unpleasant task to inform you that Dennie Stinson, loving wife of George Stinson, President of Chapter 702 died on Friday, 18 February, 2011. Her death ended a year's long battle with cancer. Though her passing was a blessing in many ways, it does not lessen the grief we feel. George has been her loving and dedicated caregiver for all these years and now is struggling for peace and understanding of her tragic loss. His brothers' of '702 are at his side and will help him through this time of turmoil and upset.

May God bless Dennie.

Ross Hall rossisvva@sbcglobal.net



**WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY
AND THE AMERICAN VETERANS TRAVELING
TRIBUTE - CHAPTER 391 SONORA**



Vietnam veteran, Medal of Honor recipient, and former POW Sergeant Major Jon Cavaiani, USA Special Forces (Retired). Behind Cavaiani is JOC George Eldridge, USN (Ret.) who was chair of the American Veterans Traveling Tribute.



Chapter 391's Color Guard was the lead color guard at the event. From left to right, back row, Mark Weber, Bob Law and Barry Schloffel; next row, John Marrs, Stan Cox, Ron Coit.

**Vietnam Veterans of America
Inland Empire Chapter 47**

Orange County Chopper Raffle



This is a raffle for a custom motorcycle built by famed Orange County Choppers® in New York. Proceeds from the raffle will support veterans' projects and assistance in the Inland Empire of Southern California.

Raffle Ticket Prices

\$10.00 each or 3 tickets for \$25.00

Winning ticket will be drawn on July 4, 2011
at the "Red, White and Cruise" event
Auto Club Speedway, Fontana, CA

Steve Mackey
VVA Chapter 47
Cell: 951-231-7268
email: Nebhuskfam@aol.com

← [For Raffle Tickets Contact](#) →

Mike Kennedy
VVA Chapter 47
Cell: 909-563-0107
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VVA CA State Council contact info inside - page 2

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- Legislative Information
- VVA CSC Capitol Day Article
- Chapter Activities
- And more...

VVA & CSC MEETING DATES & EVENTS

Region 8/9 Conference - June 10-12, 2011, Reno, NV
National Convention - August 15-21, 2011 - Reno, NV
CSC Meeting - August 26-28, 2011 - Fresno, CA
CSC Meeting - October 21-23, 2011 - Fresno, CA