



# Listening Post

Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, Inc.

P.O. Box 3218

Ventura, CA 93006-3218

August, 2011

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## Presidents Column:

Hello all:

Well, as I have said before, the VVVC has been very, very busy, and growing, growing, growing!

I am sure that all have heard of the passing of Charles Ray, father of missing POW/MIA James M. Ray. It was a very sad day for a lot of the membership, but also for many men, women and children who have known the Charlie Ray for many years. The obituary will be in this Listening Post and it is dedicated to Charles Ray. We offer our condolences to the family, and want to let Jean Ray know that the VVVC will always be here for her and her family!

I want to thank the VVVC color guard and John Cabrera for an outstanding job at the recent 4th of July parade in Ojai. Especially the members who walked and marched that whole parade, you guys are to be commended, and see; you guys still have that touch, great job!!

I want to welcome back to the VVVC Norman Michaud and Mike Ogden, and the many others whom I haven't seen or heard from in a long time? Welcome back and welcome home!

I hope all of you have been enjoying the pictures Jan Camacho has been putting in the newsletter, she also is responsible for taking all of the pictures, and boy does she make the Listening Post shine! I know we are all very proud and honored for the news letter.

I need to thank all of you for supporting the American Legion in Oak View, as most know, each month that has a fifth Wednesday, they have their potluck, and many of you have been driving all the way up here to attend, thanks so much. All they request is that we bring a salad or dessert; they provide the main dish and drinks.

I am working on the Christmas party for this year, and yes, I know it is a little early, but this year, beside our dinner at the home, I would like to see the VVVC membership possibly play Santa Claus to all of the veterans in the home and provide them with a Christmas gift. I will have more information on this as we get closer to that time of year, but I have already started to get some great feedback from a lot of members, so I shall keep all posted.

Let's see, before I forget, I had a nice phone call recently from an old friend of ours whom just turned 87 years of age, and what a sweetheart she is. I had to be reminded that she is the oldest living member of the VVVC and she was making me laugh so much that I even told her she can be appointed to the VVVC Board, hahaha. I am talking about Life Member Ms. Marie Adkinson, what a wonderful lady, so full of life,

I should mention before I shove off, a very special Happy Birthday to a very special lady and that is Mama Knocker. I recently received an email from Mama (Dorothy) and here is another lady so full of life, and energy and is very informative of Vietnam Veterans, and is a true supporter of all things veteran, she says to say Hi to all of the brothers and sisters whom all know her, who knows, maybe one day some of you will meet her, such a sweet heart.

Take care all, see you at the meetings!

Dave Betti



Born on March 20, 1924

Died on June 26, 2011

Charles Joseph Ray, 87, of Biloxi, MS died on Sunday, June 26, 2011. Mr. Ray was born in Blackstone, MA on March 20, 1924. He enlisted in the US Marines on July 20, 1941 and served 8 years. Mr. Ray worked at Voi Shan/Fairchild, Redondo Beach, CA for 29 years. He was the son of the late, Lawrence and Mary Ray.

He was a life member of several organizations including, VFW 2323, Post Commander, Granada Hills, CA, Naval Elks 353, Port Angeles, WA, American Legion 368, Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, CA, Past Chairman of Los Angeles County POW-MIA, Vietnam Veterans of America, James Michael Ray, Post 818, Lincoln, RI, Forget-Me-Nots, New Milford, CT, POW Network, Branson, MO, Release Foundation, New York, NY, American Ex-POW of America, Heart of Illinois and a member of the Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club, F Troop.

Mr. Ray is preceded in death by his first wife, Mary P. Ray; step-daughter, Cathi Ray. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Jean J. Piatek Ray; sons, James Michael Ray, POW, Vietnam/Cambodia, captured March 18, 1968 still not yet accounted for, Dennis (Denice) Ray of North Smithfield, RI, Charles (Lynn) Ray, Jr of Woonsocket, RI; daughter, Maureen (Raymond) Vien of Port Charles, FL; step-daughter, Janice Brown of Williamsburg, VA.; six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Special thanks to Rev. Phil Salois, National Chaplain of the Vietnam Veterans of America; LaSalette Shrine, MA; Rev. Thomas Pazheparambil of Sacred Heart Catholic Church; Special Angels, RN Barbara Dix, Nursing Center; Dr. Motakhaveri, Sheila Pate, D'Iberville VFW Post 6731; RN Justin, BRMC, and all of the 5th Floor nursing staff.

Memorial services were held on Thursday, June 30, 2011 at the Howard Avenue Chapel of Bradford-O'Keefe Funeral Home, Biloxi. RIP Charlie, we miss you.



### **Vice President's Message:**

I would like to dedicate my column in the memory of WWII Navajo Code Talker Joe Morres, who recently passed away at the age of 85. He served in the United States Marine Corps from 1944-46 (Guadalcanal, Guam, Saipan, Okinawa, and Tinstao, China). Welcome Home Cpl. Joe Morris, may you rest in peace.

In the past while attending Pow Wows around California, I've had the privilege of meeting and speaking to a couple of Navajo Code Talkers. It is a very humbling experience to say the least. I can't imagine what it was like to have to keep your military service a secret until 1982, when then President Ronald Regan declassified the role of the Code Talkers.

Lately, I've been greeted more and more by strangers with a "Welcome Home and Thank You for your service to our country." Recently while Jan and I went to Home Depot in Camarillo, we were greeted by a Home Depot employee who wore a Vietnam Veteran's hat. He also welcomed me home and I him, I also gave him one of my VVVC cards and informed him of our meeting time and date.

We also attended the 2011 Seabee days with our two grandsons Ryan and Gavin as well as Gavin's mom Liz. As we entered the area where tents were set up, I was welcomed home by a Seabee named Espirtu, who will be retiring in two years. We were comparing today's facilities to what we had in Vietnam, and I had quite a good laugh thinking back to the bare essentials we had compared to today.

As I write this article, I'm thinking of the trip we will be taking in a couple of days to MCRD San Diego to watch the graduation of Rafael Tinajero. I've been to a few graduations since my own in 1966, including my own son's and the feeling of pride never ends as we watch the new Marines parade out on the tarmac. New Corps versus Old Corps, it doesn't matter, they are all Marine Corps.

The Ivy Lawn work parties are back in progress again, if you available on any Wednesday, we could sure use your assistance. One thing I suggested to John Cabrera was that once a month, we need several people to walk around and auger the holes to clear the over grown grass. This will make it easier to find the sleeves the next time flags are put up.

Our membership keeps growing, renewals are still coming in, I'm so proud of the VVVC and for the way our members continue to support the Officers and Board Members. Remember, this is your organization, without you the members, there would be nothing.

Until next month,  
Semper Fi  
Richard Camacho

### **Treasurer's Message:**

On July 13<sup>th</sup>, we began making flag poles from scrap. After cutting and grinding the pieces to be welded, we only put together six poles. We now have a system in place for producing more poles.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August, we will be moving a large portable awning given to us by Ivy Lawn Cemetery. It will be moved from the maintenance yard to our "Clubhouse" (work area). we will need plenty of bodies that day to help position the awning. I hope to see you there.

Doug Temple  
Treasurer

### **Parade Chairman's Message:**

The Ojai Parade was awesome! You had to have been there. The trailer and the van were full of old and new members. Everyone pitched in as the decorating team. We looked GREAT!

The Avenue of the Flags project in progress again. Richard Pina and I pulled 25 sleeves and marked curbs. Richard Camacho and his grandson marked several on the west side. Last week we had a group show up and started repairing 65 flag poles which consisted of welding, bending, clips and bolts. This is an on-going project, it takes a lot of work and there is no way we could keep it up without the help of all the volunteers that continually come out. I thank all of you for your help. It means a lot to me.

Brother John C.

### **POW/MIA command to receive \$62.7m lab, offices**

HONOLULU — The military has awarded a \$62.7 million contract to a Honolulu company for the construction of a new laboratory and offices for the command that searches for, finds, and identifies the remains of Americans missing from past wars. Nan, Inc. is due to build the three-story structure for Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam by July 2013. Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific said Monday the building will include an identification laboratory, office space, training space and a warehouse. Maj. Gen. Stephen Tom, who leads the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, says the new Central Identification Laboratory will be state of the art and among the premiere facilities in the world.

Submitted by Dave Betti

## **A Thank You to all Vietnam Vets from a Marine in Iraq**

A guy gets time to think over here and I was thinking about all the support we get from home. Sometimes it's overwhelming. We get care packages at times faster than we can use them. There are boxes and boxes of toiletries and snacks lining the center of every tent; the generosity has been amazing. So, I was pondering the question: "Why do we have so much support?"

In my opinion, it all came down to one thing: Vietnam Veterans. I think we learned a lesson, as a nation, that no matter what, you have to support the troops who are on the line, who are risking everything. We treated them so poorly back then. When they returned was even worse. The stories are nightmarish of what our returning warriors were subjected to. It is a national scar, a blemish on our country, an embarrassment to all of us.

After Vietnam, it had time to sink in. The guilt in our collective consciousness grew. It shamed us. However, we learned from our mistake. Somewhere during the late 1970's and on into the 80's, we realized that we can't treat our warriors that way. So ... starting during the Gulf War, when the first real opportunity arose to stand up and support the troops, we did. We did it to support our friends and family going off to war. But we also did it to right the wrongs from the Vietnam era. We treat our troops of today like the heroes they were, and are, acknowledge and celebrate their sacrifice, and rejoice at their homecoming ... instead of spitting on them.

And that support continues today for those of us in Iraq. Our country knows that it must support us and it does. The lesson was learned in Vietnam and we are all better because of it.

Everyone who has gone before is a hero. They are celebrated in my heart. I think admirably of all those who have gone before me. From those who fought to establish this country in the late 1770's to those I serve with here in Iraq. They have all sacrificed to ensure our freedom. But when I get back home, I'm going to make it a personal mission to specifically thank every Vietnam Vet I encounter for THEIR sacrifice. Because if nothing else good came from that terrible war, one thing did. It was the lesson learned on how we treat our warriors. We as a country learned from our mistake and now we treat our warriors as heroes, as we should have all along. I am the beneficiary of their sacrifice. Not only for the freedom they, like veterans from other wars, ensured, but for how well our country now treats my fellow Marines and I. We are the beneficiaries of their sacrifice.

Semper Fidelis,

Major Brian P. Bresnahan  
United States Marine Corps  
Submitted by Rafael Perez

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **INSTALLATION OF MILITARY BANNERS IN MOORPARK TO BEGIN ON MONDAY, JULY 25, 2011**

Beginning Monday, July 25, 2011 around 9:00 AM at the Moorpark Veterans' Memorial, following a short ceremony, Post 502 of The American Legion and the City of Moorpark will begin placing Military Banners, honoring the men and women currently on active duty with the United States Military, on selected lampposts along Spring and Tierra Rejada Roads.

"Currently, we have 36 Banners ready to be hung", commented Matt Valenzuela, Banner Committee Chairman. "This first batch has been good to go for some time now, but it was necessary to complete all the required paperwork in order to assure the City everything was in good order." the Chairman went on to say. Eventually we plan to hang about 100 and we need 60 to 70 more names." Each Banner will display the name and branch of service of an Active Duty Service

For about two years, the Post has been developing the concept of a Banner Program but it was not until a member brought to our attention the basics of what was needed. We were ready to go but it proved to be a false start. As luck would have it, a local college student, Courtney Moore, contacted the Post asking if we would help her get a banner program going within the City. We were back on track and with Courtney's enthusiasm; we were once again ready to give it our best shot. We went before City Council, present our case, made some requests and asked for help. City Council was unanimously in support of the goal to honor Active Duty Military and we were on our way.

The community got behind us with names to put on the Banners and financial support. The Moorpark Rotary pledged to assist with the purchase of the Banners. Local eateries set aside a day or two where a percentage of their proceeds were donated to the Banner Program and one of our members, Salvador Barcenas, took it upon himself to place homemade collection boxes around the city with merchants compassionate with our goal.

For more information contact Moorpark Post 502 at 805.523.3355 or email us at [MoorparkPost502@aol.com](mailto:MoorparkPost502@aol.com)





VVVC member Chief Warrant Officer 4, Carl Wade had the honor of swearing in Midshipman Andrea Tinajero this past month at the US Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD. We are proud of you Carl and Andrea!

### From the Editor:

The Moving Wall will be at the following locations:

Santa Barbara, Ca – Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>

Garden Grove, Ca – Oct 6<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>

### Ojai 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade:



Thank you to all the members who turned out for the parade

### Important Dates:

**Saturday, Aug 6<sup>th</sup> – Ventura Fair Parade**

Meet at Ventura High @ 8:00 AM.

**Saturday, Aug. 20<sup>th</sup> – VVVC Meetings**

Ventura Veterans Home  
10900 Telephone Rd, Ventura, CA  
Board Mtg. – 5:30 PM  
General Mtg. – 6:00 PM  
Potluck, bring your favorite dish.

**Monday, Sept. 5<sup>th</sup> – Labor Day**

**Sunday, Sept 11<sup>th</sup> – Patriot Day**

9/11 Memorial Service to be held at Government Center. More information coming.

**Friday, Sept 16<sup>th</sup> - POW/MIA Recognition Day**

Candlelight vigil and reading of names Of California's Vietnam War POW/MIA's.

**Saturday, Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> – VVVC Meetings**

Ventura Veterans Home  
10900 Telephone Rd, Ventura, CA  
Board Mtg. – 5:30 PM  
General Mtg. – 6:00 PM  
Potluck, bring your favorite dish.



Our Color Guard led off the parade. GREAT JOB GUYS!!!!



The crowd was amazing. This little boy knew exactly what to do.

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