



Listening Post

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

February 2010

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Committees

POW/MIA – Dave Betti
(805) 649-3283

Listening Post – Jan Camacho
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James Ray Scholarship – David Ha
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Membership – Marie Pounds
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Parades – John Cabrera
(805) 483-5139

Presidents Column:

Well I hope everyone had a great holiday, and Happy New Year!

This year, the VVVC will once again be very busy as usual, but in a different way? I am sure by now everyone has heard that the VVVC and the VNVMC with Ivy Lawn Memorial Park will be hosting the Vietnam Veterans Traveling WALL. It has been a long time coming, and I know many have been looking forward to this day.

The WALL will arrive on August 25, 2010, and set up will be on August 26, 2010. This is going to take a lot work from many of you, and many of you we haven't even met as of yet. So, I hope that when the time comes, you will give the VVVC 100% of your time, if you can and of course your support. At the moment, we are currently awaiting the contract to start the ball rolling.

I want to thank Jean and Charlie Ray on the recent phone call we received from them at our last meeting at the new Veterans home in Ventura. What a surprise, and Charlie Ray sounded great! I haven't heard anybody as happy as he was on that phone that night.

By the way, in case some of you have forgotten, we are now conducting our meetings at the new Veterans Home in Ventura County. We even had the honor of Brenda Manke (Home Administrator) and her husband, opening the door for our first meeting there, and they even attended what a great night it was.

Be sure to watch the newsletter for upcoming events, parades and the meetings of the future.

Please don't forget, we will now opened our next three meetings for nominations of officers in the VVVC for the year 2010-2011. There are plenty of positions available, so come on down!!

Don't forget that Vung Tau this year is April the 11th, at Camarillo Springs, and also the Camacho family reunion in which the VVVC will also be cooking, that will also be at Camarillo Springs on June 26th.

So let's get ready to be busy, as usual, we shall see everyone at the meetings.

Semper Fi:
Dave Betti

Vice Presidents Column:

For those of you that missed the January meeting, it was a pleasure to finally meet in the Ventura County Veterans Home, a facility that I had the pleasure of being on the original committee some 18 years ago. It was also a pleasure to have Brenda Manke and her husband with us. (By the way, Brenda's husband touched up our VVVC logo that hangs on the meeting hall, it really looks great).

I would also like to thank our President Dave Betti for allowing me to make the announcement that the Traveling Wall will be in Ventura County this August for one week. It has been 12 years since the VVVC has sponsored the Wall. I would also like to thank John Pagel of Task Force Omega for putting in a word on the behalf of the VVVC at my request.

As I mentioned at the January meeting, as soon as we receive the contract from John and Joy Devit, we will be meeting with Terry Taylor Gonzales at Ivy Lawn to go over the contract and send in a \$2,000 deposit. We will also be forming a committee to begin preparations for this August. This display will be to honor all who served in Vietnam as well as the families of all who served as well as those who made the ultimate sacrifice. More information will be forthcoming, as we set dates for our meetings.

I also mentioned that I had received a call from Ed Evans, my former VP, informing me that one of his son-in laws was a teacher at Charminade, and was interested in having us come out to speak sometime in March. More on that also as I get information from Ed.

We also received a call from Jean and Charlie Ray during the meeting. Charlie sounded really great as he is recovering at home. .

This will be a busy year for the VVVC and I ask for the support of all members as we get ready to present the Wall to Ventura County in August.

Until next month,

Simper Fi

Richard Camacho

Scholarship Chair:

I would like to share with you the Thank You cards I received from our scholarship winners.

David Ha

Dear Mr. Ha & Members of the Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County,

Thank you so very much for bestowing on me the great honor of being your scholarship recipient. I was a surreal experience and one that I will treasure forever.

It was a complete privilege to meet you face-to-face at your meeting and you were all so kind and gracious to my family and myself. The research I did for my paper is not something I will soon forget and by learning what you and your peers did for me, for our country and how you suffered because of it, makes me appreciate your gift all the more.

I am greatly humbled by your belief in me and my future, and I am even more determined to keep going.

Thank you for all you have done for me.

Katelen Eich

Dear Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County,

I just wanted to thank you again for awarding me your scholarship and giving me special trinkets and sharing your stories with me and my family. It was truly a life changing experience and truly opened my eyes. Thank you so much again.

Sincerely yours,

Kristin Rice

Spc. Martinez Augustin

Important Dates:

Sunday, Feb. 14th – Valentine’s Day

Monday, Feb 15th – Presidents’ Day

Wednesday, Feb. 17th – Ash Wednesday

Saturday, Feb. 20th – VVVC Board & General Meetings

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

Saturday, Mar. 13th – Ventura St. Patrick’s Day Parade
More information coming. Be sure to
Check the March issue of the LP.

Wednesday, Mar. 17th – St. Patrick’s Day

Saturday, Mar. 20th – VVVC Board & General Meetings

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

**Saturday, Mar. 28th – Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans
Celebration**
More information coming. Be sure
To check the March issue of the LP.

**Monday, Mar. 30th – California State Welcome Home
Vietnam Veterans Day**

Friday, Apr. 2nd – Good Friday

Sunday, Apr. 4th – Easter

Sunday Apr. 11th – Vung Tau
More information coming as plans are
finalized

Saturday, Apr. 17th – VVVC Board & General Mtgs.
Veterans Home
10900 Telephone Road
Ventura, CA
Board Mtg. – 5:30 p.m.
General Mtg. – 6:00 p.m.
Potluck, bring your favorite dish.

VA Statement about 2010 Benefits and Programs

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans

Affairs (VA) wants to inform Veterans and other beneficiaries of the following changes that will take effect in 2010:

VA will Freeze Increase in Prescription

Copayments: Any increase in Veterans out-of-pocket payments for pharmaceuticals will be delayed until June 30, 2010. This means the department will delay a scheduled \$1 increase – to \$9 – in the copayments facing Veterans for each 30-day supply of medicine for the treatment of conditions not related to military service. During this period, VA will also keep \$960 as the maximum, annual out-of-pocket payments for pharmaceuticals for non-service-related conditions. The \$960 cap will not apply to Veterans in priority groups seven and eight. The yearly maximum out-of-pocket payment was scheduled to increase to \$1,080. There are no copayments associated with the treatment of conditions related to military service.

- **VA will Distribute Insurance Dividends:**
Approximately 900,000 Veterans are in line to share \$286.4 million in annual insurance dividends during 2010. VA operates one of the nation’s largest life insurance programs, providing more than \$1 Trillion in coverage to seven million service members, Veterans, and family members. These payments will be made to insurance policy holders on the anniversary date of their policies. Payments will be sent automatically through different payment plans and the amounts will vary based on the age of the Veteran, the type of insurance, and the length of time the policy has been in place. Consistent with private mutual insurance company practice, the VA is returning a portion of premium payments back to policyholders because the agency had strong financial results.

Veterans who have questions about their policies may contact the VA insurance toll-free number at 1-800-669-8477 send an email to VAinsurance@va.gov. They may also visit the Internet at www.insurance.va.gov.

- **No Adjustment in COLA for Disability Compensation + Pension Benefits:**

As a result of negative inflation and the consumer price index going down over the past year the Social Security Administration has announced there will be no COLA this year for Social Security recipients. Under federal law VA’s COLAs cannot exceed the Social Security COLAs. Therefore, VA is barred from making a COLA increase for recipients of its benefits.

VA provides compensation and pension benefits to over 3.8 million Veterans and other beneficiaries. Presently, the basic monthly rate of compensation paid to Veterans ranges from \$123 to \$2,673. Annual income limits for disability pension begin at \$11,830 for a Veteran without dependents and increase for Veterans who have dependents, who are housebound, or who need regular aid and attendance.

Veterans who have questions about their benefits may contact the VA’s financial benefits toll-free number at 1-800-827-1000 or go to www.vba.va.gov/VBA.