



Listening Post

Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, Inc.

P.O. Box 3218

Ventura, CA 93006-3218

September, 2021

Officers

Howard Trench

(805) 312-1977

Richard Camacho, Vice

President

(805) 384-9138

Joseph Richardson, Secretary

(805) 659-2387

Toni Morris, Treasurer

N/A

Ron Fitzgarrald, Public Affairs

(805) 659-2614

Board of Directors

Debora Ehrich

(805) 775-9987

Jess Echavarria

(805) 984-7476

Robert Buckley

(805) 377-0550

Joe Reyes

(805) 415-2521

Louis Morris

(805) 207-8692

Committees

Chaplain/Housing Improvements

None

POW/MIA

Ron Fitzgarrald

(805) 659-2614

Listening Post

Bob Citron

(805) 320-7767

James Ray Scholarship

Joe Richardson

(805) 659-2387

Membership

Joe Richardson

(805) 659-2387

Parades/Work Party

None

Fundraising

Manny Gonzales

(805) 988-4462

Presidents Message:

Wow, what a month! The VVVC participated in the Wings over Camarillo, at least 4 POW/MIA ceremonies and 1 Honor Guard ceremony at Ivy Lawn. Many of the new members have stepped forward to participate, which is extremely gratifying to see. As the VVVC moves forward, we will continue to serve veterans and our community through the great efforts of our members. Great job all!

Howard Trench, VVVC President

Listening Post Editor

All;

I have just accepted the position of LP Editor, and I look forward to bringing you the latest in news about VA resources, articles, updates from our officers and directors, and even some member personal stories/experiences.

As for myself, I served in the US Navy from 1970-1976, including a year in the Tonkin Gulf aboard the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk in 1972. Like anyone else, my military

(Con't on page2)

background is fairly long. But for the sake of brevity, my daily activities as an E-3 Seaman in the offshore combat zone of Vietnam included support for our executive branch of leadership (anybody remember Radar O'Reilly from Mash?), a lot of UNREP details unloading pallets of bombs and supplies from transfer helicopters and basically any sort of undesirable task dictated from anyone outranking me.

Our deployment was long, and it was extended at least 3 times. This resulted in a lot of stress within the ranks and ultimately a race riot occurred in October that crippled the ship's operations for over 24 hours. Unfortunately, I was in the chow line when it happened and ended up right in the middle of it. It's fairly well documented and if interested you will find stories both on-line and in a short Amazon Kindle e-book novel I recently wrote called *Westpac '72*. That last one will cost you 99 cents though...

Anyway, I just wanted to take a moment to introduce myself and I look forward to providing you with the latest from the VVVC. **Going forward, any entries for the LP should be sent to me directly at cshanty@outlook.com.** You can also point me to any other location where you might have posted them. This includes any personal stories/experiences from all our members; I'd like to set up a permanent column for that. See you all at the next meeting!

Bob Citron, VVVC LP Editor



VVVC Oct 2021 Membership Report

For those on this list you still owe back dues.

Annual members	31
Life Members	107
Total members	138

These member dues need to be renewed

Annual membership dues are (\$15 to renew) or \$150 Life membership (can be done in three \$50 payments)

All member dues will now renew on January 1, 2022

Sec/Membership Chair
Joe Richardson

POW/MIA REPORT August – 2021

13 Brothers-in-arms have been accounted for and/or returned home &

6 remain MIA and unaccounted for:

European & Pacific Theaters: 4

Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Richard W. Horrigan, 24, was accounted for on Aug. 19, 2021.

Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Henry D. Mitchell, 22, of Elm Springs, Arkansas, was accounted for Aug. 3, 2021.

Army Air Forces Sgt. Francis W. Wiemerslage, 20, was accounted for on Aug. 24, 2021.

Marine Corps Cpl. Andrew Pellerito, 22, was accounted for on Aug. 19, 2021.

USS Oklahoma: 7

Navy Electrician's Mate 1st Class Harvey C. Herber, 34, was accounted for on July 22, 2021.

Navy Seaman 1st Class Edward E. Talbert, 19, was accounted for on Aug. 5, 2021.

Navy Fireman 1st Class Walter S. Belt, Jr., 25, of Cleveland, Kansas, was accounted for on March 3, 2021.

Navy Steward's Mate 2nd Class Jesus F. Garcia, 21, of Agana, Guam, was accounted for on Sept. 25, 2018.

Navy Seaman 1st Class Joseph C. Rouse, 23, was accounted for on March 1, 2021.

Navy Seaman 2nd Class John G. Bock, Jr., 18, was accounted for on May 19, 2021.

*Navy Hospital Apprentice 1st Class **Keefe R. Connolly**, 19, was accounted for on Feb. 11, 2021

Total from World War II: 11

Currently there are 72,410 Americans (approximately 26,000 are assessed as possibly-recoverable) still unaccounted for from World War II

Korean War: 2

Army Sgt. **Elwood M. Truslow**, 20, of Batesville, Virginia, was accounted for June 7, 2021.

Army Sgt. 1st Class **Frank G. Vejar**, 19, of Douglas, Arizona, was accounted for April 14, 2020.

Currently there are 7,535 Americans still unaccounted for from the Korean War

Vietnam: 0

Currently there are 1,571 American servicemen and civilians still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War

Iraq Theater & Other Conflicts: 6

Operation El Dorado Canyon, 1986 MIA: 1

Capt. **Paul F. Lorence**, of San Francisco, U.S. Air Force, was lost on April 15, 1986, over Libya.

Operation Desert Storm, 1991 MIA: 2

Lt. Cmdr. **Barry T. Cooke**, of Austin, Texas, U.S. Navy, was lost on Feb. 2, 1991, in the Persian Gulf.

Lt. **Robert J. Dwyer**, of Worthington, Ohio, U.S. Navy, was lost on Feb. 5, 1991, in the Persian Gulf.

Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003-2010 MIA: 3

Mr. **Kirk Von Ackermann**, of Albuquerque, N.M., DoD contractor, was lost on Oct. 9, 2003, while working in Forward Operating Base Pacesetter, Iraq.

Mr. **Timothy E. Bell**, of Mobile, Ala., DoD contractor, was lost on April 9, 2004, while working in Baghdad, Iraq.

Mr. **Adnan al-Hilawi**, of Orlando, Fla., DoD contractor, was lost on March 3, 2007, while working in Baghdad, Iraq.

Ron Fitzgarrald, POW/MIA Chairman

Helpful Resources

Free dental work for veterans:

On **October 14, Potts Dental in Camarillo** is offering free, complimentary dental care for veterans. Services include cleanings, extractions and fillings. To make an appointment just call (805) 388-3319.

Free legal assistance:

If you are a veteran interested in becoming a US citizen, you can meet with an attorney for free to find out if you qualify for the Veteran's Naturalization Assistance Program. Attorneys will meet on October 22 from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. You will need your DD-214 and an Honorable or General Under Honorable Conditions discharge. **Call (202) 733-3337** for more info and to make an appointment.

Veteran Collaborative of Ventura County (VCVC):

New contact information:

2901 N. Ventura Road, 3rd Floor, Oxnard, CA 93036

(805) 477-5155 (main office number)

(805) 477-5418 (fax)

<https://www.ventura.org/human-services-agency/veteran-collaborative-ventura-county-2/>

- *Federal Benefits Information:* https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp
- *CalVet Benefits Information:*
https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Documents/Veteran_%20Resource_%20Book.pdf
- *CalVet Benefits Checklist:*
https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Documents/2012%20Veterans_Benefits_Checklist.pdf#search=CHECKLIST%20FOR%20BENEFITS
- *Crisis Intervention:* <https://youtu.be/tgV60laOui0> (veterans' mental health – you are not alone)

Other Notices:

1. The VA West LA location is now offering **free booster shots** of the Pfizer Covid vaccine. In order to receive it you must have completed the original 2 dose Pfizer vaccine, and it has been at least 6 weeks since your last dose. For additional information, send email to: VHAGLAPublicAffairs@va.gov or call 310-268-4900 for an appointment.
2. If you are a surviving family member of a deceased wartime veteran, you may qualify for monthly benefits under the VA Survivor Pension program. For eligibility and application steps go to: <https://www.va.gov/pension/survivors-pension/>
3. As of August 2021, the VA has expanded some educational benefits. For more information go to: <https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/post-9-11/> or call the VA educational call center at: 1-888-442-4551.

Storyboard:

Beginning with this issue of the LP, a section will be dedicated to stories/experiences of vets both within and outside of the VVVC. If you would like to submit a story/experience from your service days, send it to me directly at cschanty@outlook.com. I'll start this off, with a short note of my own, an experience aboard the USS Kitty Hawk during our deployment to Vietnam in 1972.

We were underway in the Gulf of Tonkin, conducting an UNREP (underway replenishment) activity and I had been one of the lucky ones to be assigned to this detail. I donned my flight deck gear and reported in to my duty station. There were 4 of us and our responsibility was to receive/unload pallets of equipment from the supply ship alongside via CH-53 helicopter, one of those huge twin blade monsters. We were about 6 hours into it and the next shipment was a pallet of cluster bomb fins. I didn't notice exactly what happened; it was so quick. For some reason the pallet fell to the deck and shattered into pieces. The helo quickly lifted up and banked the blades in our direction. Most of those 8 pound bomb fins flew toward us like pieces of paper. Instinctively we all hit the deck as they bounced around us, one nearly taking my head off. Think us swabbies had it easy? Scary stuff, but we all survived and went back to job at hand. Daily routine on an aircraft carrier...

Cemetery Memorial Park:

Bob Martinez, President Ronald Reagan Marine Corps League Detachment #597 (and one of our newest members) brought to our attention a movement to turn Cemetery Memorial Park in Ventura into a National Cemetery. To assist in this effort, contact him at **(805) 368-7001**.

VVVC Remembers 3rd Saturday September



11 am
Oxnard
Plaza Park



2pm,
Oxnard Family Circle



7pm
Ventura County Government Center





The table.... is round to show our everlasting concern and it is small symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner, alone, against his or her suppressors.

The tablecloth is white, symbolic of the purity of their intentions to respond to their Country's call to arms.

The single setting symbolizing the fact that members of our armed forces are missing from our ranks. They are referred to as POWs and MIAs

The single rose in the vase signifies the blood they may have shed in sacrifice to ensure the freedom of our beloved United States of America.

This rose also reminds us of the family and friends of our missing comrades who keep faith, while awaiting their return.



The yellow ribbon represents an unyielding determination for a proper accounting of our comrades who are not among us.

The slice of lemon reminds us of their bitter fate.

The salt sprinkled on the plate is to remind us of the countless fallen tears of the families as they wait.



The glass is inverted for they cannot toast with us at this time.



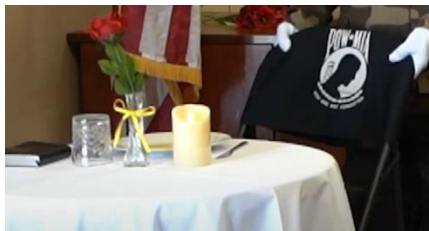
The lighted candle is reminiscent of the light of hope which lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors and to the open arms of a grateful nation.



The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain us and those lost from our country, founded as one nation under God.



The chair it is empty and will remain empty until their return.





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

This letter is intended to be used to introduce us, the Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, and to assist us in our effort to solicit subscription/donations to our organization in the form of advertising in our monthly newsletter.

First the legal issues of proper identification.

- IRS, 501(c)(19) Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County Inc. id#93-0966053

State of California Franchise Tax Board

- 501(c)(19) Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, tax exemption, Revenue and taxation Section 23701f

Our organization represents all veterans (not just Vietnam Veterans) in the 805.

Our organizations primary function is to act as a 'service' group providing all manner of assistance to our veteran population. We are active in the education of our youth in our local schools by speaking at the schools to the students. We support and provide college scholarships every year. We have been the organization responsible for bringing the 'Traveling Wall' Vietnam Memorial to Ventura six times in the last 30 years and are planning on doing so again in 2018. We provide full military honor and color guards in parades and at funerals. We work closely with literally hundreds of other organizations and our elected officials both State and Federal in the county to see veterans' needs are met.

Our group runs around 130 strong, most living in Ventura, but some as far away as Australia and Canada. We are asking for donations to our cause, by selling advertising space in our newsletter.

We plan on starting with a full page with fees broke down in the following manner:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|
| • Business Card | \$10/mo. | \$100/yr |
| • ¼ page | \$15/mo | \$150/yr |
| • ½ page | \$25/mo | \$200/yr |
| • Full page | \$30 each | |

You consideration of donating to our causes, gaining some advertising in the deal, is fully deductible by virtue of our legally acquired non-profit status as a veterans service organization.

We look forward to establishing a relationship beneficial to us both.

Larry Seguin, fund raising chair

Joe Richardson, secretary - Laurie Richardson VVVC Post editor