



The Bugle

*The Newsletter of Chapter 702
Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. Yountville, CA
Mar/Apr 2012*

Chapter 702's Newsletter, "The Bugle" is available via email. The email version is in full color, the number of pages is not restricted by snail mail weight, which limits the USPS mailed version to 12 pages, so there are more pages and more information in the email version. Our Jan/Feb 2012 email newsletter consisted of 16 pages and included much more news and information of interest to veterans than did the mailed version.

If you want the email, expanded version of the newsletter, please email Ross Hall at rossisvva@sbcglobal.net, our newsletter editor, to provide him with your email address. That's all there is to it and you'll begin receiving your full color, expanded newsletter electronically. You get a better newsletter, and the Chapter saves the cost of paper, printing, mailing labels and postage, not to mention the labor of applying mailing labels, postage stamps and the now required mail seals, two per newsletter.

Due to the cost of producing and mailing our newsletters, it's foreseeable that we may be forced to publish the email version only, eliminating the printed, mailed version. Let's face it folks, the Chapter gets only \$9 of your dues payment. The remaining \$11 goes to the national and state organizations. 72 members (including AVVA) X \$9 = \$648. Publishing and mailing 72 newsletters, plus copies mailed to national and state officers, cost about \$800/year. As you can see, your Chapter's portion of your dues does not cover the cost of the newsletter. The more we can do to reduce these costs, the better off your Chapter will be.

So please, give some serious thought to the idea of receiving your newsletter via email. Remember, to start receiving your newsletter via email, send an email to Ross Hall at rossisvva@sbcglobal.net. You and your Chapter are both benefited.

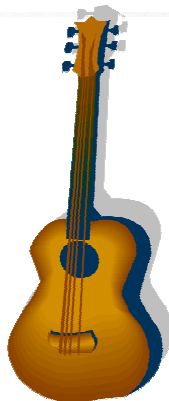
ALL STAR GUITARS

Dan Howard
Owner

2522 Jefferson Street
Napa, CA 94558

(707) 224-6577

allstargtr@comcast.net



Each Office Is Independently
Owned And Operated.

DESI CAPAZ, CNE
REALTOR®, DRE# 01887903
(707) 258-5249 DIRECT
(707) 260-9906 CELL
(707) 253-1042 FAX
DCapaz@cbnapavalley.com



BROKERS
OF THE VALLEY
1775 Lincoln Avenue
Napa, CA 94558

www.cbnapavalley.com/agents/DesiCapaz

Vietnam Veterans of America

Chapter 702

Yountville, California

Officers:

President	Almon Bundy	944-2431
VP	Larry Glenn	224-8903
Secretary	John Mellquist	337-6407
Treasurer	Ross Hall	252-7537

Board of Directors:

Paul Batto
Grover Totman

Standing Committee Chairs

4th of July	John Mellquist
Membership	Ross Hall
Watch Fire	Robert Souza
Veterans Benefits	Grover Tottman

Ad Hoc Committee Chairs:

Delegate, CSC	Almon Bundy
Newsletter	Ross Hall
Delegates, National Convention:	
Veterans Home Liaison:	Almon Bundy
Veterans Home Volunteer Coordinator:	Ross Hall
Welcome Home VV Day:	Almon Bundy
Yountville Days' Parade :	Almon Bundy

Board of Director's Meetings

Held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at noon in the **Home's Dinning Hall**.

All members welcome. Participate/comment on issues, let us know what you think - but, only BOD members can vote.

Membership Business Meetings

1st Tuesday of each month

1830, **Lee Lounge** in the Members Service Center

All our members are welcome at all of our meetings. Member participation is encouraged. This is your chapter. Help your officers help you by taking an active part in our meetings. Through participation at meetings, you become an integral part of our chapter's management. The more participation we have, the better the Chapter is managed - for everyone's benefit.

MEMBERS NEEDED!

The Chapter is asking for your help with the management and conduct of our Chapter's annual events.

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETEANS DAY.

This year, Chapter 702 and the Town of Yountville will be co-hosting a celebration to welcome home, officially, our Vietnam War veterans. Significantly, 702 and the town will also be extending the "Welcome Home" hand of friendship to our veterans home from Iraq and Afghanistan. The event is scheduled for April the 1st. If you can help us put this event together and volunteer some of your free time in support of our efforts, or you would like some more info about the event and how you can help, please contact Almon Bundy @ 944-2431

WATCH FIRE/MEMORIAL DAY

This annual Memorial Day eve event pays tribute to all our troops of all our wars that made the ultimate sacrifice in preserving our freedoms. The Memorial Day eve Watch Fire has become a 702 tradition and is attended by Veterans Home residents and local community members. It is supported and attended by the Boy Scouts, the American Legion, the Rough Riders motorcycle club and various other community groups and organizations. For more information, or to find out how you can help, Call Robert Souza @ 257-7542.

OTHER CHAPTER 702 HAPPENINGS/EVENTS

Other events you may consider volunteering for are our annual 4th of July Silent Auction, the Army/Navy football game, POW/MIA day, the annual Veterans Home historical cemetery cleanup, frequent memorial observations for Veterans Home residents that passed on the previous month, and, of course, our Honor Guard team.

Homebuying Myth: Renting Less Expensive

The Truth: In most cases, mortgage payments may be lower than rental payments, and, if you continue to pay rent, you'll only succeed in making a landlord wealthy. You need a purchase strategy. Keep in mind that your first home is a "strategic" stepping stone to your dream home. Your strategy: be willing to make some concessions, like a smaller home or property, a fixer-upper, a home with a rental unit, one in a different neighborhood, or a longer work commute.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF DATES NOTED

Meeting of 3 Jan 2012

General Membership Meeting 1830-2000
in Lee Lounge of Members Service Center.

Officers present: Ross Hall, Almon Bundy,
Larry Glenn, John Mellquist

Members present Charlie Liggett, Paul Batto,
Mike Besvoda, Grover Totman, Stan Jones,
Tom Tilden, Jim Vye, Tom Rossi, George
Stinson, Lenny Welch .

Items:

- Minutes of previous meeting approved as printed in The Bugle
- Finance report: Fund Raiser Acct - \$4859.65; General Fund - \$2172.37; Troop Support - \$1075.35
- Board of Directors meeting minutes from previous meeting about member participation in chapter activities read and discussed. Next meeting set for 17 Jan 2012 at 1830 in Lee Lounge.
- Army-Nave game – was recapped with a thanks to Stan Jones, Tom Rossi, Tom Tilden, Paul Batto, Larry Glenn, and Mike Besvoda for their participation.
- Recap of the 13 Dec 2012 Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon – AVVA memberships were presented to Marcella McCormick, Susan Heims, and Karen Zanatell – appreciation expressed to Ross Hall, Larry Glenn, and Mike Besvoda for their work in the event.
- It was reported that the Vietnam veteran whom Al assisted with getting residence at the Home is adjusting well to his new environment.
- Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day was discussed at length per Al's draft of the program. The entire schedule of events was covered: setup; music; displays; special guests and participants; the mayor's introduction and other key remarks; remembrance prayer; reading of Napa KIA names; taps; cleanup at end of event.
- Al iterated national VVA President Rowen's recommendation to seek out and encourage OIF/OEF (Iraqie Freedom/Enduring Freedom) vets to participate in AVVA. The general consensus was in agreement with the concept. OIF/OEF vets will be encouraged to participate in Yountville's Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day as equal and co-sponsors.
- The meeting was adjourned with drinks and snacks at 2010.

Meeting of 7 Feb 2012

General Membership Meeting 1830-2005
in Lee Lounge of Members Service Center.

Officers present: Larry Glenn, Almon Bundy,
John Mellquist, Ross Hall

Members present: : Linda Hanson, Grover Totman, Paul Batto, James Mussen, Jim Beatty, George Stinson, Elisabeth Stern, Jim Vye, Orlando, Lenny Welch

Items:

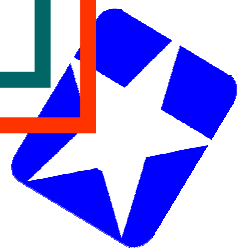
- Minutes from 3 Jan were read and approved.
- Finance: Fund Raiser - \$5397.49; General - \$2172.37; Troop Support balance - \$1175.35. Reimbursement checks to Ross Hall, Larry Glenn, and John Mellquist were approved and issued.
- Next Board of Directors' meeting set for Friday, 17 Feb 2012 at noon in the CVH dining hall.
- Al gave an update on the monument for Veterans Park in downtown Napa. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission voted to place said monument where the fish artwork now stands by a margin of 5 – 0
- California Veterans Benefit Fund will support the Healing The Wounded Heart program with \$500 per workshop for 2012.
- Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day in Yountville was discussed in detail. Event will start at 11am on Sunday, April 1 at the community center in Yountville. Music, military vehicle displays, POW/MIA car, publicity, and participants explained. Our Chapter will have to pay \$25.00/hr for security, which the town will provide. The cost of security based on the anticipated length of the event should be around \$75.00. The membership present agreed to pay.
- Members present also agreed to help defray the cost of bring the POW/MIA car for display at the event. That cost should not exceed \$250
- The chapter agreed to limit total expenses for WHVVD to no more than \$1,000.
- Lengthy dissertation given by Al about his experience at the California State Council Meeting in Fresno. Upcoming state convention to be held in Fresno 28Jun – 1Jul, 2012.
- Dropping the "D" from PTSD was discussed, with Al relaying CSC's concern that if the "D" is dropped, will the VA translate that to mean that since it's no longer a "disorder" it can avoid providing the care needed by PTSD sufferers. See more on this subject on page 7.
- Chapter membership in attendance participated in July 4th fundraiser solicitation letter folding, envelope stuffing and stamping activity. 201 letters sent out to local businesses.
- Business concluded at 1930 when snacks and refreshments were served and numersous side conversations ensued on large variety of interesting subjects. Meeting and refreshments dispanded at 2011

CHAPTER ELECTIONS



**NOMINATIONS ACCEPTED AT
OUR MARCH MEETING
1830, 6 MARCH, 2012
LEE LOUNGE
MEMBERS SERVICE CENTER
VETERANS HOME, YOUNTVILLE**

**NOMINATE ANYONE YOU FEEL WILL HELP
GOVERN THE CHAPTER
PARTICIPATE IN CHAPTER EVENTS
CONTRIBUTE HIS TIME AND EXPERIENCE
INPROVE THE CHAPTER
IMPROVE OUR SERVICES TO OUR VETERANS
. OR -
NOMINATE YOURSELF**




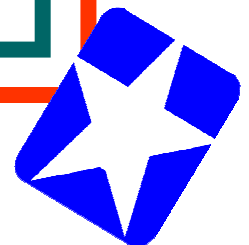
CHAPTER ELECTIONS

**ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD AT
OUR APRIL MEETING
1830, 3 APRIL, 2012
LEE LOUNGE
MEMBERS SERVICE CENTER
VETERANS HOME, YOUNTVILLE**

**PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTION OF YOUR
CHAPTER OFFICERS AND BOARD OF
DIRECTORS MEMBERSHIP
VOTE FOR AND ELECT THE PEOPLE YOU FEEL
WILL DO THE MOST GOOD FOR THE CHAPTER
VOTING IN CHAPTER ELECTIONS IS ONE OF
THE MOST IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES YOU
HAVE AS A CHAPTER MEMBER**



 **VOTE**





Faces of **AGENT ORANGE**

"They were getting complacent," he said. "We've been dealing with the VA for 20 years on these issues, and it's very important for veterans to go to these meetings. They are important links between the veterans and the VA. These issues would just fade away if we didn't fight. The government won't do anything unless they're pushed. And VVA has stepped forward and advocated for all veterans and has taken the lead on these issues. We're a small organization, but we have produced good results. We've had an impact. We just have to keep working

Drop the "D" from "PTSD"?

The president of the American Psychiatric Association says he is "very open" to a request from the Army to come up with an alternative name for post-traumatic stress disorder so that troops returning from combat will feel less stigmatized and more encouraged to seek treatment.

Dr. John Oldham, who serves as senior vice president and chief of staff at the Houston-based Menninger Clinic, said he is looking into the possibility of updating the association's diagnostic manual with a new subcategory for PTSD. The subcategory could be "combat post-traumatic stress injury," or a similar term, he said.

"It would link it clearly to the impact and the injury of the combat situation and the deployment experience, rather than what people somewhat inaccurately but often assume, which is that you got it because you weren't strong enough," Oldham said.

The potential change was prompted by a request from Gen. Peter Chiarelli, the Army's vice chief of staff, who wrote to Oldham last year, suggesting APA drop the word "disorder" from PTSD.

"Calling it a disorder contributes to the stigma and makes it so some folks -- not all, but some folks -- don't get the help they need," Chiarelli said.

The general doesn't like to use the word disorder. "It's not a dirty word, but I think it's misused here," he said. "I don't think that the post-traumatic stress that Soldiers experience is a disorder. It's not something that happens just to weak people or people that are somehow inclined to be affected by horrible things that they see or are required to do. I think it causes an actual injury to the brain and how the brain works."

Early discussions

After receiving Chiarelli's letter, Oldham wrote back to say he appreciated his concern, but dropping the word disorder might not be the best way to go. He said he was eager to work with Chiarelli to see what APA could do.

The general invited Oldham to the Pentagon to discuss the situation. They met for about an hour and a half on Dec. 9. Oldham agreed to bring the general's suggestion to the APA work group tasked with reviewing PTSD for the next version of the association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, the classification book used by psychiatrists in America. APA is finalizing the fifth edition of the manual, due in May 2013.

Oldham cautioned the discussion is very preliminary but speculated that a new subcategory like "combat post-traumatic stress injury" might work.

Although Chiarelli still would prefer to lose "disorder" entirely, he said a new subcategory would be a start. "I'm frustrated with how long this is taking, to be honest," he said.

The general pointed out that PTSD has had many names over the years, from shell shock to battle fatigue. "It's been called all kinds of different things and somehow we decided to go with PTSD and I think that's just wrong," he said.

Chiarelli's campaign to change the name of PTSD is part of the Army's effort to reduce alarming suicide rates among Soldiers. Statistics released last month identified 260 potential suicides in 2011. Of that total, 154 were active-duty Soldiers, 73 were National Guard troops and 33 were reservists.

Silence over stigma

Stigma is a major problem. A study published in the Archives of General Psychiatry in October found that Soldiers were two to four times more willing to report PTSD, depression, and suicidal thoughts if they were allowed to answer a survey anonymously, rather than put their names on a routine post-deployment screening form.

Of the Soldiers who screened positive for PTSD or depression, 20 percent said they weren't comfortable answering honestly on the routine form. The study concluded that the Army's screening process misses most Soldiers with significant mental health problems.

Dr. Harry Croft, a psychiatrist in San Antonio, said the findings jibe with what he hears from veterans he treats for PTSD.

"Even though the rules, as I understand them, say you don't get kicked out if you get diagnosed with PTSD, depression or any other issues, a lot of veterans say, 'I knew damn well if I answered the questions right my chance to get promoted was gone,'" Croft said.

Croft has mixed feelings about changing the name of PTSD. He understands the concern about stigmatizing troops but thinks whether the condition is called PTSD or something else will have little effect on the suicide rate.

"Rather than concentrate on what we call it, we need to concentrate more on how to help warriors coming back from the combat zone, because I don't think the name we give it will have much of an impact on the 18 suicides a day and all the other problems that we see," Croft said. "That's putting a Band-Aid on a much bigger wound."

Chiarelli says his main concern is getting Soldiers into treatment, so if calling post-traumatic stress a disorder keeps them from seeking help, then the wording needs to change, the sooner the better.

"You can have the very, very best treatments in the world, but if you can't get people take advantage of them, they don't do any good," he said.

Editor's note: Now we have a dilemma. Is dropping the "D" from PTSD a ploy to deny veterans care and treatment under the VA system because PTS will no longer be a "disorder"? Of course civilian doctors and psychiatrists are willing to discuss the "D" situation, because they don't have any skin in the game. But the VA and veterans do. Big time. Way to go general, we really needed someone to open this can of worms!

From the President



As I write this, in the middle of February, I feel like that I am just recovering from the holidays. Maybe you are too. So Happy New Year and welcome to what I see is becoming a transformational year for Chapter 702.

Over the past few months I have discussed in this column and in our Chapter meetings the need for more volunteers and more involvement. Well it is beginning to happen. Robert Sousa volunteered to chair the Watch Fire Committee. Paul Batto volunteered to work on the Napa Valley Veterans Resource Center project. Jim Dye volunteered an article for the Bugle. These members have already taken some actions on their projects. That is a good start. But we have other long standing projects and some new ones that give us all an opportunity to help our Chapter, our veterans and our community. So don't miss your chance to help and make a difference. Just read through this issue of the Bugle to see some of the projects and issues we are working on.

I want to highlight some of our projects and issues. First is the project by Alyssa DeBenedetti, a Napa High School Senior, to put a monument to OIF/OEF veterans in Veterans Memorial Park. You can read some background elsewhere in this issue. But as an update, on Tuesday, January 26th, Alyssa made her presentation to the Napa Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, backed up by about 20-25 veterans many from Chapter 702. After her presentation an OIF Veteran, David Grega who is also a member of Associates of Vietnam Veterans, spoke to the Commission. He asked them to approve the monument, the exact monument, with the boats, rifle, helmet and dog tags. He told of how he took part in a ceremony for three fallen comrades in Bagdad that were represented by this exact tribute; the boots, the rifle, the helmet and the dog tags. One of the fallen was a close friend. He broke down as he described the death and how that soldier had a two week old daughter that would never know her father. There was not a dry eye in the room including the Commissioners. The vote was five to zero in favor of Alyssa's project as submitted. That in-

cludes moving the fish statue! Brothers and sisters that was a great night for the veteran community in Napa. Veterans from WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Iraq and Afghanistan came together to help make sure this happened. We made a difference. We still need the approval of the City Council and Mayor. I hope by the time of our next Bugle we will have their approval.

Also in this issue is a story about the move to drop the "D" from PTSD. Read this and stay tuned. Something is up here and we may need to organize against this action.

Finally, we are sponsoring with the Town of Yountville a Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Event on April 1st. Please come to our meetings, stay tuned to your email and set aside April 1st so that we can make this the best Chapter 702 event ever. Here is why: This event will welcome home all Vietnam Veterans for sure but we will also welcome the young veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. We have the opportunity to be the first in Napa County to hold a welcome home celebration for them. They will not have to wait 30 or 40 years.

Peace

Almon





VVA Chapter 702 Sponsors'

Healing the Wounded Heart Workshops

It is getting to be routine. A wonderful, who would have thought we could have gotten this far routine. On February 16th the Healing the wounded Heart Workshop #9 started. Six men and women, Vietnam and Iraq veterans began their journey to a place of another choice. You have heard me say, "The most common comment of the Workshop participants is that it is the best and most help they have gotten for their PTSD since their military service". I look forward to the final session of Workshop #9 to see if we can keep the streak going.



Gary Magnani, Commander of American Legion Post 489 in Sonoma presents a check to Almon Bundy President VVA Chap702

Maybe now is a good time to look back to the days after a few of us attended the first workshop in early 2009. We didn't name it the Healing the Wounded Heart Workshops until a few months later. We received so much benefit and we wanted to help other veterans have a chance at this experience. We, Chapter 702, decided to sponsor, raise the money and support the Workshops in any way we could. Chapter 702 made a donation to the fund for the Workshops. We asked American Legion Post 489 in Sonoma to make a contribution. I remember Commander Gary Magnani's enthusiasm as he wanted his Post to be part of this effort and he gave us our first outside donation. It was a check for \$500.00. They have contributed to every workshop since. We have received support from the veteran community including American Legion Posts 199 in St. Helena and 113 in Napa. The Napa Board of Realtors has made generous donations.

In late 2009 we met Bill Chadwick, Executive Director of the California Veterans Support Foundation. Bill is a Green Beret and a combat veteran. He quickly understood the value of a heart based approach to treating PTSD. VVA Chapter 702 and the Foundation have become full partners in the effort to fund and continue these life changing Workshops. That includes some great financial support.

So it has been a little under two years since the first eight week Workshop. Now we are on #9. Chapter 702 has been the little engine that could. Let's keep it going

If you would like to be more involved in supporting this project of veterans helping veterans or know a veteran that might benefit from attending a workshop please call VVA Chapter member Almon Bundy at 707-944-2431. Especially if that veteran is you!



Gen. Charles P. Stone (1916-2012)



One year ago, I wrote a piece for The VVA Veteran about Charlie Stone, "VVA's Maverick General." When I interviewed him, he was just plain Charlie, an old man in the twilight of his life, his memory often cloudy, living in the big old comfortable house he

bought in 1952, surrounded by the artifacts from his travels and assignments in the Army.

Back in 1968, he was Major General Stone, when he commanded the 4th Infantry Division in the Central Highlands. He was known not only as a maverick – and an acerbic one at that – but by many of his troops as a soldiers' general, who was always concerned with the welfare of his troops.

He fought the war "the way he wanted to." A gifted tactician, he was, for the most part, successful. He believed in what he called the "fantastic mobility" of U.S. forces which, coupled with top-shelf communications, enabled him to know "everything that happened in my area five minutes after it happened [and] I could react to it at once." During the Tet Offensive, it was reported that the 4th Infantry registered the highest kill ratio of any American unit.

Charlie Stone died on February 6, 2012. He was 96. He will be interred at Arlington on March 15th, 2012 at 3:00 PM.



VETS CAN ENLIST FOR RESEARCH

Veterans are signing up to serve again—but this time the focus is on better health care. The Million Veteran Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) Office of Research and Development, has a \$19.8 million budget to research how genes affect the health and illnesses of those who have served in the armed forces. More than 25,000 vets have signed up so far – and the USDVA hopes to hit the 1 million mark within seven years. "We will customize treatments for conditions that affect veterans," says Joel Kupersmith, M.D., the USDVA's chief research officer, and study "whether there are underlying genetic factors that contribute to disorders."

For more information, call (866) 441-6075 toll free.

ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

The best place to begin your application for the benefits you have earned as a veteran is your local County Veterans Service Office (CVSO).

All local CVSO offices are part of the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers, an organization of professional veterans advocates. In California, the County Veterans Service Officer plays a critical role in the veteran's advocacy system and is often the initial contact in the community for veterans services. Through the County Veterans Service Officer, the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers is committed to California counties to provide a vital and efficient system of services and advocacy to veterans, their dependents and survivors. To contact your local CVSO, visit www.cacvso.org and click on "contact us" and you will be directed to your county's CVSO.



Napa Veterans' Memorial Park's Monument

To Napa High senior Alyssa DeBenedetti, it seems only fitting that Veterans Memorial Park should have an actual memorial honoring local military personnel who were killed in the line of duty.

DeBenedetti has made it her mission to remedy this omission before she graduates in June. She is proposing a bronze sculpture to honor the memory of the five Napa County Army, Navy and Marine fatalities who have died in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

"I was watching a video on Yahoo at the beginning of the school year about a fallen soldier," DeBenedetti said. "I broke down in tears. It really moved me because I realized there are so many people out there who aren't recognized." As her senior project, a requirement for graduation, DeBenedetti has planned and is now fundraising for a memorial. Because she wants it to sit in a public park, she will request approval from the City Council to use a corner of Veterans Memorial Park on Main Street.

"I want the community to be aware of who we have lost," she said.

DeBenedetti worked with an out-of-state artist on the design of the bronze sculpture. It will feature a pair of combat boots, an M-16 rifle and a helmet, she said. Plaques will surround the sculpture and give details on Napa's five fallen soldiers.

"I want the community to be aware of who we have lost," she said. "At the beginning of this project I didn't know who we'd lost — it was new to me too."

Over the past several months, DeBenedetti has met with three of the five victims' families and plans to meet with the other families soon, she said.

"I want to know these men and woman's stories," she said. "Who they were, their accomplishments, why they joined the military."

In addition to plaques bearing the names and other information of the war casualties, the memorial will also have an application that smartphone users can access to view a three- to five-minute video created by the families.

"In addition to the physical memorial, there's going to be a virtual memorial," DeBenedetti said.

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 702 is a strong advocate for the monument, and the Chapter's President, Almon Bundy, said "Even though the memorial would name only those killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, it would honor all slain veterans," Her proposal will be "very well received," he predicted.

Bundy also said the park needs such a memorial and he thinks veterans groups throughout the city will support her. DeBenedetti already has several organizations behind her. "If it takes a high school student from Napa High to get something done that we haven't done for Vietnam and Korea veterans, then God bless her," he said.

DeBenedetti said she would like the sculpture to be placed at the corner of Third and Main streets on the platform where the "Fish On" sculpture, part of the Napa Art Walk, sits.

"I want to place this in a really well-seen place to catch people's eyes," she said.

Larry Mazzuca, Napa Parks Director, said it may not be possible to move the fish sculpture to make way for the memorial sculpture, which DeBenedetti hopes to have in place by Armed Forces Day on May 19. He said the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission will work with her on finding a number of potential locations within the park

Editor's note: The "Fish On" sculpture's gotta go someplace else. What on earth does it have to do with Veterans? Why is there any discussion about moving a fish sculpture to make room for a veterans memorial? Move the damn fish!



VVA's New Membership Application

Please feel free to duplicate and use as often as possible



Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc

Application for Membership

We are looking for all Veterans who served during the Vietnam Era

Membership is open to U.S. armed forces veterans who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975, or in any duty location between August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975.

ATTENTION New members and new life members:
You must submit a copy of your DD-214 form along with this application and dues payment.

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email Address: _____ Gender: _____

(OPTIONAL) Chapter Number: _____ Sponsor: _____

I am already a VVA member and want to become a Life Member. My VVA member number is _____

Type of Membership:

Individual Member 1yr: \$20

Individual Member 3yrs: \$50

Life Member Time Payment Plan:
\$50 down, \$25/mo. until paid in full

Life Membership:

Age 50-55yrs: \$225

Age 56-60yrs: \$200

Age 61-65yrs: \$175

Age 66 + : \$150

Payment Method: Check Money Order Credit Card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover)

Credit Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

Return your completed application,
payment, and a copy of your DD-214 to:

Vietnam Veterans of America
PO Box 64299 - Baltimore - MD - 21264

Add Local Chapter information here



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA-CALIFORNIA STATE COUNCIL

DAY AT THE CAPITOL

MARCH 28, 2012

STATE CAPITOL, SACRAMENTO CA

The California State Council holds its Annual Day at the Capitol event to coincide with Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day which is during the last week of March each year.

VVA and AVVA members from across California are invited and encouraged to attend. The State Legislature, the CA Department of Veterans Affairs, the Employment Development Department, the Department of Health and Human Services, the CA National Guard, and the state colleges and universities all oversee programs to assist veterans and their families.

Therefore, it is important that VVA-CSC members attend the Day at the Capitol to show our support for these programs and to educate legislators and staff on issues of importance to veterans.

The Council provides free breakfast and lunch buffets to VVA attendees. The day is spent at the State Capitol meeting your local legislators, educating legislators and staff on veterans issues, and hearing from key legislative speakers.

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day is also observed. There will be a ceremony and wreath laying at the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Please spread the word to all chapters.

REGISTRATION FORM

* Note: Breakfast and lunch are free to all VVA and AVVA members who are registered.

NAME OF ATTENDEE(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE# ()

E-MAIL:

CHAPTER #

CHAPTER LOCATION:

E-MAIL OR FAX THIS FORM TO PETE CONATY & ASSOCIATES:

pconaty@sbcglobal.net Fax: (916) 492-8957

MONEY TALKS. VETERANS. . . WALK - AGAIN! only fools and little children trust politicians

Wow! Unbelievable! That is all that I could say when I read the following link to a "Resolution to Establish a National Home for Veterans in Los Angeles" that was passed this weekend by the Veterans Caucus of the California Democratic Party -- supporting the VA's incredulous "CARES Master Plan."

"Resolution to Establish a National Home for Veterans in Los Angeles"

<http://veteranscaucuscdp.org/content/resolution-establish-national-home-veterans-los-angeles>

The CARES Master Plan that they are endorsing is not something that any Veteran or Veteran Organization would ever support because it doesn't even offer a fresh coat of paint on 75-year old prison-looking buildings that are rat invested with an horrific past.

Note that this Resolution was proposed by the Pacific Palisades Democratic Club December 2011, and was Adopted by Brentwood Residence Coalition. Huh??? Did I fail to mention this is the Veterans Caucus of the California Democratic Party? Where's their voice?

There is only one "Master Plan" to our Veterans property, and it is called the Deed of 1888.

Anyone who has ever read the VA's CARES' Master Plan knows that it offers absolutely nothing for the benefit of disabled and homeless Veterans and is a shield to prevent the new and necessary housing development for Veterans in order to protect the wealthy neighborhoods from these enormous demands brought forth by the devastating casualties from decades of war to defend our Nation's freedom and safety.

This Resolution shows who seems to be running the Veterans Caucus of the California Democratic Party the Pacific Palisades Democratic Club and the Brentwood Resident Coalition.

This also has the fingerprints of the Waxman / Feinstein Political Machine all over it as this twosome supports a public park on Veterans property and they have refused to maintain this land as it was deeded in 1888 -- as a National Home for Disabled Veterans.

Attached is a Resolution passed by the Los Angeles County Democratic Party in 2011 and it is very emphatic about the misuse of the Veterans property and calls on President Obama, VA Secretary Shinseki, Senators Feinstein and Boxer, and Congressman Waxman to take action. No action has been taken by the aforementioned to operate this as a Veterans Home.

But instead of promoting the LACDP Resolution, Joe Halper authored his own Resolution joining forces with the residents of Brentwood and the Palisades instead of supporting the LACDP Resolution -- and his fellow Veterans.

Perhaps its because Joe has grandchildren who go to the Brentwood School, one of the wealthiest private schools in the nation, and the school has a long-term sweetheart deal with the VA for 21 acres of Veterans property that is off limits to Veterans. The CARES Master Plan mentions nothing about canceling this privileged agreement.

This week, the Riviera Country Club in Pacific Palisades is hosting the Northern Trust PGA tournament and the attendees will park their cars on Veterans property and shuttled back and forth on tour buses instead of parking on the streets of Pacific Palisades. Well of course the Pacific Palisades residents would prefer to use Veterans land as a public parking lot instead of parking attendee cars on their streets.

And the Brentwood Resident Coalition wants a public park on Veterans property instead of supporting a new Veterans Home for disabled and disadvantaged Veterans. Wendy Sue Rosen, past chairwoman of the Brentwood Community Council and leader of the Brentwood Resident Coalition is also on the board of directors of Veterans Park Conservancy (VPC), which is not a Veterans organization by any stretch. This is an affluent and influential homeowner group that has a rent-free lease agreement for 16 acres of Veterans land to build a public park "for the enjoyment and education of the entire community. The property is valued at more that \$1 billion and Veterans get \$0.

The Brentwood Community Council, under Ms. Rosen's leadership, wrote a letter in 2008 trying to block Bob Handy's Resolution, the then Chairman of the Veteran Caucus of the California Democratic Party. Bob's Resolution opposed VPC's public park agreement and other misuse of Veterans property. After a year and a half of this Ms Rosen trying to block the Handy Resolution supported by hundreds of thousands, it finally passed. Now, this back door Resolution supports the Master Plan that supports the public park.

The so-called CARES Master Plan is this biggest sham and hoax imaginable. It also includes approval of VPC's public park on Veterans property, why wouldn't these local resident groups have a heavy hand over the Veterans Caucus of the California Democratic Party. Did I mention that Ms. Rosen is on VPC's board of directors?

It's time to get the politics and non-Veteran special interest groups out of "Veterans Affairs," particularly at the Los Angeles National Veterans Home.

If the Veterans Caucus of the CDP wants to support this kind of takeover of Veterans land, that is their call. But they sure do not speak for all the rest of the Veterans who want to keep this land for Veterans use only. There are 20,000 homeless Veterans who have been exiled from their Home, and it's hard to understand why this Veterans Caucus would support a public park instead of housing for homeless Veterans.

One would've thought that the CDP Veterans Caucus would've passed a Resolution supporting the ACLU lawsuit against the VA for misusing Veterans property and discriminating against severely disabled Veterans, not a Resolution to support the local residents who want to turn this sacred land into a public park and tourist attraction.

Hopefully, the Veterans Caucus of the CDP will realize they've been hoodwinked and will cancel this Resolution and join forces with fellow Veterans to build a new Veterans Home.

The "VA is a Racket" article underscores everything that is wrong with the VA

Perpetuating the Erroneous “Ticking Bomb” View of Veterans

January 27, 2012 by Alex Horton

A few weeks ago, we warned against an increasingly prevalent narrative in news: That war Veterans are violent, unstable, and dangerous. I [explained why](#) that simply isn't the case, and how those aspersions can hurt Vets and deepen the divide between us and civilians.

Thursday, the national media moved a step closer to establishing this unfortunate characterization as conventional wisdom in the newsroom. *USA Today*, a national newspaper second to only the *Wall Street Journal* in distribution, published [a story](#) with a headline brimming with violent imagery:

Police get help with vets who are ticking bombs

In an age where millions of people get news from sources like Twitter, or simply glance at newspaper ledes during morning coffee, headlines often inform readers what they need to know. In this case, it's that police officers need reinforcement in a growing battle with “ticking bomb” Veterans. It doesn't matter that the program might be useful in helping law enforcement recognize issues facing some folks after returning from combat. The headline paints the story of Veterans—any Vet, really—

“We just can't use the blazing-guns approach anymore when dealing with disturbed individuals who are highly trained in all kinds of tactical operations, including guerrilla warfare,” said Dennis Cusick, executive director of the Upper Midwest Community Policing Institute. “That goes beyond the experience of SWAT teams.”

as a ticking bomb, primed to explode.

USA TODAY publishes stories on Veterans issues all the time—and typically they're balanced and

There is no data that specifically tracks police confrontations with suspects currently or formerly associated with the military.

informative. On the same day this article ran, they published a [story](#) on the status of homeless Veterans. We could be talking about that story, but unfortunately, we have to refute that Vets are violent, unstable psychos. From the article:

That brings up important questions: Who are the disturbed individuals and how prevalent are they? Is this threat common enough to justify such a response? *USA TODAY* continues:

This is an issue. After noting the perceived problem, the reporter acknowledges that data on the topic is sparse—or non-existent.

But an Army report issued this year found that violent felonies in the service were up 1% while non-

violent felonies increased 11% between 2010 and 2011. During that time, however, crime in much of the nation declined. While understanding the relation to crime dropping “in much of the nation,” the significance of a one percent increase in service-related violent felonies in the last year seems unclear.



Ultimately, the story hinges on bizarre statistical framing. The reporter acknowledges that the kind of data used to make a claim about military-wide increases in violent crime does not exist. Instead, we are presented with a minor uptick in violence—which may or may not be indicative a large or even growing problem.

USA TODAY continues by highlighting the story of a single incident in Fayetteville, North Carolina in which a Veteran exchanged gunfire with local police. Coupled with two recent news reports out of [Washington State](#) and [Los Angeles](#), a shallow conclusion could be that this represents the trend of “ticking bomb” Veterans. But isolated cases do not a trend make. And while it’s easy to make that presumptive connection, it’s irresponsible to do so without hard evidence.

Darrel Stephens, executive director of the Major Cities (Police) Chiefs Association, said the type of training proposed by the Justice Department represents “one piece of the challenge” in dealing with **an increasing number of mentally ill suspects.**

Again, we have the assertion of “an increasing number of mentally ill” Veteran suspects, but no empirical data to back that up. (And now others have begun to take note. Ron Capps, a contributor to *TIME*’s *Battleland*, [called the headline “absurd.”](#))

The ticking bomb metaphor, as inflammatory and unacceptable as it was, is a perfect term for this perception of an “increasing number of mentally ill suspects.” The melodramatic language conveys a surprising and violent event. A bomb is bad enough, but a ticking bomb? You never know when a

ticking bomb will go off; that’s what’s so heinous, so destructive about it. You may not even now there’s a bomb at all. The only thing you do know is that it will explode at some point. The reader of this story, then—given a story so devoid of context and facts and appropriate measurements and statistics—is left to conclude all Veterans are walking powder kegs. They have always ticked, and it’s only a matter of time before an explosion.

If Veterans are ticking bombs, we at least owe it to them to provide non-anecdotal evidence before making such an accusation. And in this case, *USA TODAY* failed to do that.





Introducing **John B. Mellquist!** Born to Barclay and Victor Mellquist on 6 June 1949 in Arlington, Virginia, John and family migrated to California where he attended Rolling Hills High School in Palos Verdes. He joined the Army team in December of 1968 in Los Angeles, preferring a three year enlistment to conscription, then it was off to Fort Ord for his stint in boot camp and basic infantry training. From there he was sent to Ft. Rucker, Alabama and was trained in the fine art of helicopter maintenance and repair.

From Ft. Rucker, it was on to Vietnam. Once in-country, however, the needs of the service changed and his specialized skills as a Huey mechanic were no longer needed and he was quickly retrained as a company clerk. In this capacity he served with the 1st Air Cav's 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion in "Phuoc Vinh, and with the 1st Aviation Brigade in Cam Rahn Bay.

John was awarded the Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal, along with a Good Conduct, National Defense, Vietnam Service and Campaign medals and ribbons. He was separated from the Army at Fr. Lewis, Washington on 9 Aug 1971.

John attended El Camino College in Torrance, CA and Cal-Poly in San Luis Obispo, CA. He has a teaching certificate and taught primary school kids for several years and adult education classes on a part-time basis

John lives in Napa, as he has for many years now, sharing his life and love with his wife Joanne until her passing a few years ago.

He keeps busy at camping, hiking, kayaking, surfing, swimming, sailing, motorcycling and photography. As if teaching and all of the activities above aren't enough, he also volunteers his time to Fish and Game projects, as VVA 702's Secretary and VVA events and volunteer service at the Veterans Home in Yountville.

He is also a founding member of our chapter and has served one two year term as President of the Chapter.

It's guys like John who keep are Chapter alive, growing and meaningful.



- There are signs that Newt Gingrich's campaign is starting to run out of money. He's dropped Tiffany and he's buying all of his jewelry on QVC now.
- Mitt Romney said he is not concerned with the very poor. That statement worked out well for Marie Antoinette, didn't it?
- Donald Trump has now endorsed Mitt Romney. Imagine that: A billionaire reaching out to a millionaire.
- Romney knows how President Obama thinks. Because when he was governor of Massachusetts, he thought the exact same way.
- .Donald Trump announced that he's endorsing Mitt Romney for president. It was really nice. Trump was like, "There's only one man with the brains, the skills, and the charisma to be president — but since I'm not running, you might as well vote for Mitt Romney."
- It was a busy day for Trump, because just this morning, his hair popped out of the ground and predicted six more weeks of winter.
- Romney said the poor ought to get together and go to Best Buy or CostCo to watch the Super Bowl on the wide screen
- More details are coming out about the Italian cruise ship disaster. It seems the chef on board the ship says the captain ordered dinner after the crash. And here's the worst part — he ordered it to go.
- That guy has brought more shame to the Italian people than Olive Garden..



BEWARE OF THE "JURY DUTY" SCAM

The phone rings, you pick it up, and the caller identifies himself as an officer of the court. He says you failed to report for jury duty and that a warrant is out for your arrest. You say you never received a notice. To clear it up, the caller says he'll need some information for "verification purposes"-your birth date, social security number, maybe even a credit card number.

Hang up the phone. It's a scam.

Jury scams have been around for years, but have seen a resurgence in recent months. Communities in more than a dozen states have issued public warnings about cold calls from people claiming to be court officials seeking personal information. Court officers never ask for confidential information over the phone; they generally correspond with prospective jurors via mail.

The scam's bold simplicity may be what makes it so effective. Facing the unexpected threat of arrest, victims are caught off guard and may be quick to part with some information to defuse the situation.

"They get you scared first," says a special agent in the Minneapolis field office who has heard the complaints. "They get people saying, 'Oh my gosh! I'm not a criminal. What's going on?'" That's when the scammer dangles a solution—a fine, payable by credit card, that will clear up the problem.

With enough information, scammers can assume your identity and empty your bank accounts.

"It seems like a very simple scam," the agent adds. The trick is putting people on the defensive, then reeling them back in with the promise of a clean slate. "It's kind of ingenious. It's social engineering."

In recent months, communities in Florida, New York, Minnesota, Illinois, Colorado, Oregon, California, Virginia, Oklahoma, Arizona, and New Hampshire reported scams or posted warnings or press releases on their local websites. In August, the federal court system issued a warning on the scam and urged people to call their local District Court office if they receive suspicious calls. In September, the FBI issued a press release about jury scams and suggested victims also contact their local FBI field office.

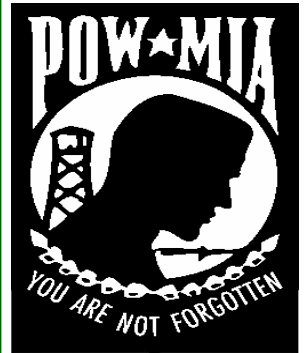
In March, USA.gov, the federal government's information website, posted details about jury scams in their Frequently Asked Questions area. The site reported scores of queries on the subject from website visitors and callers seeking information.

The jury scam is a simple variation of the identity-theft ploys that have proliferated in recent years as personal information and good credit have become thieves' preferred prey, particularly on the Internet. Scammers might tap your information to make a purchase on your credit card, but could just as easily sell your information to the highest bidder on the Internet's black market.

Protecting yourself is the key: **Never** give out personal information on the phone when you receive an unsolicited phone call.



Do you know what the most germ/bacteria infested items are in your house? Most people don't realize how infested their dishcloths, kitchen sponges and other cleaning utensils used in cleaning/rinsing dishes are. How do you clean, and keep clean these items? Put any of them that don't contain metal in the microwave for 1 minute each day. Actually, preferably, after each use. This simple trick will keep them clean and germ/bacteria free.



UPDATE
AS OF
12/15/11

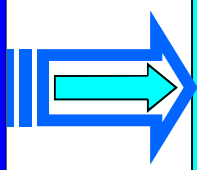
AMERICANS UNACCOUNTED FOR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

COMPONENT	COUNTRY OF LOSS					TOTALS
	VN	VS	LA	CB	CH	
Army	10	419	76	27	0	532
Navy	257	84	18	0	7	366
Marine Corps	22	165	17	8	0	212
Air Force	182	128	209	17	0	536
Coast Guard	0	0	0	0	0	0
Civilian	1	19	6	6	0	32
TOTALS	472	815	326	58	7	1,678
PURSUIT STATUS						
Further Pursuit	173	436	294	52	4	959
Deferred	39	53	5	1	0	98
No Further Pursuit	260	326	27	5	3	621
Totals	472	815	326	58	7	1,678

VN North Vietnam, VS South Vietnam, LA Laos, CB Cambodia, CH China

Special

VVA and VVA Life Member
 Baseball Caps
 \$15.00 each
 2 for \$28.00



To purchase your Official VVA
 baseball cap(s), attend one of
 our meetings

- or -

Contact Ross Hall via phone
 at 707-252-7537

Or via email
rossisvva@sbcglobal.net



Social Security Benefits for Military Service? Could be, depending on your time in service.

Since 1957, if you had military service earnings for active duty (including active duty for training), you paid Social Security taxes on those earnings. Since 1988, inactive duty service in the Armed Forces reserves (such as weekend drills) has also been covered by Social Security.

Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for your military service from 1957 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. These extra earnings credits may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of your Social Security benefit.

Special extra earnings credits are granted for periods of active duty or active duty for training. Special extra earnings credits are **not** granted for inactive duty training.

If your active military service occurred

- **From 1957 through 1967**, we will add the extra credits to your record when you apply for Social Security benefits.
- **From 1968 through 2001**, you do not need to do anything to receive these extra credits. The credits were automatically added to your record.

After 2001, there are no special extra earnings credits for military service.

How You Get Credit For Special Extra Earnings

The information that follows applies **only** to active duty military service earnings from **1957 through 2001**. Here's how the special **extra** earnings are credited on your record:

Service in 1957 Through 1977

You are credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty basic pay.

Service in 1978 through 2001

For every \$300 in active duty basic pay, you are credited with an additional \$100 in earnings up to a maximum of \$1,200 a year. If you enlisted after September 7, 1980, and didn't complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings. Check with Social Security for details.

Since 1957, if you had military service earnings for active duty (including active duty for training), you paid Social Security taxes on those earnings. Since 1988, inactive duty service in the Armed Forces reserves (such as weekend drills) has also been covered by Social Security.

Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for your military service from 1957 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. These extra earnings credits may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of your Social Security benefit.

Special extra earnings credits are granted for periods of active duty or active duty for training. Special extra earnings credits are **not** granted for inactive duty training.

If your active military service occurred

- **From 1957 through 1967**, we will add the extra credits to your record when you apply for Social Security benefits.

Real heroes don't wear capes and masks, they wear dog tags!



VA STRIKES AGAIN!

Business, Jobs, And Education

BY RIC DAVIDGE, CHAIR, WITH GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS STAFF

The VA's Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE) was created to help veterans and service-disabled veteran small-business owners. Less than three years ago CVE was known as a place where veterans' advocates helped veterans get their businesses off the ground and become competitive. Now it has become the enemy of veteran-owned businesses.

Now CVE is called the Center for Verification & Evaluation. It is infamous for accusing legitimate veteran businesses of fraud and wrecking their businesses through bureaucratic bungling and insensitivity. CVE has ruined legitimate and successful service-disabled veteran-owned businesses, costing business owners their livelihood and the veterans who worked in those businesses their jobs.

This is not good government. It's in contravention of both law and common sense, and it does not even save money. Congress and the White House need to step in and stop the destruction of small businesses and veterans' livelihoods.

JOBS FOR VETERANS?

The big issue in the 2010 midterm elections was jobs. Since then, Congress, especially the House of Representatives, has fixated on cutting funding to narrow the deficit. And while President Obama has proposed a significant jobs bill, one that will benefit out-of-work veterans, House Republicans have not moved on it.

The Veterans' Affairs Committees in the Senate and the House have been working on legislation, but the bills that have been passed in their respective bodies are not in synch.

In the House, Committee Chair Jeff Miller (R-Fla.) has sponsored H.R. 2433, the Veterans Opportunity To Work Act of 2011, and shepherded it through the House, which passed the bill by a 418-6 vote on October 12. This measure would allow 100,000 unemployed veterans to apply for Montgomery GI Bill benefits. They could choose to learn high-demand skills for up to one year in areas such as health care and technology. The bill also seeks to strengthen work-leave protections un-

der the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act and would provide a retraining grant program for homeless veterans.

On the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Patty Murray (D-Wash.) sponsored S. 951, the Hiring Heroes Act of 2011. This bill focuses more on hiring unemployed, disabled veterans who served in Afghanistan and Iraq. It also gives new veterans a 180-day opportunity upon leaving military service to gain federal jobs without competing against applicants from the public. A compromise bill was enacted Nov 10.

HIGHER EDUCATION?

VVA was a leader in the fight to pass the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which provides educational benefits for veterans who have served since September 11, 2001. Just as predatory entities sprung up then to feast off the generosity of the American people, so, too, have the predatory for-profits arisen now.

According to a report by the Government Accountability Office, many large for-profit colleges have raked in millions of dollars while engaging in predatory practices to attract students who earn degrees or certificates that are, in effect, worthless. The VA is culpable. Only after congressional hearings that focused a light on this scandal of significant proportions has the VA taken action—mild action at best.

Many of the predatory for-profits are sending their students to Capitol Hill to extol their all-but-worthless degrees. These predators, who spend almost no money on libraries or educational materials, do spend a great deal of money on marketing, pandering to the veterans' community, and on high-pressure recruiting of veterans.

It's time for the VA—and for Department of Justice and the FBI—to crack down hard. Among the for-profit entities targeted by GAO investigators: University of Phoenix, Argosy University, Kaplan College, Everest College, Westech College, Bennett Career Institute, Potomac College, MedVance Institute's College of Office Technology, Anthem Institute, Westwood College, and ATI Career Training.

There must be a swift and thorough investigation. If it is shown that these businesses took money from American taxpayers and in return gave American veterans empty dreams, they ought to be publicly embarrassed, ostracized, and humiliated.

Not all for-profit colleges or training schools are bad. Not all online or distance learning programs are frauds. But the VA and DoD must provide appropriate oversight and must demand the authority and resources to get the job done.

Editors note: When they reduce the size of the funding increase for VA, congress still calls it an "increase". When they reduce the size of the funding increase for other programs, they call it a "reduction". Go figure!

THE WAR ON PTSD IS JUST BEGINNING

Veterans have finally come home after nine long, hard-fought years in Iraq. Celebrations of their return, tearful family reunions and parties in their honor have all come to a close, but now is the time they need us more than ever. Post-traumatic stress disorder has already begun to set in on the veteran, allowing haunting memories and dreams to leave scars you may never see. It's no secret that PTSD is a major issue surrounding veterans today. The Department of Veterans Affairs has reported treating more than 212,000 combat veterans for PTSD since the beginning of the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns. Though the number of Iraq-era veterans treated for PTSD is only a fraction of those from the Vietnam era, their experiences are different based on a number of factors, including a rise in the use of improvised explosive devices (IED). Often, those with PTSD or brain injuries suffer silently. Veterans avoid counseling because they have difficulties in admitting a mental disorder. Troops who are taught to be fearless might feel that they are viewed as weak if they admit to any health problems, especially one so closely related to emotions. This stigma is one we, as a national community, can help them overcome. Without proper treatment their relationships can deteriorate, educational opportunities get pushed aside and everyday life becomes a struggle. Drugs or alcohol are often used to fill the emptiness that a veteran suffering from PTSD may hold inside, which can lead to them losing their family, job and even their life. It is our job as veterans, friends and family members to help combat this terrible affliction. I challenge you to learn as much as you can about PTSD, because knowing how PTSD affects people may help you understand what your friend or family member is going through. There are many programs out there to help veterans, so don't let these resources go to waste. **Editor's note:** War on PTSD just beginning? This article, written by a VA staff writer, gives you a strong clue that maybe the VA is a little behind and has some catching up to do treating PTSD? Do you think, maybe, some Vietnam vets might have returned home with PTSD 40 years ago? And now the VA is stating the "WAR ON PTSD IS JUST BEGINNING"? Well where, precisely, has the VA been all these years? Oh well, look how long it took them to get their act together on Agent Orange.

When the Homeless Vet Is a Woman Warrior

Submitted by [Dave the VSO](#) on Tue, 01/31/2012



Women have served in the US Army since 1775. That's some history. Bet you thought women in Iraq and Afghanistan was a new thing. Nope. Just a different version of an old thing.

But here's something new: the number of homeless women vets more than doubled from 2006 to 2010 according to Mark Thompson, writing online for [Time](#) magazine.

The numbers don't include women who are living in shelters, or women who are homeless but haven't been asked if they're vets, so that number could be even higher.

A GAO report says that by 2010, "homeless women veterans were commonly middle-aged, divorced, unemployed, or newly homeless. Many of these women also had disabilities." Sound familiar?

And that middle-aged part? That was two years ago, pal. Think of the number of women who served in Iraq and Afghanistan who are just now coming home. A lotta young women are going to be re-entering civilian life, with the all the trials that men have along with some different ones all their own.

We've talked here about the VA recognizing that women's medical issues are different from men's (*duh!*) but there's still a gap in care that misses many women vets out there. Sometimes the reasons are geography...no place close by. Sometimes, just like men, they find it difficult to ask for help.

No, I don't know why this is so, but I can tell you this: it's time to start calling them out. We need to seek out homeless women and identify the vets among them. When we find homeless women vets, we need to get them into treatment.

Do women suffer from PTSD, TBI? You bet they do. Is their adjustment back to civilian life a piece of cake? Hardly.

How about jobs? A homeless woman find a job? You kiddin' me?

The VA needs to recognize that women need their help too.

