



Listening Post

Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, Inc.

P.O. Box 3218

Ventura, CA 93006-3218

August, 2016

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Listening Post

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Presidents Message:

Besides my responsibilities as your VVVC President, I also am the Director of Senior Services for the Oxnard Police Department Clergy Council. Part of my duties as Director is to participate with a group of professionals to prevent the financial abuse of elders. In California that means anyone 65 or older. I am amazed at all the schemes there are to separate an elder from their money and even their real estate. For example, there is the IRS scam. You get a phone call supposedly from the IRS saying that you owe back taxes and that the police are on their way to arrest you; or you missed jury duty; or we have kidnapped a family member and all you have to do is give us your bank routing number, or send a money gram to get their release. These scammers are VERY intimidating and sound real. Also you may find that your computer locks up with a pop up that states you have a virus and need to call a Microsoft tech to unlock your computer. They give you a phone number. If you call, you will have a very professional sounding person tell you for a certain amount of money they will clear up the problem. They will even ask permission to control your computer remotely. Then they will ask for your bank routing number. In the case of the computer scan, all you have to do to unlock your computer is reset your computer to an earlier day.

There are so many types of scams out there I don't have the time or space to mention them all. Besides by the time you read my article there will be two or three new scams I haven't heard about yet. One thing, though, all these scams have in common and should be a "red light" for you is, they all want money immediately through either a money gram, a green dot card, or your routing number. I don't care how real the scam sounds, if they require immediate payment – IT IS A SCAM.

Also, if they don't want your money, they want your information. **Don't ever give your SS#, Medicare or Medical # to any one via phone or e-mail!** This is true with some IRS scams, or lottery scams. They want to make certain they have the right person for identification purposes. The IRS already has your information. Make them give you your SS# or your Medicare #. If they can't or won't – hang up!

There are also some scammers who wait outside senior residences or shopping malls offering free lunches and even free scooters. All you have to do is give them your Medicare #. Oh, you will get your free scooter, but they will continue to use your numbers to fraud Medicare.

A standard rule when contacted by these crooks is this: "If it sounds too good to be true, it is". Guard your personal information.

If you don't have a post office box, you should think about getting one. Tweakers like to go down a street that has mail boxes next to the road. They steal your mail, especially if your red flag is up, in order to steal your identity. For instance, if you are paying a utility bill with a check, they will take your numbers off your check and purchase whatever they like and charge it to your account; or if you pay a credit card bill this way, they get both numbers. Ever get a credit card offer in the mail? They can use this too and ruin your credit. Use the regular mail receptacles if you can, or better yet, go to the post office.

As I said earlier, I am amazed each week to hear of the new scams. Protect your identity, protect your information.

Dave Wilson

The V.P. and POW/MIA Chair Person is on vacation and will return next month!

Treasurer's Message:

This month the veterans' book club read "The Saigon Zoo" by Pete Walon. The book is about a group of army privates who make their way through the Vietnam War doing as little as possible and partying as much as possible.

The book goes into detail about the types of drugs and drug users in Saigon and Long Bin. There was one redeeming quality to the book. According to our moderator, Walon offered one of the best descriptions of the racial problems of that time in Vietnam, 1968-1970. The book received mixed reviews from members of the club.

Doug Temple

Membership Chairperson's Message:

VVVC August 2016 Membership Report

Annual Members	34
Life Members	92
Total Members	126

Memberships Expiring in August 2016

Mike Riddle 8/3
Reynaldo Rivera 8/15
Theresa Miller 8/16
John Still 8/16

Please renew your memberships at your earliest convenience.

Marie Pounds
Membership Chair

VA Problem Points of Contact:

Having problems with the Oxnard CBOC (VA Clinic), Sepulveda or West LA VA Facilities? Below are points of contact to assist you:

Richard Robinson, Executive Director of Ambulatory Care and CBOCs. He is over all the CBOCs and Sepulveda.
(239) 682-4157 – this is his personal cell number.
Richard.robinson7@va.gov – this is his email address.

If after receiving a VA post card notifying you to call to make an appointment, and you call only to get an answering machine, leave a message but do not receive a call back, Contact the following person:

Thomas Telemonte, Outpatient Supervisor WLA
(310) 478-3711 X43205

If your situation is still not resolved after contacting the above, please call Cheri Orgel of Congresswoman Brownley's office (805) 379-1779. Explain your situation to her and what actions you have taken. You will be emailed a Congressional Case Work Authorization form to fill out so that the office can call on your behalf.

Richard Camacho

A Note From The Editor:

What a great surprise to have John Smiley come to our July general meeting after being absent for so long! Welcome back John!

My thoughts and prayers go out to Barry Jenkins' family in such a difficult time.

And sincere condolences go out to the Ed Evans & Joe Richardson families for the recent loss of a family member.

Vets On Track to Receive Cost of Living Increase in 2017:

A bill that would provide veterans a cost-of-living increase next year has passed both houses of Congress, and is expected to soon become law.

- By FederalSoup Staff
- Jul 15, 2016

The Veteran's Compensation COLA Act of 2016 – sponsored in the House of Rep. Ralph Abraham, M.D., (R-La.) and in the Senate by Sens. Johnny Isakson, (R-Ga.), and Richard Blumenthal, (D-Conn.) – would provide vets with the same percentage increase to be applied to Social Security.

The bill passed the House July 11, and the Senate on July 13. The White House is expected to sign the bill into law. News of the bill's progress has been welcomed by other veterans' advocates.

The bill would apply to veterans' disability, dependent compensation, clothing allowance and other veterans' benefits. The exact amounts of increase will not be calculated until December.

Source: Federal Daily E-Newsletter

Happenings:

July 29, 30 & 31, 2016 – **Ventura County Stand Down**
Homeless Veterans – CA Army National Guard
Armory, 1270 Arundell, Ventura CA 93003.

August 6th – **Ventura County Fair Parade**
Meet at Catalina St. at 8 am to join us in the parade.

August 27th – Military & Veterans Expo sponsored by
Ventura County Military Collaborative
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Opening Ceremony at 9:45 AM
A Free Event at Camarillo Community Center,
1605 Burnley St., Camarillo, CA
Bringing over 100 Free Military and Veteran
Benefits to You.

August 31st – Every 5th Wednesday of the month the
Oak View American Legion serves a free dinner
for all veterans at 6:00 PM. Should you go for
dinner I'm sure you will see at least one of
our VVVC members there!

California State Assembly's Ninth Annual Veterans of the Year Luncheon

On June 28th, my son Richard Jr. and I flew from Bob Hope Airport to Sacramento to attend the Ninth Annual California State Assembly Veterans of the Year Luncheon on June 29th at the Sacramento Convention Center.

After being picked up at the airport by friends that I have not seen in 34 years, we checked into the Grand Sheraton Hotel, which was located just two blocks from the Convention Center.

We had dinner with our friends, and got caught up on the last 34 years, and then we returned to the hotel. The next morning after breakfast, my son and I got ready and walked over to the State Capitol to meet with Assemblywoman Jacqui Irwin and her staff.

We arrived at the State Capitol around 10:45 AM and proceeded through security. After arriving at the Assemblywoman's office, we discussed upcoming Veteran Bills and other issues that the Assemblywoman is working on. The Assemblywoman then escorted us to a private elevator, which took us to the Assembly Floor. Once on the Assembly Floor, we had our picture taken in the front center of the Assembly Floor, just below the Assembly Speaker's podium. Overhead was a marquee, which displayed "Assembly Member Irwin Welcomes Richard F. Camacho, U.S. Marine Corps, 2016 Veteran of the Year, June 29, 2016". After our picture was taken, the Assemblywoman had a second picture taken that included my son. We then returned to the Assemblywoman's office for more discussions on veteran issues.

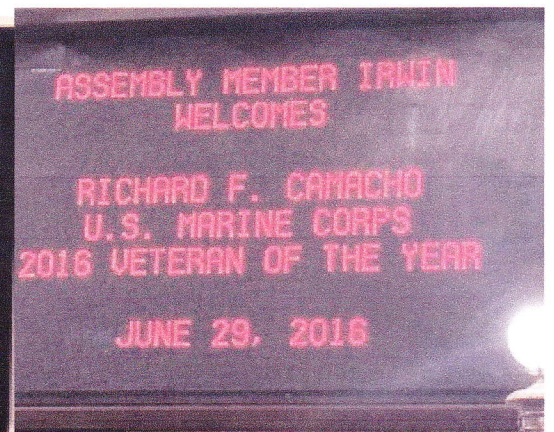
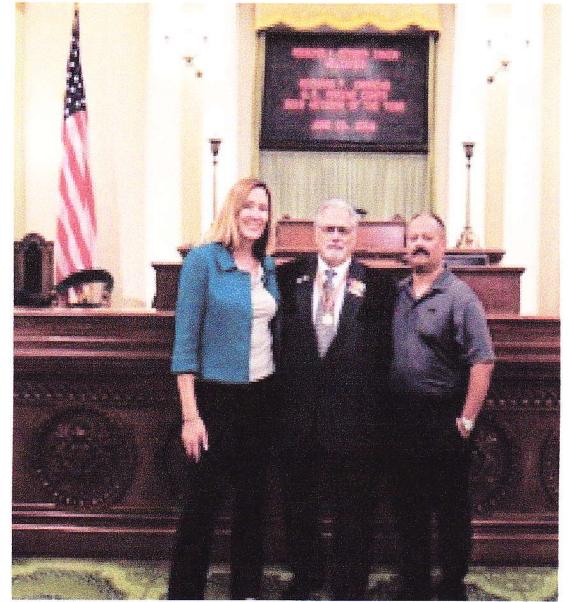
At 11:45 AM, we were once again escorted to the private elevator and taken to the Capitol basement where, a black SUV and driver were waiting for us. We were driven over to the Convention Center, where we had one more picture taken and checked in. Our table was located front center of the auditorium; this was due to the Assemblywoman being the Chairperson of the State Veterans Committee. In all there were 72 other selected Veterans of the Year and their respective Assembly Representatives.

We had the honor of sharing a table with Walter Valentine, USMC Retired, who had served in WWII, Korea and Vietnam. Walter was present at both flag raising events on Iwo Jima, and survived the Chosin Reservoir. Walter retired as a Master Sergeant (30 years), plus he did an additional 35 years as a Civil Servant for the Marines, assisting retiring personnel.

The selected Veterans of the Year included veterans who had served during WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. To be among this group of distinguished honorees was very humbling to say the least.

I share this now with all of the current and past members of the VVVC, without your continued support, this would not have been possible.

Richard Camacho



2016 Veteran of the Year Reception

On July 12th, Assemblywoman Jacqui Irwin hosted a reception to recognize Richard Camacho as the 44th Assembly District Veteran of the Year for 2016.

Assemblywoman Jacqui Irwin, D-Thousand Oaks, selected Camacho as part of a program started nine years ago in which the state Assembly honors Veterans who have demonstrated exemplary service in the military and in their community.

Camacho, 70, enlisted in the Marine Corps after graduating from high school and served in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968. He has spoken to local high school and middle school students for 29 years about his wartime experience.

“His extraordinary bravery and accomplishments as a warrior at home and overseas exemplify the core American values of service, community and compassion” stated a news release from Irwin’s office.

