



Listening Post

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

February, 2012

Officers

Dave Betti, President
(805) 648-3283

Richard Camacho, Vice President
(805) 384-9138

Secretary - Vacant

Doug Temple, Treasurer
(805) 984-0489

Public Affairs - Vacant

Board of Directors

John Cabrera
(805) 483-5139

David Ha
(805) 482-3772

Robert Holmes
(805) 641-3880

Larry Seguin
(805) 320-4116

Dave Wilson
(805) 469-0281

Committees

Chaplain - David Ha
482-3772

POW/MIA - Dave Betti
(805) 649-3283

Listening Post - Jan Camacho
(805) 384-9138

James Ray Scholarship - David Ha
(805) 482-3772

Membership - Marie Pounds
(661) 297-2464

Parades - John Cabrera
(805) 483-5139

Presidents Column:

Greetings All:

Well, here it is, the February 2012 newsletter, already? I hope everyone is enjoying the New Year, and I hope it has been a greater one each and every year!

I want to start off this article by saying condolences to the family of John Cabrera. I am sure most don't know that John recently lost his father and we all wish him our love and support in this difficult time, but knowing John he will be back up and running and busy as ever. We all love you and your family John, we are all here!

This past Dec. 2011 on Christmas Eve I was able to speak to Marie Pounds who has also been under the weather due to her recent injury. I have this feeling after talking to Marie she may be off for a little longer than expected, she told me that she has had the best care, and that Lance has been so overwhelming in his care that she may have to stay home awhile longer until her other arm heals? Hum, I thought it was the other arm that got hurt, hahaha, but we are so happy that Lance has stepped up to the plate, I have always had tremendous respect for him, and I always knew that he could be counted on, I mean he does drive back and forth to Ventura from Santa Clarita so Marie can attend the VVVC meetings and such, GREAT JOB Lance! Besides, how could you not love Marie Pounds!!

I know my article sounds like a sick call letter, but I'll have time for the heavy stuff in a minute. I also want to say get well wishes to Wilma Holmes (VVVC Board member Bobby Holmes' wife) who has been under the weather also. In December they both went to Arizona to visit family and are still there as of this article due to Wilma catching a cold which put her in the hospital for a few days. We just heard that Wilma is now out of the hospital and staying at her sister's house. Update on Wilma as of 1/21/2012, Bobby Holmes notified the membership at our January meeting, that he doubts that Wilma will be returning to CA. Due to problems with her diaphragm, Wilma is breathing with the aid of a Bi-pap. Also, Wilma is on a liquid diet at this time due to the fact that she cannot swallow solid food. Please keep both Bob and Wilma in your thoughts and prayers. Okay, now on to some VVVC mail, and info! Please do not forget that the VVVC is now having nominations for new officers for the years 2012-2013. I would hope that all of you will be able to please come and run for a position and attend the meetings to vote, it's very important to all of us, and this is your club!

At the last Christmas party of 2011 at the Veterans Home in Saticoy, I was talking with VVVC member Carl Wade and Max Van Der Wyck (Past DAV Cmdr.) and we were discussing December 7th Pearl Harbor Day.

In case some don't know, Max had wanted to change the celebration to Memorial Day and have the services at Ivy Lawn in November instead of on December 7th as is the norm. The concern was that a lot of World War II and Pearl Harbor survivors would not be able to handle the preparations and setting up for the services that are held at the Veterans Memorial site here in Ventura County.

(cont. pg.2)

President's Message (cont.)

I, along with Carl Wade, and Max Van Der Wyck have agreed to help set up, and be responsible for making sure that this day will never go unnoticed for as long as we are around, in other words, we are picking up for the survivors of this era to make sure they and this date will never be forgotten, that we will continue to have this ceremony each and every year at the Veterans Memorial site as has been the case in the past. We hope that all of you, as veterans would continue to support and help out when it comes time to honor this holiday, just as we do for Veterans Day, Memorial Day and POW/MIA Day for the Pearl Harbor survivors and World War II veterans!

I did not, nor will I commit the VVVC for being responsible for this service to honor these men and women, it's up to all of us as veterans, not as just one club to continue on this tradition, I have made my commitment to Max and Carl and the survivors of World War II and Pearl Harbor, we hope that you would also!

MORE CLUB NEWS OH BOY!

I want to thank Paul Lamar for the work he had done on the recent VVVC newspaper article that was donated to Jennifer Vasquez at our last year's Christmas party, great job Paul, thanks again. I also want to thank all of you who donated Christmas gift cards to our last year's Christmas party, it was overwhelming, and it was very much appreciated by all of the veterans in the home! The VVVC cooks were great, as was the food, and it was a crowded party that's for sure, and Santa "Bobby Holmes" Claus put a smile on everyone there! Thanks again!!

One last bit on info, VUNG TAU is coming up again, it is scheduled for APRIL 1st, I know, I know, is also April's fools Day, but seriously, it is APRIL 1st at Camarillo Springs Grove Park, same as last year, and yes, the VVVC will be cooking again, yummy, yummy! So, sharpen up your blades, clean those aprons, get out your sun caps, and wear your colors, it's time for fun in the sun!

Don't forget, VVVC nominations January, February and March 2012 for new officers and final elections in March 2012, let's see you all there.

See you soon, and thanks for helping out at the work parties at Ivy Lawn!
Dave Betti

Treasurer's Message:

It's that time of year again to nominate and elect new officers for the coming year. There are five executive officers and five board member positions that are to be nominated and then elected. So if you would like to help out in any capacity, throw your hat in the ring and get active.

Doug Temple

Vice President's Message:

My condolences to the family of John Cabrera on the recent loss of John's Father.

By now I'm sure that most of you have heard or seen the video/photograph of the four Marines standing over and urinating on dead Taliban bodies. I can't believe all of the reaction this has caused both here at home and abroad. Secretary of State Clinton has demanded that the four Marines be identified and tried for war crimes. Please, Madam Secretary, don't make me laugh, compared to the actions of Jane Fonda while she was in North Vietnam, this is nothing. The Secretary of defense Panetta wants all four Marines held accountable, give me a break. If they're to be held accountable for anything it should be for being stupid, in capturing their deed and posting it.

Why is it that American warriors are held to a higher standard than warriors from other countries? What War Crime was committed? How does this compare to the cutting off of ears that took place in Vietnam, and not one warrior was held accountable back then. And it did take place, I witnessed it my first day in the field.

And we wonder why our troops are so stressed! We send them off to a foreign country, tell them to take care of business and then condemn them for doing it. (Sound familiar?). To those that are calling for all of these actions, I say don the uniform, experience what these young women and men experience every day, and let's see if you wouldn't do the same thing. It's so easy to sit back here out of harm's way and condemn the actions of those that face death each day. Enough said.

Now on to other business, Ms. Jeanine Alexander of Moorpark High School, contacted me and asked if we would be coming to Moorpark this year. I told her yes, and reminded her it would be our 25th year there. I'm sure we will be hearing from other schools very shortly as they prepare their plans for the school year.

Remember, Nominations were opened by Dave Betti during our January 2012 meeting. Nominations will remain open until the March meeting, so please step up and take a position or nominate someone.

Please keep Bobby and Wilma Holmes in your thoughts and prayers, Wilma is still in Arizona, where she is undergoing rehab while staying with her sister. Bob updated us on Wilma's condition at the January meeting; he doubts that Wilma will return to CA. Bob will continue to travel between AZ and CA to attend VA appointments and VVVC meeting when possible.

One last note, as I'm preparing this article, I realize that Jan has been putting this newsletter together for four years now. It's not an easy task, getting articles from Board Members and Officers alike, then printing, mailing and emailing the LP each month. As I watch Jan put the LP together each month, I have gained a new respect for Lloyd Vancil and Steven P. Weber, our past editors.

Thanks for allowing me to sound off.

Until next month,
Semper Fi
Richard Camacho

2012 Nominations:

Nominations are now open for all VVVC officer and board positions. Nominations will be taken at the February and March meetings. The election will be held at the March General Membership meeting March 17th.

The following nominations were received at the January meeting held January 21st.

Officers:

President – Dave Betti
Vice President – Larry Seguin
Secretary – Jane Smiley
Treasurer – Doug Temple
Public Affairs – Stan Leighton

Board:

John Cabrera
Richard "Camacho"
Bobby Gonzales
Bobby Holmes
Dave Wilson

VA Posts Online List of Ships Associated with Presumptive Agent Orange Exposure

WASHINGTON – Veterans who served aboard U.S. Navy and Coast Guard ships operating on the waters of Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, may be eligible to receive Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation for 14 medical conditions associated with presumptive exposure to Agent Orange.

An updated list of U.S. Navy and Coast Guard ships confirmed to have operated on Vietnam's inland waterways, docked on shore, or had crewmembers sent ashore has been posted at <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/> to assist Vietnam Veterans in determining potential eligibility for compensation benefits.

"Posting of the ships list is an important recognition of the sacrifices U.S. Navy and Coast Guard Veterans made for this Nation," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "It provides an easier path for Veterans who served in Vietnam to get the benefits and services they are entitled to under the law."

VA presumes herbicide exposure for any Veteran with duty or visitation within the country of Vietnam or on its inland waterways during the Vietnam era. Comprehensive information about the 14 recognized illnesses under VA's "presumption" rule for Agent Orange is also located on the webpage.

In practical terms, Veterans with qualifying Vietnam service who develop a disease associated with Agent Orange exposure need not prove a medical link between their illnesses and their military service. This presumption simplifies and speeds up the application process for benefits.

For questions about Agent Orange and the online list of ships, Veterans may call VA's Special Issues Helpline at 1-800-749-8387 and press 3.

Membership Renewal Notifications

The following memberships will expire at the end of February 2012, please renew as soon as possible to ensure that you will continue to receive the Listening Post Newsletter.

Gary McElroy
Johnny Mills
Ronald Mills
David Boostroom
Thank you,
Membership committee



John Cabrera and his work party were surprised and honored to receive a plaque for all the flag work for Avenue of the flags. Presenting the plaque to John is Ernestine Watson of the VFW Post 1679. Great job guys!

Important Dates:

Thursday, 2/2 – Groundhog Day

Tuesday, 2/14 – Valentine's Day

Saturday 2/18 – VVVC Meetings

Veteran's Home, 10900 Telephone Rd,
Board Mtg. – 5:30 PM
General Mtg. – 6:00 PM
Potluck, bring your favorite dish.

Monday, 2/20 – President's Day

Wednesday, 2/22 – Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, 2/29 – 5th Wednesday Dinner

American Legion, Oak View @ 6:00 PM

Sunday 3/11 – Daylight Savings Time Begins

Set clocks forward one hour.

Saturday, 3/17 – St. Patrick's Day Parade Ventura

More information coming.

Saturday, 3/17 – VVVC Meetings



Name: James Michael Ray
Rank/Branch: E3/US Army
Unit: 525 Military Intelligence Group Team 38
Date of Birth: 10 November 1949 (Cambridge MA)
Home City of Record: Woonsocket RI (family in CA)
Date of Loss: 18 March 1968
Country of Loss: South Vietnam
Loss Coordinates: 113409N 1080234E (AN775805)
Status (in 1973): Prisoner of War
Category: 1
Acf/Vehicle/Ground: Ground
Refno: 1093
Other Personnel in Incident: John G. Dunn (Released POW)
Source: Compiled by Homecoming II Project 30 June 1990
from one or more of the following: raw data from U.S.
Government agency sources, correspondence with
POW/MIA families, published sources, interviews. Updated
by the P.O.W. NETWORK 1998.

REMARKS:

SYNOPSIS: On March 18, 1968, PFC James M. Ray and 1Lt. John G. Dunn were part of a unit on a road clearing mission with Montagnard soldiers on Highway 20 in Lam Dong Province, South Vietnam. During the mission, both Ray and Dunn were captured by the Viet Cong and taken to Cambodia for detention. Dunn was released in the general prisoner release nearing the end of American involvement in Vietnam in 1973. Jimmy Ray did not come home. Ray, who had been wounded during his capture, was rotated within the "system" of those POWs held in South Vietnam. He made escape attempts which infuriated his captors and they beat him severely and confined him with chains. He was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry for these escape attempts and resulting torture. In April 1969, an American POW who escaped from the camp where Ray was being held with other POWs reported that Jimmy was alive and one of the healthiest of the POWs both mentally and physically. Jimmy was held apart from the other POWs, because of his attempts to escape. In the summer of 1969, Jimmy became ill with malaria and reportedly died in November 1969 at a detention camp in the northern Tay Ninh Province/Cambodia area. Although there are "statements" attesting to Jimmy Ray's death, many years would pass before Jimmy's father would be able to trace and personally talk to POWs held with Jimmy. NOT ONE saw him dead - even those whose "statements" were in Jimmy's files! PFC Ray's records are a tangle of inconsistencies. His death was "reported" when there

(Cont. next column)

was no witness, and this report was later retracted. A medal was awarded for gallantry in an escape occurring AFTER Jimmy was supposed to have died. However, no verified proof of his death was ever received. Jimmy's family feels there is a strong chance that he is alive today, but if he is not, they know that the communist government of Vietnam certainly knows the fate of PFC Jimmy Ray, who, in the words of one POW, "wanted more than anything else to be free." The Vietnamese state that Jimmy died on November 6, 1969, but have not produced proof of his death or returned a body. James M. Ray was promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant during the period he was a prisoner of war.



**First Vietnam Veterans Memorial:
Angel Fire, New Mexico**

The memorial was begun by Victor and Jeanne Westphall, the grief-stricken parents of Marine First Lieutenant David Westphall, who was among sixteen young men in his unit killed in an ambush in 1968 in Vietnam. The Westphalls used their son's insurance policies to begin construction of the Peace and Brotherhood Chapel. The chapel resembles a sail and perches on the hillside overlooking the Moreno Valley. The chapel is open twenty-four hours per day. The David Westphall Veterans Foundation has since supported the operation of the memorial, which was dedicated on the anniversary of David's death in 1971. At the time of its construction, the site received national media attention and helped inspire the establishment of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., completed in 1982. In 1987, the United States Congress recognized Angel Fire as a memorial of national significance.



*Happy
valentine's
Day!*

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: _____

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

