



Listening Post

Vietnam Veterans of Ventura County, Inc.

P.O. Box 3218

Ventura, CA 93006-3218

February, 2025

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Listening Post

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Membership

Joe Richardson

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President's Message:

VVVC – Jan 2025 Membership Report

Annual Members: 33
Life Members: 109
Total Members: 142

VP/Membership Chair **Joe Richardson**

All annual members that have not yet paid, your 2025 dues should be sent in asap. \$15 for renewal and \$20 for new \$150 for life

Sick Call...

Please continue to think about and say a prayer for our brothers and sisters:

Laurie Richardson, had right shoulder revision
Barry Jenkins (myeloma)
Howard Tench thyroid issues
Ron Fitzgarrald upcoming knee replacement

If you know of anyone we should be aware of please let me know
Joe

POW/MIA REPORT Jan '25 – Feb '25



Currently there are **71,961** Americans (approximately 26,000 are assessed as possibly-recoverable) still unaccounted for from World War II

Currently there are **7,446** Americans still unaccounted for from the Korean War.

Currently there are **1,575** American servicemen and civilians still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War

And still **6** American servicemen in the Iraq Theater & Other Conflicts

13 Brothers-in-arms have been accounted for and/or returned home & 6 remain MIA and unaccounted for

European & Pacific Theaters: 6

U.S. Army Air Forces Pvt. **Donald E. Bays**, 21, was accounted for on Dec. 20, 2024. On Dec. 7th, 1944, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese aircraft expanded to Hickam Field, targeting U.S. aircrafts and ships, barracks, supply buildings, and the base chapel. The attack lasted four hours. Bays was reportedly killed during this time. This is an initial release. The complete accounting of Bays' case will be published once the family receives their full briefing.

U.S. Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. **Felix J. Shostak**, 24, of Proctor, Vermont, was accounted for Sept. 19, 2023. On Aug 18, Shostak was a crewmember onboard a B-24H "Liberator," when it was struck by anti-aircraft fire after a bombing raid on a German position near Boussicourt, France. He will be buried in Proctor, Vermont in June 2025.

U.S. Army Air Forces Capt. **Arthur M. Lingo**, 24, was accounted for Jan. 10, 2025. During a bomber escort mission to Sorau, Germany, the P-51 Mustang fighter he piloted was shot down by enemy aircraft and crashed near Miesterhorst, Germany. He was reported missing in action on April 11, 1944, and his remains were not identified after the war. The Army issued a presumptive finding of death for Lingo for Oct. 18, 1945. The complete accounting of Lingo's case will be published once the family receives their full briefing.

U.S. Army Pvt. **Charles W. Smalley**, 19, was accounted for Jan. 14, 2025. On August 25, Smalley's unit's objective was to repel German forces from a mountain between Marsanne and the village of La Coucourde. An eyewitness reported that

Smalley was killed by machine gun fire during the first ten minutes of the attack. However, the War Department listed Smalley as missing in action as of Aug. 25, 1944. The complete accounting of Smalley's case will be published once the family receives their full briefing.

* U.S. Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. **Justice J. Buttala**, 24, was accounted for on Jan. 14, 2025. On April 24, during a combat mission to Japan, the aircraft was shot down over Tachikawa, on the western outskirts of Tokyo. Buttala survived the crash but was held as a **POW**. He perished in the Tokyo Military Prison during a fire on May 26, 1945. The complete accounting of Buttala's case will be published once the family receives their full briefing.

Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. **Gilbert A. Rauh**, 28, of Thornwood, New York, was accounted for on August 23, 2024. His family recently received their full briefing on his identification, therefore, additional details on his identification can be shared. He will be buried in Pleasantville, New York in May 2025.

Korean War: 6

U.S. Army Pfc. **Arthur A. Clifton**, 17, of Los Lunas, New Mexico, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for Aug. 19, 2024. His name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the Punchbowl, along with the others who are still missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for. He will be buried in San Antonio, Texas, in January 2025.

U.S. Army Sgt. **DeLoren D. Dage**, 23, was accounted for Jan. 15, 2025. Between November 27 and December 1, his company engaged with the Chinese People's Volunteer Army on the Eastern side of the Chosen Reservoir in North Korea, sustaining heavy casualties, including Dage. He was declared missing in action on Dec. 2, 1951. The complete accounting of Dage's case will be published once the family receives their full briefing.

* U.S. Army Sgt. **David Eugene Hardy**, 20, of Cascade, Virginia, who died while a **POW**, was accounted for Sept. 27, 2024. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 1, 1950. In 1953, a POW from Sgt. Hardy's unit was returned during Operation Big Switch, and reported that Hardy died on Feb. 28, 1951, while a prisoner at POW Camp #5. He will be buried in Eden, North Carolina, in March 2025.

U.S. Army Cpl. **Frederick Carrino**, 18, of Berkeley, Missouri, missing during the Korean War, was accounted for Oct. 10, 2024. He was assigned to B Battery, 57th Field Artillery Battalion, 7th Infantry Division, in the Korean theater. A presumptive finding of death was issued on Dec. 31, 1953. He will be buried in Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, on a date yet to be determined.

U.S. Army Sgt. **James B. Brock**, 20, was accounted for Jan. 29, 2025. He was reported **MIA** after his unit was forced to retreat from Hagaru-ri, North Korea, after the Battle of Chosin Reservoir. The complete accounting of Brock's case will be published once the family receives their full briefing.

** U.S. Army Sgt. **Orace J. Mestas**, 22, was accounted for Jan. 31, 2025. In April 1951, Mestas was a member of Company I, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action near Chip'o-ri, North Korea after his unit's position was attacked on April 25. The U.S. Army determined him to be nonrecoverable on Jan. 16, 1956. The complete accounting of Mestas's case will be published once the family receives their full briefing.

Vietnam: 1

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. **Donald W. Downing**, 33, was accounted for Dec. 20, 2024. On Sept. 5, he was piloting an F-4C Phantom II aircraft as the second in a flight of two aircraft conducting a nighttime armed reconnaissance mission over Vietnam when his aircraft was shot down. On April 28, 1978, the Air Force reported Capt. Downing as Killed in Action. He was later posthumously promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Downing's funeral will be held in Arlington National Cemetery on a date yet to be determined.

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.

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To respect the next-of-kin, individuals are only displayed as "Accounted For" in the grids and case profiles when (1) DPAA has made the identification, and (2) the next-of-kin has been notified.

Annual Members

2025 Dues must be sent/payed prior to MAR meeting

News from Feb meeting:

- Sutton statue cost now paid in full
- \$5000 Scholarship applications for 2025 now out to Ventura County H.S., J.C., & Univ.
- Board members were provided 2019 Bylaws to review and prepare to work on updating

New:

- Oxnard will be hosting **The Wall** at Plaza Park week before Memorial Day
- Memorial Day at Plaza Park will feature Marines that were involved with the evacuation of Saigon
- Richard has started scheduling this years' Vietnam Experiences talks at the local schools
- May 5th this year will be the 40th Anniversary of the VVVC. Talks of a gathering in the works
- Richard will be receiving a proclamation for his 40 years' service as an officer with VVVC, at the County Government Center Board of Supervisors meeting, Mar. 11 at 9am please attend in our colors
- Feb 25 @ 5:30pm Veterans and First Responders will be celebrated at Royal High School, Simi
- VVVC will be the lead-off group for the Ojai July 4th Parade, need volunteers for the color guard
- George Sandival would like a color guard at UCCI for his Vietnam Presentations Mar 29 and April 30 please contact Ron Fitzgarrald if you want to be involved
- The VVVC will be donating \$500 to the Oxnard Film Society in support of George
- Three past events not now being done were discussed. Ave of Flags at Ivy Lawn Cemetery, Cemetery Park situation still unresolved, Wreaths Across America (Boy Scouts every year nationwide)
- Veteran Collaborative upcoming event:
 1. Veterans Job Fair Mar 19 10a-2p in the Ventura College cafeteria
- Debora shared this important link about claims: <https://www.va.gov/ogc/accreditation.asp>
- Call to Arms: many Ventura Veterans are in Congressman Salud Cabajals' Dist. We need people to contact the Congressman and ask that he get involved and support the Vet Center and CBOC Clinic that is NOW in HIS district along with his duties to Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo