



Listening Post

Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, Inc.
P.O. Box 3218
Ventura, CA 93006-3218

December, 2011

Officers

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Presidents Column:

Greetings all!

I hope everyone survived Veterans Day, I can say it was the best of the best! Ivy lawn looked great, all of the flags standing tall, the ceremony was great, and so were the keynote speakers and the MC's (master of ceremonies).

The Veterans Home had their ceremony and it was packed with veterans from table to table, and from inside to outside, they had their book signing at the Veterans home and it was packed!

I saw the video of the guys from the VVVC (Ventura) in Las Vegas on channel 3 and all of the floats at that parade and there were lots of them. I also heard that Bakersfield, Calif. (my hometown) had the biggest Veterans Day parade they have ever had in years, that's great!

I can see that we are going to be off to a BIG start for next year, and we haven't even gotten through Christmas as of yet?

I hope that all of you remember that December the 14th is the **cutoff date** to let us know if you will be attending the VVVC Christmas party at the Veterans home here in Ventura on December the 17th at 12:30 PM. There will be gift cards given to the veterans in the home, Santa "Bobby" Claus will be there and plenty of good cheer, food and celebrations going on so we hope that you will join us! Each VVVC member (family) is asked to bring a dessert to share with the Veterans.

There will not be a VVVC meeting that night (Dec.17) as the Christmas party will be our meeting. The next scheduled VVVC meeting will be January 21, 2012.

I want to say thank you to all of you who have served the VVVC, and hope that many of you will return in your capacity that you held this year.

I want to say get well to Katie Ogden who recently had surgery, and hope that you may be up and about very soon.

Next year some of the schools will be calling on veterans to speak, and I would hope that a lot of you would be available to attend, or at least support those who so go and speak! In case you haven't seen the recent TV show called Vietnam in HD, you may want to go to the History Channel and check out some of the pictures, but they are also asking for pictures and videos of the veterans on the WALL!

They are trying to put the faces to the names on the WALL and a lot of us have those pictures that we may want to share, so go to the History Channel web site and scroll around and check out the info they are asking for, it won't hurt anything, and it may do some of the families an honor to see their son or husband, or daughters face on the WALL after this project is finished!

(cont. pg. 2)

Presidents Message cont:

Merry Christmas to all, and please send us your newsletter articles, let us hear from you, even if you are a DJ, or a chef, or a whatever?

See you all soon, and thanks for your support in keeping the VVVC very much alive!!!!!!

Semper Fidelis and Happy Holidays!
Dave Betti

Parade Chairman/Work Party:

Things really turned out good this year in Las Vegas. We were #27 out of 138 entries and a three hour parade. We made it on the news and our photos on the PC News. I'd like to thank Bobby G., Doug Temple, Richard Pena and my friends from Riverside, Iowa and Nebraska.

I'd like to thank all who helped with the Ivy Lawn project. I know all of these "work Wednesdays" paid off. The flags looked great! Leaving them up for 2 weeks caused some of the older sleeves to move, so it is like starting all over again. I can't thank you enough to those who helped take down the flags before the rain.

We will not be doing the Oxnard parade this year as they forgot to include us.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the Veteran's Home Christmas Party. We hope to have a good turn out to support our elderly Veterans.

It has been a very tough month, very busy... but we all did a great job.

Brother John C.

Vice President's Message:

Time magazine date November 21, 2011 had an article entitled "The Other 1%" by Mark Thompson. In the article, Marine Sergeant Alex Lemons returns home from a third deployment only to feel more alienated than he felt in Iraq. Once home in Utah, he said it was nearly impossible to tell that the nation was at war.

As I read this article, it flashed me back to 1968 when I returned home from Vietnam. When I landed at MCAS El Toro, I had to call one of my best friends a fellow Vietnam Vet to come and get me, my family was too busy. When I returned to work one week after being released, all of my co-workers treated me as though I had been on a two year vacation. And like the Marine Sergeant above, the nation I came home to was not at war, only the military and their families were. I couldn't speak to my friends; they had no idea of what I went through.

Once again, the majority is too busy to take notice that there are two wars going on and that our military personnel are being stretched too thin. I've always said the draft should not have been abolished, as it is everyone's responsibility to protect this nation and the rights of all of the citizens.

Nothing will change until all Americans are affected by what's going on in Iraq and Afghanistan. Until all feel the pain of war, America will always be at the mall while the military and their families are the only ones affected by war. As time passes, both Iraq and Afghanistan are becoming more like Vietnam. What has happened to us as a nation? What's with our leaders, who seem only interested in gaining more for themselves and not what's right for this nation? What happened to the honor of being a military veteran? Why, are we as a nation willing to settle for an honorable withdraws in lieu of going over and kicking butt and coming home a winner? Why do we allow our leaders to handicap our military for political correctness?

Sorry for going off like this, but as I watch more and more troops coming home broken, and our nation (VA and DOD) are not giving them the proper care and our congress and senators do nothing to protect them, it pisses me off. Please continue to welcome home all veterans you may come in contact with every day. During our recent trip to Laughlin, NV, Jan went out of her way to say "Thank you Sir for your service" to each and every veteran she came in contact with each day.

Thanks for allowing me to sound off.
Until next month,
Semper Fi
Richard Camacho



Merry
Christmas!

A Note from Dave:

Greetings all:

I have just received word that Jennifer Vasquez, the bugler from the 1st Ventura County's Honor Detail Color Guard has been invited to attend the Kennedy Centers Honoring of Veterans scheduled for December the 5th in Washington, D.C.

I received a phone call this morning (7:45AM) from Jennifer and she was excited to share this info with all of you. She will be leaving for Washington D.C on December the 4th and attending the private ceremony which is by invitation only, and is being held at the Kennedy Center of Performing Arts. The trip will be financed by none other than the Robert Pence Foundation and all of her arrangements have been confirmed and made through the Travel Agency of McCabes Travel.

A recent article of Jennifer and her duties as bugler for veterans funerals, Memorial Day and Veterans Day and even last year while attending the VVVC WALL ceremonies each evening had made the newspapers in Washington and her family was sent an email requesting her presence to attend the ceremony this year.

We are all very happy for Jennifer as this is a once in a life time event that we only see on television. To be asked to attend this event at such a young age is an honor, and we wish her the best of luck, and what bright future she is in for!

Good luck, have fun Jennifer, we at the VVVC could not be prouder!

Semper Fi.

Dave Betti



The VVVC Color Guard performed admirably at the Veterans Day ceremony at Ivy Lawn. Pictured left to right are: Dave Wilson w/ US Flag, Skip Thomas w/ POWMIA Flag, Fred Keuser w/ VVVC Flag and Paul Lamar w/ Agent Orange Flag/ Great job guys!

Origin of Taps:

Taps...! It's the song that gives us the lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes. But, do you know the story behind the song? If not, I think you will be interested to find out about its humble beginnings. Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Elli was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia.. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Elli heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment... When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out.. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army. The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted. The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. But, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician. The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. This wish was granted. The haunting melody, we now know as 'Taps' used at military funerals was born. The words are:

"Day is done, gone the sun, from the lakes, from the hills, from the sky."

"All is well, safely rest, God is nigh. Fading light, Dims the sight, and a star, gems the sky, gleaming bright, From afar, drawing nigh, falls the night."

" Thanks and praise, for our days, Neath the sun, Neath the stars. Neath the sky, As we go. This we know. God is nigh"

Submitted by Robert Holmes





Work Party placing the flags at the entrance of Avenue of the Flags at Ivy Lawn Memorial Park. You guys did a great job!

Important Dates:

Wednesday, 12/7 - Pearl Harbor Day Ceremony
 10:00 AM Veterans Memorial
 Government Center

**Saturday, 12/10 & Sunday, 12/11 – Fill the Bus/Toys
 For Tots Drive,**
 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM
 Target, Ventura

Saturday, 12/17– VVVC Christmas Party
 12:30 PM, Veterans Home, Ventura
 Cost \$7.00 per person
 Please bring a dessert. RSVP by 12/14
 to Dave Betti or John Cabrera.

Sunday, 12/25 – Christmas Day

Sunday 1/1 – New Years Day

Monday 1/16 – Martin Luther King Holiday

Saturday, 1/21 – VVVC Meetings
 Veterans Home
 10900 Telephone Road, Ventura
 Board Mtg. – 5:30 PM
 General Mtg – 6:00 PM
 Potluck, bring your favorite dish.

Thursday, 2/2 – Groundhog Day

Tuesday, 2/14 – Valentines Day

Saturday, 2/18 - VVVC Meetings
 Veterans Home
 10900 Telephone Road, Ventura
 Board Mtg. – 5:30 PM
 General Mtg – 6:00 PM
 Potluck, bring your favorite dish

Monday, 2/20 – President’s Day

From the LP Committee:



Wishing you and your
 family a Merry Christmas
 &
 a Healthy, Happy 2012!
 Richard & Jan

Application for Membership

Mail completed application and fees to:
Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, Inc.
P.O. Box 3218, Ventura, CA 93006-3218

Membership Type (Please check one):

- Annual Member => \$20.00 (Check this line if you are a NEW member)
- Renewing Member => \$15.00 (Check this line if you are renewing your membership)
- Lifetime Member => \$150.00 (May also be paid in three monthly installments of \$50.00)

Membership Class (Please check one):

Formal: Check this line if you were on active duty between **January 1, 1959** and **May 7, 1975**. ALL new Formal applications require a copy of your DD-214. ALL current Formal Members must have their DD-214's on file with the Membership Chair, or they will be listed as Informal Members.

Informal: Check this line if you did not serve in the U.S. Armed Forces, or did not serve during the time specified for Formal Membership. If you did serve at any time, we also ask for a copy of your DD-214.

NOTE: One applicant and fee per application, please. Renewal requires completion of this form.

=> Please type or print <=

NAME: _____
Last First Middle Initial

ADDRESS: _____
Street & Number Apt. # City State

PHONE NUMBER: _____ ZIP CODE: _____
Area Code + phone number

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

"I hereby certify that I am at least 18 years of age, of good moral character, and I am dedicated to the purposes and goals of the Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, Inc. I agree to abide by the By-Laws and amendments in all respects. My word is my bond. If I do so ever fail this pledge, I am aware that my membership in the VVVC may be forfeited."

Signature of applicant Date

General Membership Meetings are held at 6:00 p.m. the 3rd Saturday of each month at:

The Veterans Home
10900 Telephone Road
Ventura, CA 93004

Treasurer: _____ Date: _____

Membership Chair: _____ DD-214: Yes No On File

Sponsor: _____

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