



# Listening Post

Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, Inc.

P.O. Box 3218

Ventura, CA 93006-3218

\*June, 2016

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## Presidents Message:

As you all may know, the Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County is a veteran's service organization. We are always on the lookout for opportunities to help our fellow veterans regardless of service. One such an opportunity is coming up on July 29<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> at the California Army National Guard Armory in Ventura. It is the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Ventura County Stand Down. Though primarily organized to assist our Homeless Veterans, the Stand Down is for all Veterans of Ventura County. There will be FREE: Superior Court on Friday only; FREE Social Services, Dental Services, Eye Exams and Glasses, VA Benefits, Housing Information, Legal Assistance and Transportation. Also there will be FREE Food, Showers, Clothing, Haircuts, Comfort Kits, Medical Assistance and Employment Assistance. For additional information call: (805) 987-3118.

Pre-registration is Encouraged but not required. The handouts at our May meeting have the registration form. You may also download the fliers and registration forms from the Stand Down web site: [venturacountystanddown.org](http://venturacountystanddown.org).

If there are any veterans who will need the services of the Superior Court on Friday, pre-registration will be extremely helpful as the onsite Court will need the records necessary to clear records. The Public Defender's Office is in charge of case eligibility and adding cases to the Stand Down. Some of the misdemeanor charges range from public intoxication, unauthorized lodging, drinking in public, various misdemeanor traffic violations, etc.

Volunteers will be needed to help set up the Stand Down on Wednesday and Thursday as well as breaking down on Sunday. One of the best ways we can help is to distribute the fliers and pre-registration forms to as many Ventura County veterans, especially the Homeless, as we can.

Dave Wilson

### **From the recliner of the VP:**

Well, I'm sitting here thinking about what to say for this month and it comes to me! This is the month of May already and school will be out in another month. Vacations will be starting. And the new reality TV show season is about to start too! (What would we do without the Kardashians?)

Well, as most of you know, our group was asked to participate in an episode of "Master Chef" back in February. The show was filmed outside the Camarillo Airport with the Commemorative Air Force Museum as the backdrop. It was a great experience meeting and greeting all of our veteran brothers and sisters. There were 101 veterans total from WWII, Korea, Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, Iraq, Afghanistan and, of course, Vietnam. Out of the 5-6 hours we were there, about 4 ½ of it was milling around talking, sitting, telling stories and enjoying the camaraderie. It reminded us all of the "Hurry up and wait" of the military. When they did finally get the show on the road, they lifted the hangar doors and we came marching out, with brass band and all! And our VVVC flags proudly displayed from the hangar doors!

Everyone was served 2 plates of food, one from the Blue Team and one from the Red Team. The dishes consisted of the same cut of meat, grilled and served 2 different ways, along with 2 different sides consisting of grilled zucchini and mac 'n cheese on one plate and grilled baby brussel sprouts (waiting for the recipe for these) and garlic mashed potatoes on the other. Some of us commented the only thing they were missing was a good bottle of red wine.

All of us were sworn to secrecy about the outcome. Well, maybe about the time this article hits the presses the veil of secrecy maybe lifted.

What we were told is the show was to air sometime in May. I've been told it will air on the Fox channel, then I heard no it will be on Bravo. I did search on my DirecTV and it shows up as Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup>. Our episode may be the 1<sup>st</sup> one, then again maybe not! So the veil of secrecy is still only known to us 101.

Ron Fitzgarrald

### **Joe Richardson, Scholarship Chair ... 2016 VVVC Scholarship Report**

I am proud to announce the winners of our 2016 Scholarship awards. The first place award of \$1000 goes to Caitlyn Fastenau, an outstanding student and senior at Ventura High School, looking to further her education at one of the Universities of California. The second place award of \$500 goes to Nicolle Silverstein, another excellent student currently studying at Moorpark College with plans for a career in Pharmacology.

The applicants had three choices of material to write their essays on and both of our winners chose to write about the treatment of our returning soldiers from the Vietnam era through today.

This year we contacted 29 school career counselors with the information and forms for entry. By the deadline we had received 14 applications with 13 of those meeting the entry requirements.

Additionally, this year the VVVC received money and a continuing commitment from the DAV for funding to our scholarship program. With this firm funding and bigger application numbers we will be able to help more students in the future.

**POW/MIA Chair Person's Message:**

**The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of 3 U.S. servicemen from World War II** who served aboard the USS Oklahoma and were killed in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, have been identified and will be returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

**Navy Chief Petty Officer Albert E. Hayden, 44, of Mechanicsville, Maryland,** was buried May 18 in Morganza, Maryland. **Navy Chief Storekeeper Herbert J. Hoard, 36, of DeSoto, Missouri,** will be buried May 21 in his hometown. **Navy Seaman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Dale F. Pearce, 21, of Dennis, Kansas,** will be buried May 26 in his hometown.

**The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of the following U.S. servicemen, unaccounted for since World War II,** have been identified and are being returned to their families for burial with full military honors. **Navy Motor Machinist's Mate 1<sup>st</sup> Class John E. Anderson, 24, of Wilmar, Minnesota,** will be buried May 28 in his hometown. On June 6, 1944, Anderson was in Landing Craft Tank (LCT), Mark 5, Hull Number 30, which landed on Omaha Beach, France during the invasion of Normandy. **Army Pvt. John P. Sersha, 20, of Leoneth, Minnesota,** will be buried May 28 in Eveleth, Minnesota. On Sept. 27, 1944, Sersha was assigned to Company F, 325<sup>th</sup> Glider Infantry Regiment, as part of Operation Market Garden, and was entrenched on a hill overlooking the German-controlled Kiekberg Woods near Groesbeek, Netherlands. **Army Air Forces 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Leonard R. Farron, 23, of Tacoma, Washington,** was buried May 4 in his hometown. Farron was the pilot of a P-39 aircraft with the 67<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, 347<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group, 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force, when he failed to return from a strafing mission over Tassafaronga, Guadalcanal.

(Cont. next column)

**Marine Pfc. Elmer L. Mathies, Jr., 21, of Hereford, Texas,** will be buried May 28 in his hometown. In November 1943, Mathies was assigned to Headquarters Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 8<sup>th</sup> Marines, 2nd Marine Division, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. **Pvt. Earl J. Keating, 28, of New Orleans,** will be buried May 28 in his hometown. Keating was assigned to the Anti-Tank Company, 126<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 32<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, when his unit was involved in an intense engagement with enemy forces in present-day Papua New Guinea.

**The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DDPA) announced today that the remains of 2 U.S. servicemen, missing from the Korean War,** have been identified and will be returned to their families for burial with full military honors. **Army Cpl. David J Wishon, Jr., 18, of Baltimore,** was buried May 6 in Arlington National Cemetery, near Washington, D.C. On Dec. 1, 1950, Wishon, assigned to Medical Company, 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, was declared missing in action after his unit was heavily attacked by enemy forces in the vicinity of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. **Army Sgt. Billy J. Williams, 20, of Madisonville, Texas,** was buried May 17 in Madison County, Texas. On Feb. 14, 1951, Williams was assigned to 2<sup>nd</sup> Recon Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, when his company was attacked by the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces in the vicinity of Chuam-ni, North Korea.

Ron Fitzgaarald,  
POW/MIA Chairman

**Treasurer's Message:**

At the May veteran's book club meeting we discussed "We Gotta Get Out Of This Place": The Soundtrack For The Vietnam War by Doug Bradley and Craig Werner.

This book was based on some three hundred interviews with military personnel in Vietnam at different times of the war, and the different stories that came up when remembering their favorite songs. Much more than just the songs.

Again, the discussion brought out a lot of thoughts from the veterans at the meeting.

Doug Temple

**Membership Chair Person's Message:**

Current Membership:

Life members 88

Annual members 38

Total membership 120

**A Note From The Editor:**

Please note that this issue of the Listening Post (\*June, 2016) is for June 2016, and the last issue you received (June, 2016) was for May 2016. Sorry for the confusion!

On Tuesday May 10th, after speaking at Foothill Technology High and attending the Oral Histories of San Buena Ventura Vietnam Veterans at CSUCI, Jan and I went to the Wal-Mart Neighborhood Market to pick up a few items.

As I was walking up one of the aisles, I kept hearing someone calling "Sir, Sir", I turned around to see a middle aged Vietnamese woman walking towards me.

As she got closer, she asked me if I had served in Vietnam. I responded yes, to which she then touched the VVVC logo on my shirt and said "I really miss my country".

She began to cry at that point. She told me that she left Saigon in 1975, and thanked me for fighting for her country, while giving me a really big hug.

I was so taken back by what had happened that I didn't think to have Jan take a picture of the two of us.

It really made my day.

Richard Camacho



**VIETNAM WAR  
50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
COMMEMORATION EVENT**  
May 21, 2016, 10:00 AM  
Constitution Park  
601 Carmen Drive, Camarillo

**The City of Camarillo  
Proudly Honors  
Veterans of the  
Vietnam War Era  
From 1955 to 1975**

