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AGENT ORANGE TOWN HALL MEETING

By Ken Holybee



(L-R) Richard Jones, Mokie Porter, Stephanie Holybee, Sonja Holybee, Ken Holybee and Sandie Wilson

October 16, 2010 Santa Rosa Chapter 223 held a town hall meeting to discuss the affects of Agent Orange and other Dioxins on the children of Vietnam Veterans. We learned a lot about putting on the meetings and who to invite to help us with our cause. Dr. Ginger Schechter, Santa Rosa VA Clinic, said we need to get this information to the interns and medical



Mokie Porter, VVA National Staff Coordinator, and Richard Jones, VVA Chapter 223 President, on the dais at the Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting held in Santa Rosa, California.

staff so they know what they are looking at in not only the Veterans but our children. With our panel we were able to give information that most in attendance were unaware of. Sandie Wilson, VVA Board member, was a nurse in and after Vietnam. She spoke of the birth defects she witnessed as a pediatric nurse at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky after her return from Vietnam. Most of these children were the children of soldiers that had returned from service in Vietnam. The wives of the service members always thought the problems were from something they had done to have such deformed or stillborn children. She also speaks of the "missing generation" from the number of miscarriages and still born from the Veterans and their spouses after returning. The numbers we are just now getting are from the Veterans that were discharged when they returned and tried to put the war behind them. There was no "baby boom" after Vietnam, as after WWII, but there were a high number of still born, spontaneous abortions, miscarriages, and children dying of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) or other abnormalities that no one knew what caused them. When these problems developed there was no real way to track the defects or deaths to a cause. Only university medical centers would be interested in the reason for

death or the resulting defects. Little was known about the connection between chemical exposures and child development at that time since there was never any large number of these problems in any given area. The emphasis was on the exposure to the woman during pregnancy with no direct connection to the exposure to the father before conception. At this time the Institute of Medicine still says there is no proof of paternal exposure being the cause of defects in children.

Also present was Mokie Porter, VVA Communications Department. Mokie spoke of the project, "Faces of Agent Orange," she started after the report from the Ford Foundation reported that all our Veterans children with problems related to Agent Orange were being taken care of by our government. "Faces" is a series of people's stories of the illnesses and problems their children and grandchildren are experiencing that are out of the normal range of what should be expected in our families. The first town hall forum was at our national convention in 2009 and hosted by the Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America (AVVA). Since the first meeting, we have started putting on more around the country as a way to educate the communities and our elected officials about the hidden and secretive problems we feel are attributed to our time in service. I spoke briefly about the problems my children are having that have never shown up in either Sonja's side of the family nor mine. I told of my younger daughter having heart problems, extra bones in her feet and toes on her hands in the place of thumbs, my youngest child, a son, being sterile and minor problems with his feet and ankles as well as all of my children having some learning disabilities. Stephanie, my oldest daughter spoke about the problems she is experiencing. Here are some of her comments:

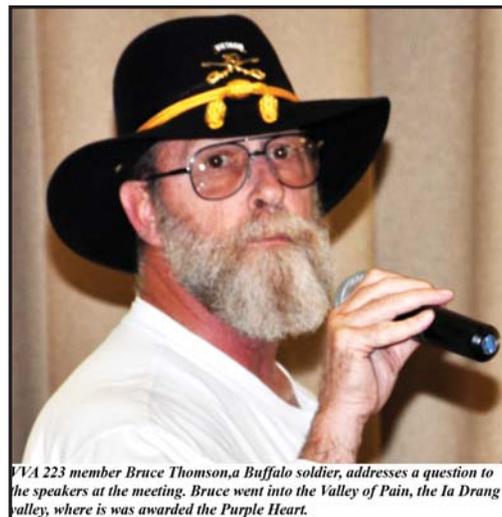
"My name is Stephanie Holybee and I am 36, I am the oldest child of Ken and Sonja Holybee, I was born less than two years after my Dad came home from Vietnam. At the time of my birth and for the first year of my life, mom and dad had to take me to the hospital numerous times for Asthma.

When I started school, I was diagnosed with dyslexia and could not read or do math, so I spent until 12th grade in special Ed or below average classes, because of this problem.

The first year I noticed that I had a problem with something else I was 20 and living in Illinois going to college. At that time, I could not pick up my feet to walk or to get my feet in my car and I also could not lay my hands flat on the table. Through numerous tests, I was diagnosis with scleroderma and Reynaud's.



The Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting was organized and presented by the Holybee family, represented by Sonja, Ken and Stephanie Holybee. Stephanie was the keynote speaker, along with Sandie Wilson and Mokie Porter. VVA Chapter 223 and its members supported the event.



VVA 223 member Bruce Thomson, a Buffalo soldier, addresses a question to the speakers at the meeting. Bruce went into the Valley of Pain, the Ia Drang valley, where is was awarded the Purple Heart.

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of VVA, the State Council or its members.

Who Are The Vietnam Veterans Of America?
 Founded in 1978, Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. is the only national Vietnam veterans organization congressionally chartered and exclusively dedicated to Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA is organized as a not-for-profit corporation and is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

VVA'S FOUNDING PRINCIPLE
 "Never again shall one generation of veterans abandon another."

PURPOSE
 The purpose of Vietnam Veterans of America's national organization, the state councils, and chapters is:

To help foster, encourage, and promote the improvement of the condition of the Vietnam veteran.

To promote physical and cultural improvement, growth and development, self-respect, self-confidence, and usefulness of Vietnam-era veterans and others.

To eliminate discrimination suffered by Vietnam veterans and to develop channels of communications which will assist Vietnam veterans to maximize self-realization and enrichment of their lives and enhance life-fulfillment.

To study, on a non-partisan basis, proposed legislation, rules, or regulations introduced in any federal, state, or local legislative or administrative body which may affect the social, economic, educational, or physical welfare of the Vietnam-era veteran or others; and to develop public-policy proposals designed to improve the quality of life of the Vietnam-era veteran and others especially in the areas of employment, education, training, and health.

To conduct and publish research, on a non-partisan basis, pertaining to the relationship between Vietnam-era veterans and the American society, the Vietnam War experience, the role of the United States in securing peaceful co-existence for the world community, and other matters which affect the social, economic, educational, or physical welfare of the Vietnam-era veteran or others.

To assist disabled and needy war veterans including, but not limited to, Vietnam veterans and their dependents, and the widows and orphans of deceased veterans.

FUNDING
 Vietnam Veterans of America relies totally on private contributions for its revenue. VVA does not receive any funding from federal, state, or local governments.



At approximately 25 I was diagnosis with hyperthyroidism; I had a benign tumor the size of a nickel and a week or two later when I went to get the medicine to kill it, radioactive iodine, it was the size of a silver dollar.

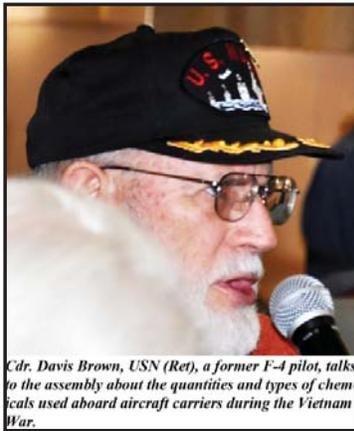
My Reynaud's and scleroderma continue to be a major part of my life, because of the muscle deterioration and the cold weather making my hands not work properly and they turn purple, red and then white with the skin cracking and peeling off and making cuts (worse in cold weather than warm)."

As a parent, I am very proud of Stephanie for her to speak, for the first time, in a public format and expose her life like this.

As with many of our children her concern are the costs of health care and what happens when she can no longer work. My concern, as a parent, is also what happens when she can no longer take care of herself, will I be able to assist, or what will our health issues be and what will they allow us to do as parents?

We welcomed the staff members from Congressman Mike Winter 2011 page two

Thompson and Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey's offices. We hope to work closely with them in getting the government to recognize these problems. We are working at the national level to present legislation to create a federal registry in the VA to account for and assist us in treatment and diagno-



Cdr. Davis Brown, USN (Ret), a former F-4 pilot, talks to the assembly about the quantities and types of chemicals used aboard aircraft carriers during the Vietnam War.

ses of these problems. We need research that would help in isolating and treating these illnesses and defects. What we would like from our government is not compensation



California State Council President Steve Mackey, VVA Chapter 47, listens intently as Stephanie Holybee shares the facts of multitude of birth defects that she has survived because of Agent Orange tainted DNA passed down from her father.

to us, or a lawsuit to make a payment to our children, but something that can assist not only our children, but also the children of all service members, and all Americans. In short we would like to introduce legislation to require the Department of Veterans Affairs in concert with the Departments of Defense and Health and Human Services to conduct a National ongoing outreach and education effort to inform Veterans and their Families about the plausible association between military service and disabilities and health conditions of their offspring. To fund research in conjunction with university medical centers and the Veterans Administration to review scientific research beyond herbicides in seeking association between certain chemicals and the maladies that have afflicted veterans and their offspring.

(Photos by Brooke McKusick - VVA 223)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

First let me say Happy New Year to everyone. I hope everybody had a good Christmas and Santa Claus brought you everything you wanted.

As some of you may have heard, VVA National has assembled a VVA Future Task Force to study where Vietnam Veterans of America should be in 10-20 years. Who will be VVA's legacy? Will VVA be a last man/woman standing organization? When the last man/woman leaves, will he/she turn out the lights to VVA? Will we re-write VVA's constitution so that other Veterans are allowed into the organization so we keep VVA alive and active after all the Vietnam Veterans are gone? Will Associates of Viet-

nam Veterans of America become our legacy?

The Task Force will be gathering information from VVA members to take back to the National BOD. During the 2011 convention in Reno, NV in August there will be a discussion on what VVA members want. There will be no vote at this convention, just discussion on what we think the future of VVA should be.

When this discussion comes up, let's not forget Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America. AVVA began as a group of members within Vietnam Veterans of America. In 1999, as the scope of activities and the number of members grew, the Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc was established. AVVA now functions as an independent membership and service organization. AVVA is a 501 c 4 organization so they can lobby Congress just as VVA does. They will continue with all the hard work that VVA has done over the last 32 years. AVVA has stood behind us all these years so I think we should be standing behind them as the organization to continue our legacy and to continue the work of VVA to see that all generations of veterans receive the treatment they deserve. These are my thoughts, I am sure we all have thoughts on this matter.

CSC Treasurer Barry Schloffel is a member of the Task Force. Make sure you talk to Barry and let him know your view on which organization should continue the legacy of VVA. This is a very important issue, make sure you have an input. Your voice does count!

Upcoming events:

- January 21-22 Council of State President's Meeting Redwood City CA.
- March 30, 9 am-5 pm VVA-CSC 2nd Annual Capitol Legislative Day
- June 11 Region 8/9 Conference Reno NV.
- August 15-20 VVA National Convention Silver Legacy Reno NV.

Thank you all for your continued membership. CA has 4 chapters in the top chapters listing of VVA National. Chapters 391, 47, 982 and 223 are holding their numbers each month. As of December 2010, CA shows 4,158 VVA members, 2nd in this great nation of ours.

Keep up the good work.

Remember the CSC Officers and BOD's are here for you. If you need to contact any of us, please do not hesitate. We have a lot to offer and there is something that I am sure is of importance to each one of you.

Steve

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

By Pete Conaty and Dana Nichol

WE WERE SUCCESSFUL!

Governor Schwarzenegger And State Legislature Approve Budget Increase For Operation Welcome Home

On October 8, Governor Schwarzenegger signed the State Budget, Senate Bill 870, an \$87.5 billion general fund spending plan for 2010-11. This budget was California's latest budget in 30 years; 100 days had passed since a spending plan should have been in place. The state faced an estimated \$19.1 billion deficit. Legislative leaders from both parties and the Governor were deadlocked as budget negotiations dragged on. The state was preparing to issue IOUs to state contractors and the economy was showing no signs of rebounding. The final budget deal included no new taxes or fees. As a result many programs were cut or even eliminated. The one bright spot in an otherwise bleak budget compromise was that a \$5 million increase was approved for the Operation Welcome Home initiative's subvention augmentation for the County Veterans Service Officers (CVSO's). This brings the total money allocated (subvention) to the CVSO's via the state budget up to \$7.6 million.

8955-101-0001—For local assistance, Department of Veterans Affairs, for contribution to counties toward compensation and expenses of county veterans services offices, to be expended in accordance with Section 972 and following of the Military and Veterans Code.....

.....\$7,600,000

California's veterans had been advocating for an increase in the subvention to CVSO's for many years. This money allows California counties to maintain a County Veterans Service Office to assist local veterans file for and obtain their veterans benefits. For 13 years the veterans community and the CVSO's association have advocated for full funding, but were not able to obtain more than \$2.6 million.

In February the Governor announced his Operation Welcome Home (OWH) initiative which sought to help the 30,000 veterans discharged each year in this state. OWH seeks to connect these young veterans with benefits, education assistance, and employment help. The CVSO's are at the forefront of connecting veterans and their families with these benefits.

However, in addition to only receiving half of what the CVSO's were authorized in 1997, the counties were making cutbacks due to the economy. CVSO offices were losing positions and county funding. The governor realized that the already impacted CVSO's would be overwhelmed by the flood of new veterans steered to them by OWH. Therefore, in the Governor's May Budget Revision, he increased the subvention to the CVSO's to the full \$11 million authorized by SB 419. The Assembly accepted this proposal in its budget and the Senate did not. It went to a conference committee to work out the difference and they decided to cut the \$8.4 million increase to about \$1 million. My office, in conjunction with the California State Council and other statewide veterans groups, went on an all out offensive to gather popular support from veterans organizations, County Boards of Supervisors, individual veterans, and individual legislators. Nineteen County Boards of Supervisors sent letters of support. Seventy-five legislators signed onto a letter requesting the full amount be put back in the budget. We followed the lead of the Governor's office and the Department of Veterans Affairs who were in strong support of the full funding all the way. Further support was built via a Capitol press conference with all major veterans organizations participating and the enlistment of four Republican members on the Joint Budget Conference Committee who requested that the committee re-open the issue.

As a result, with the help and support of so many, funding was increased for the CVSO's from \$2.6 million to \$7.6 million. In this fund is \$600,000 which is available to VSO's and others to apply for competitive grants to help veterans. The CDVA will be notifying everyone when the application process starts.

Since the CVSO's subvention is subject to yearly approval in the state budget process it is important to constantly educate the Administration and the Legislature on the importance of what CVSO's do for veterans. In 2011, Jerry Brown will become governor and 28 new state legislators will assume office. One of the Council's legislative goals in 2011 and beyond will be to convince the Administration and the Legislature to maintain the current subvention level and if possible get it increased to the full \$11 million authorized in the Military and Veterans Code. Also, the possibility of having the subvention cut is very real as it has happened twice in the last 4 years. The Legislature sought to reduce subvention by 10% as part of an across the board cut on government services.

The Council is currently developing a legislative platform for 2011. The platform will lay out which issues the VVA-CSC will actively pursue via sponsored legislation and also which issues the Council would support should a legislator want to run with it. The platform also serves as a way to inform and educate policy makers and the public about what things are important to California's veterans and their families.

VVA-CSC's 2nd Annual Capitol Legislative Day will be on March 30th, 2011 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. This will be similar to last year's inaugural event. This is also Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day and there may be a ceremony with the new governor.

MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Jerry Yamamoto, CSC Minorities Affairs Committee (MAC) Chair, also National VVA MAC Chair, will be making a presentation at the Council of State Council President's (CSCP) Annual Winter meeting in Redwood City in January 2011 on the topic of minority vet recruit-

ment using the Minority Affairs Committee's recruitment powerpoint program. The presidents will be asked to make an appointment of a minority affairs representative as point of contact for each state with the National MAC. California chapter presidents have already been requested to appoint a chapter minority affairs contact person with the state MAC.

Lucretia McClenney, Director of the VA Center For Minority Veterans, has agreed to speak at the National Minority Affairs Committee Meeting at the VVA January 2011 National Board of Directors meeting.

Feedback from minority veterans was reported in the 2009 VA Veterans Health Administration hospital "report card". "The report also found minority Veterans are generally less satisfied with inpatient and outpatient care than other Veterans. In addition to targeting outreach efforts to these Veterans, a minority Veteran program coordinator has been placed in every medical center."

- Feedback from minority vets reported in 2009 VA VHA hospital "report card". "The report also found minority Veterans are generally less satisfied with inpatient and outpatient care than other Veterans. In addition to targeting outreach efforts to these Veterans, a minority Veteran program coordinator has been placed in every medical center."

- MOU was recently signed on October 1, 2010 between the VA and the Indian Health Services to establish coordination, collaboration and resource sharing between the two agencies. It will help both agencies improve the health status of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Veterans. The IHS-VA MOU outlines a new plan for enhanced coordination, collaboration, and resource-sharing that will draw on the strengths and expertise of the two agencies. This will be accomplished by increasing available services, improving the delivery of care by sharing programs, developing new models of care using the latest technologies, providing culturally competent care for beneficiaries, and increasing the quality of care through training and workforce development. Emphasizes the necessity and importance of tribal consultation for local adaptation to meet needs of individual tribes, villages, islands, and communities, as well as local VA, HIS, Tribal, and Urban Indian health programs. The MOU can be viewed at: <http://www.ihs.gov/announcements/documents/3-OD-11-0006.pdf>.

- Making presentation at CSCP annual winter meeting in redwood city, CA on minority vet recruitment using Mac power point program and requesting appointment of a representative as point of contact for each state w/ MAC.

CHAPTER 53

Chapter 53 was extremely busy during the months of November and December 2010. The chapter participated in a number of community programs supporting veterans and the current military. The chapter president attended the US Vets Villages @ Cabrillo "Honoring Those Who Serve" Luncheon in Long Beach. Its members volunteered as workers at the Kenny Nickelson Memorial Foundation Education and Job Fair Care Day in Los Angeles. Chapter members attended the VVA Chapter 1024 Holiday Party for Vets at Long Beach VA Hospital. The chapter president participated as a panelist on 53rd District Congresswoman Jane Harman's Military Selection Interview Panel to select candidates for her nomination to attend a military academy. As members of the Patriot Guard Riders, chapter members continued to perform funeral escort duties for the remains of those who have recently been killed in the current wars and veterans who have recently died.

Chapter 53 sent a monetary donation to the Navy League Los Angeles for building a structure to house the replica of the Battleship USS Nevada and restore it at the Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station. Chapter monetary donations were sent to 4 local high school JROTC detachments at Narbonne High School (Harbor City), North Torrance High School, Hawthorne High School and Redondo Beach Union High School and the Snowball Express.

The chapter gathered and donated toys and a monetary donation to the Beach Cities Toy Drive and toys to the Marine Corps Reserve Toys For Tots Program in December. The Chapter donated and participated in the VVA Chapter 47 Bowl For Breath.

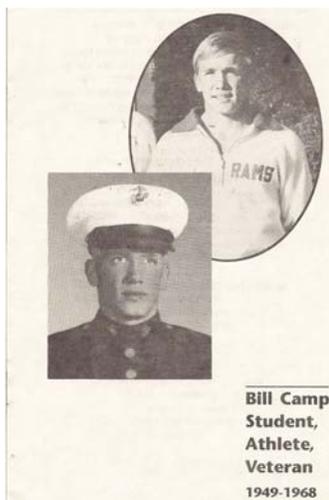
The chapter president contacted California State Council President Mackey to discuss and set up the California

State Council Minority Affairs Committee (MAC) Point of Contact Program with each chapter appointing a minority committee chair to coordinate with the State MAC. The chapter president also communicated with California DVA Assistant Secretary for American Indians Affairs Pete Molina concerning the dates and locations of 2011 national American Indian conferences and conventions.

Chapter 53 has begun promoting its 2011 High School Scholarship Essay Program at twenty five local high schools. Senior students whose scholarship essays are selected for their excellence will be awarded a \$1,000 scholarship with a maximum possible four essays selected.

CHAPTER 933

Fresno Chapter 933 has made a name change, effective Dec. 1, 2010. We will remain Fresno Chapter 933 for legal reasons, such as dealing with VVA National, CSC and the various governmental agencies affecting our not-for-profit status, etc., but will hereafter be informally known as Vietnam Veterans of America LcPl William Gordon



Camp Memorial Chapter 933.

William Gordon Camp was KIA in Vietnam. His mother has been an AVVA member with Fresno's VVA chapter since the time it was formed first as Chapter 247...and now as Chapter 933. She is an avid support of the Chapter and attends the Moving Wall displays wherever and whenever they occur in Central California.

Marine LcPl William Gordon Camp, aka: Billie, was born in Fresno on January 14th, 1949, and attended both Central High and Bullard High Schools where he excelled in the classroom and running cross-country. Billie was recruited to run cross country at Fresno City College and excelled on the race course as well as being an inspirational leader to his teammates. Billie enlisted in the Marine Corps and was subsequently assigned to the 1st Platoon, M Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines in Quang Nam Province, Republic of South Vietnam. On November 6th, 1968, Billie was walking point in a company-sized deployment from Hill 55, when his company was ambushed by Viet Cong soldiers hidden in the jungle. Under intense small arms fire, Billie moved forward towards the ambush and was killed by a small arms bullet in the chest. His loss was significant to the company, since he was not only a brave and capable Marine, but he was also a leader and mentor to others.

Billie's legacy lives on through a monument erected at the Fresno City College quad area by his Cross country Coach and his teammates. His legacy will also live on as the namesake of our Chapter.

CHAPTER 47

LOOKING BACK THIRTY YEARS

By Pat Kelly

Thirty years ago a group of Vietnam Vets from Riverside meet another group of Vietnam Vets from Anaheim, and this was the start of Chapter 47. The Anaheim group was VVA Chapter 19. The Riverside group came from the

Riverside Vietnam Veterans Outreach Center. For most of us this was the first time we had met other Vietnam Vets that weren't from our area. We quickly bonded finding we were able to talk, and not worry about being judged by people we didn't know.

No one knew that within a year the Riverside group would



become Chapter 47, and the Anaheim group would be gone. The Chapter was not very stable in the first months we were together. Many still suffering, and dealing with PTSD, and other problems from their service in Viet Nam. From this first group we added more members, and lost some members, but from this unsettling beginning came the Chapter we have today.

In the beginning we passed the hat to put out a newsletter, because we had no money. We were not smart enough to know that we couldn't do things as unorganized as we were, so we managed to do the things we were told we couldn't do. We put on a parade. We did a Thanksgiving Day party for the people who didn't have the money for a Thanksgiving Dinner, and feed over 200 people. We gave away hundreds of toys at Christmas to needy children.

We went on to bring public awareness on Vietnam Veterans issues of Agent Orange, POW/MIAs, and PTSD. Many of these earlier members have moved on, moved away, or passed away. Some just come to meetings every once in a while. As Chapter 47 reaches its thirtieth year I hope that these early members will return and help celebrate what a great Chapter they help create.

For other VVA Chapters I hope you remember your Chapter's history, and celebrate all that your Chapters have done.

CHAPTER 702

VVA CHAPTER 702 MAKES POSSIBLE HEALING THE WOUNDED HEART WORKSHOPS

A new approach to treating PTSD

In March and April of this year the first "Healing the Wounded Heart Workshop" was held at the Yountville Veterans Home. This is a new heart centered approach to begin healing the lives of veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. This eight week course was developed over a thirty year counseling career by Allen Rolland PhD who also happens to be a former Navy Fighter Pilot. Allen, along with Sal Ueda, a VA Readjustment Counselor, conducted the once a week two hour sessions with lots of home work for six Vietnam era veterans that had been diagnosed with PTSD. The results were excellent. In evaluations at the completion of the workshop each veteran agreed that this was the most helpful treatment they had ever experienced and that they were now in a place of another choice in their quest for healing. Several of the participants have been in prior treatments for twenty or more years. This was truly a transformation and breakthrough for these veterans.

With these results Allen and Sal wanted to conduct another workshop. There were enough veterans already identified from Iraq, Afghanistan and Vietnam to fill the next workshop. Unfortunately there was no VA funding or other state or local government funding available for additional workshops.

As fate would have it there were two members of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 702 in the first workshop. When these veterans learned of the funding problem, they presented the information at the next Chapter 702 meeting. The chapter decided to make funding these workshops their project. Over the next few weeks the chapter raised all the money to fund the second workshop. The second workshop was held at the Yountville Veterans Home from August to October this year. The results were just as excellent for the second group of veterans.

The third workshop will be completed on December 16th. All reports are that the veterans are having the same transformational experience. A fourth workshop is scheduled to begin in January 2011. Again all these workshops have been and will be funded through the efforts of Chapter 702 a proud Veterans Service Organization that wants to make a difference for all veterans from all wars.

If you would like to become involved in supporting this project of veterans helping veterans or know a veteran that might benefit from attending a workshop please call VVA Chapter member Almon Bundy at 707-944-2431

CHAPTER 391

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans art exhibit planned

The Tuolumne County Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 391 is planning an art exhibit to coincide with The Traveling Wall Veterans Tribute which will be at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds from March 23-27 in celebration of Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day which is March 30.

"Our primary goal is to seek out our fellow Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans who are doing art in any medium," says Frank Smart, coordinator of the art exhibition. "We want to find out how many artists in Tuolumne and Calaveras counties are also veterans of this period of American history.

While the Traveling Wall is at the Fairgrounds, George Eldridge, chair of the event, expects a minimum of 10,000 visitors to see this tribute to our fallen veterans. "We know it will be a solemn experience for many people," Smart added. "We thought an art show would be a nice compliment to this event. It's a way to honor the living while we pay respects to those who died in service to their country."

To achieve this art exhibit, Chapter 391 wants to reach out to those veterans who are creating art in these two counties. "We don't know how many veterans may be doing artwork in our region. Whether you are a professional or hobbyist artist, we want to hear from you as soon as possible," says Smart. The goal is to contact as many of these artists as possible to see if there is enough interest and potential artistic material for the exhibit. Give us a chance to find out if you'd like to participate in this art exhibit," added Smart. The hope is that enough veterans will be interested and offer enough material in order for the art exhibit to be successful."

Any Vietnam or Vietnam-era veteran who is interested in participating in the Welcome Home Art Exhibit is urged to contact Frank Smart immediately by e-mail (fsmart@rocketmail.com) or by phone at 532-0439.

CA AVVA

Happy New Year to you all.

Our hope for 2011 is a prosperous one for our veterans and their families in the forms of continuing and enhanced benefits for all. Besides a genuine hope for good health, we also hope that needed awareness to Agent Orange for our veterans and the effects of Agent Orange on our children and grandchildren is brought to the fore front this year.

As I have said many times, this is not a matter of "when it happens to me, I will pay attention". It can and may be happening to you. Have you considered holding an Agent Orange Town Hall Meeting in your area?

As years past and years to come, we can promise you that CA Associates will be beside you in every endeavor that you choose. Our support is in our hearts and as the VVA motto states that you shall never abandon another veteran - we will never abandon you.

Well, I guess all of our "pestering" paid off. When the membership roster is sent, I always go right to the CA AVVA membership, and believe it or not CA AVVA is now # 1 in membership with 674 members. We have now gone ahead of New York by 2, yes 2, members. Thank you all so much.

At the October meeting, I went home with 2 applications from VVA members. Now that's a nice coincidence.

During the October CSC meeting, AVVA held a Sec-

ondary PTSD tier. This tier has been requested by many AVVA members. Nina Schloffel, CA AVVA Secretary did a great job in planning this tier. Not only did AVVA attend but we also had VVA members. Everyone had a chance to talk and we felt that this tier was one that all benefitted from. Hopefully, we will be able to continue with this each CSC meeting.

As always "Welcome Home & Together Always"

Elayne, Chelli, Nina & Carol

GOV. PRESENTED MOMENTO

California's Veterans Leaders Present Governor Schwarzenegger with Farewell Memento

Sacramento: Leaders of major veterans groups from across California presented outgoing Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger with a bronze and oak sculpture. The sculpture was given as a memento signifying the appreciation California's veterans have for the Governor's exemplary dedication and support of veterans and our U.S. military.

Thirteen statewide representatives from Veterans Service Organizations were on hand to present the memento to the Governor. The following groups were represented:

American Legion, Dept. of CA; AMVETS, Dept. of CA; CA Association of County Veterans Service Officers; CA State Commanders Veterans Council; Military Order of the Purple Heart, Dept. of CA; Reserve Officers Association, Dept. of CA; Veterans of Foreign Wars, Dept. of CA; and the Vietnam Veterans of America, CA State Council.

The sculpture was created by Rolf Kriken of Nordhammer Art Foundry of Kelseyville, California. Kriken is an Army veteran who has provided many pieces of bronze art work for veterans memorials, most notably the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial at the State Capitol. The inscription below the sculpture reads:

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

For Service Above And Beyond the call of duty on behalf of California's Veterans and our Military Forces
This presentation was organized by Ken Holybee, Leg-



islative Chair of the Vietnam Veterans of America. The sculpture for the Governor was presented on behalf of California's 2.1 million veterans by Jim Anderson, President of the California State Commanders Veterans Council.

Below is an article which appeared in the Capitol Weekly newspaper written by veterans advocate Pete Conaty praising the Governor's veterans legacy.

Schwarzenegger: His support for veterans goes beyond



call of duty
By Pete Conaty
12/02/10
12:00 AM PST

What is Arnold Schwarzenegger's legacy after two terms as governor? Political pundits may disagree about the answer to that question. California's veterans do not. We are united in our respect for Gov. Schwarzenegger's unbroken record of commitment to the men and women of America's Armed Services and California's veterans. Throughout his more than seven years in office, he has gone beyond the call of duty on behalf of veterans of all ages and all wars.

"For more than 200 years, our freedoms have been paid for in blood and sacrifice by our men and women in uniform."

Gov. Schwarzenegger said last month. "America is the Land of the Free, only because it is the Home of the Brave . . . we will continue to do everything in our power to make sure all our veterans, young and old, are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve."

Those are inspiring words but Governor Schwarzenegger honors veterans not only with his words but his deeds. More than any governor in memory, he has dedicated himself to ensuring that California never forgets the debt of gratitude we owe all who go in harm's way in defense of liberty - opening homes for our elderly veterans, helping young women and men transition successfully to civilian life after serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, providing a wide array of services to veterans of all generations.

Gov. Schwarzenegger traveled to Iraq during the height of the war there and returned with a renewed determination to improve existing services for veterans and to develop new programs to meet the new realities of this age of a seemingly never-ending war with terror.

Four years ago, the governor launched a series of more than 40 "Honor a Hero, Hire a Vet" job fairs throughout the state. Over the years, hundreds of employers have linked up with more than 15,000 veterans at these fairs.

This year, building on the success of that program, Gov. Schwarzenegger established Operation Welcome Home, the only program of its kind in the nation. Using a wide variety of services, this \$20 million outreach has already provided a very hearty and helpful welcome home to more than 35,000 veterans, connecting them with job placement and training, educational assistance and medical benefits services. The Operation Welcome Home staff includes 300 veterans who reach out to men and women who are now leaving the service after tours in combat zones.

In the face of opposition among some lawmakers, Gov. Schwarzenegger managed to win \$5 million in additional funding for County Veterans Service Offices, the ground level force that day in and day out succeeds in ensuring that veterans obtain their well-deserved benefits and establish a fund for veterans service organizations to assist CVSOs.

Gov. Schwarzenegger's dedication to veterans' causes goes far beyond these initiatives on behalf of our newest heroes.

• As a sign of his commitment to a generation that served so bravely and nobly in Vietnam, the governor signed legislation establishing an annual "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" on March 30. "It is never too late," he said, "to recognize the selfless actions of these courageous men and women who answered duty's call and served our nation."

• During his administration, California has opened three homes for older veterans and started work on two new homes. Builders of those homes have agreed to set a goal of 10 percent participation by companies operated by disabled veterans.

• Gov. Schwarzenegger has gone the extra mile in honoring the bravest among us. He signed "Stolen Valor" legislation making it a crime to falsely claim to be a decorated war veteran, and he urged our real heroes to proudly wear their military medals on Veterans Day. "When we see our veterans wearing their medals at parades and ceremonies on Veterans Day we will be reminded of the courage and sacrifice they all made to serve and protect us," said Gov. Schwarzenegger.

• He also signed legislation to offer treatment instead of prison for our servicemen and women whose wounds can't be seen, such as Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

• Veterans' legislation signed by the governor extends educational assistance to all California National Guard members - those who protect us in disasters at home as well as those who go overseas to protect our freedoms.

Gov. Schwarzenegger's legacy of commitment to California veterans is remarkable and his inspiration is clear. In his own words: "Our veterans have answered duty's call and defended our nation in every corner of the world. For-saking the comforts of home, they have risked their lives to protect the liberties we enjoy. Their willingness to serve and the sacrifices that they have made are inspira-

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC., CALIFORNIA STATE COUNCIL - WINTER 2011

Chapter	Address/Phone	E-Mail/ Web Site	Primary Contact	Meeting Information
47	PO Box 4277 Riverside 92514-4277 951-781-6137	nebuskf@aol.com www.vva47.com	Steve Mackey	3rd Saturday, 10 am at LifeFall church Social Hall located at the corner of Columbia and Main St. in Riverside. Board meets prior to the meeting (check web site for special meeting locations & times)
53	PO Box 7000-185 Redondo Beach 90277 310-540-8820; FAX:310-257-9053	n9140y@ca.rr.com www.vva53.org	Jerry Yamamoto	Monthly at 7 p.m., 4th Wednesday at Billy's Restaurant, 5160 W. Torrance Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503 (except in December)
201	PO Box 26203 San Jose 95159-6203 408-246-2288	poka513@comcast.net www.nichecom.com/vva	Mike Shaw	3rd Monday, 7:30 pm, American Legion Post 564, 2120 Walsh Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95050
218	PO Box 2214 Santa Barbara 93120-2241 805-455-3365	ksperk@verizon.net www.vvachapter218.org	Keith Perkins	Meetings on 2nd Tuesday at 6:15 pm at Veterans Memorial Building, 112 West Cabrillo Blvd., Santa Barbara, 93101
223	PO Box 1583 Santa Rosa 95402-1583 707-526-4218 - Fax same #	vets@vva223.org www.vva223.org	Richard Jones	3rd Tuesday 7 pm, Santa Rosa Veterans Building, 1315 Maple Ave., Santa Rosa.
355	PO Box 2986 Canyon Country 91386-2986 818-508-9626 or 661-212-4377	vietnam6970@msn.com the51504sure@yahoo.com	Frank LaRosa Nick Callas	3rd Sunday of each month, 10 am - 2 pm, at one of two local restaurants
357	PO Box 4021 Redding 96099 530-242-1596	coonradt@charter.net	Dennis Hipley	2nd Tuesday each month, 7 pm at Shasta County Veterans Memorial Hall
368	PO Box 1566 Mariposa 95306 209-966-2292 - Fax same #	orland123@yahoo.com chapter368mariposa@yahoo.com	Dennis Croucher	1st Wednesday, 5:30 pm at the American Legion Hall on Bullion St., Mariposa
391	PO Box 5391 Sonora 95370 209-928-3848 - Fax same #	southern@lodelink.com www.vietnamveterans391.org	Dick Southern	General Meeting, 2nd Tuesday, 7 pm.; Board, 1st Tuesday 7 pm. Both meetings held at Sonora Veterans Hall, 9 N. Washington St. Sonora, 92370
400	200 Grand Ave., #208 Oakland 94610 510.444.5235 - Fax 510.534-5703	fdrdocent@comcast.net	Susan Hodges	3rd Tuesday, 6:30 pm; alternate between Oakland Vets Bldg, 200 Grand Ave. (upstairs), and Alameda Veterans Memorial Bldg.
441	782 N. Brundage Farmersville 93223 559-594-5710	r5926768@yahoo.com	Rod Hughes	2nd Monday, 7 pm. Exeter Memorial Bldg.
446	1000 E. Walnut St. Pasadena 91106 626-795-8141 - Fax same #	vva446@att.net	Stephen Malmberg	General Meeting 1st Saturday, 4 pm., at chapter office conference room #107; Board meets 1st Friday each month, 7:30
464	PO Box 25540 San Mateo 94402 650-368-6713	je.higgins07@comcast.net	Gary Higgins	Veterans Memorial Senior Center, 1450 Madison Ave., Redwood City (Goldstar Room) on the fourth Saturday each month at 10 a.m.
472	2115 Park Blvd. San Diego 92101-4792 619-239-5977	vva472events@aol.com www.vva472.org	Roland Martinez	1st Saturday each month, 10 am. (board meeting held after General Meeting at 1 pm) at Veterans Museum and Memorial Center, lower level, 2115 Park Blvd, San Diego, 92101
500	PO Box 255484 Sacramento, CA 95865 916-481-6020; Fax: 916-481-2609	vva500@sbcglobal.net www.norcaltravel/vva500.html	Mary Lou McNeill	Board Meeting, 1st Tuesday, 7 pm; General Meeting - 3rd Tuesday, 7 pm. Both meetings held at: VVA 500 Veterans Hall, Suite J, 4441 Auburn Blvd., Sacramento, CA - corner of Auburn Blvd. and Orange Grove Ave.
526	PO Box 1442 Culver City, CA 90232-1442 310-429-4512		John Hamilton	American Legion Hall, 5309 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City; First Thursday each month at 7:30 p.m.
535 *	PO Box 37 Grass Valley 95945 530-798-9967	http://www.nccn.net/%7evvanc/	Joseph Sanders	1st Thursday, 7 pm. Grass Valley Veterans Memorial Bldg., 255 South Auburn, Grass Valley (in Remembrance Room)
547	PO Box 745 Corte Madera, CA 94976-0745 415-457-8005; Fax: 415-454-2737	webmaster@vietnamveteransmarin.org http://www.vietnamveteransmarin.org/	Pat Williams	3rd Wednesday, 7 pm. American Legion, Post 313, Club Room, 12 Ward St., Larkspur, CA 94939
563	PO Box 751284 Petaluma 94975-1284 707-762-9078	johnc85393@aol.com breese1@aol.com	John Cheney Jane Baker	Veterans Memorial Bldg., Petaluma Blvd., Petaluma, 4th Thursday each month at 6:30 p.m.
582	PO Box 3070 Paradise, CA 95969-3070 530-877-1340	ccfvunlum@comcast.net	Carl Frederickson (Butch)	3rd Wednesday each month, 7 pm., Veterans' Memorial Hall, 557 Rio Lindo Ave., Chico, CA 95928
643 *	PO Box 745 Dinuba 93618 559-528-2811 / Fax: 559-528-2384	geodrid@sbcglobal.net	Peter McManus	2nd Wednesday, 7 pm at Dinuba Memorial Building, 249 S. Alta Ave., Dinuba, CA 93618
691 *	PO Box 2226 Merced 95344-0226 209-388-9729	rgrisby@sbcglobal.net www.mymerced.com/0704k163.html	Ron Grisby	3rd Monday, 7 pm, Citi Bank, 19th & M, Merced. Board - 1st Monday, 7 pm
702	PO Box 355 Yountville 94599 707-252-7537 / Fax: 707-252-8594	rossisvva@sbcglobal.net	Ross Hall	Board meets 1st Tuesday, 6:30 pm, conference room C, 1st floor Holderman Medical Center, Yountville Vets Home. Membership meetings same location at 7 pm.
756	PO Box 90994 Long Beach 90809 562-433-6756	aircop72@gmail.com www.vva756.org	Max Stewart	1st Wednesday, 7 pm at VFW Post 8615, 2805 South St., Long Beach
781 *	1100 Main St. PO Box 102 Ferndale 95536 707-726-7842	digitdan@suddenlink.net www.vva781.org	Daniel Lawrence	2nd Tuesday each month, 7 pm, Ferndale Veterans Memorial Hall, 1100 Main Street, Ferndale, 95536
785	2345 Barraca Parkway Irvine 92602 949-422-8325 / Fax: 949-493-4387	vva785@aol.com www.vva785.org	Harry Steelman	1st Wednesday, 6 pm (social hour prior), at US Army Reserve Training Center Armory, 2345 Barranca Parkway, Irvine, CA
880 *	508 Riddle Court Modesto 95356 209-416-0200	emg@msn.com	Errol Green	3rd Tuesday, 6:30 pm at American Legion Hall, 1001 S. Santa Cruz, Modesto
933	PO Box 26256 Fresno 93729-6256 559-294-8828	sdoak@unwiredbb.com	Stephen Doak	1st Tuesday, 6 pm, at Clovis Veterans Memorial Bldg., 453 Hughes Ave., Clovis 93612
951 *	PO Box 1313 Lakeport 95453 707-262-5651	deanvva951@mediacomb.net vva951.org	Dean Gotham	2nd Tuesday at 801 N. Main St. 6 p.m. (St. Mary Immaculate Hall Parish Hall), Lakeport, 95453; potluck 6 pm, General Meeting 7 pm
982 *	PO Box 1002 Guadalupe, CA 92434 805-233-2201	halfaro12000@yahoo.com	Henry Alfaro	American Legion Post 371, 1025 Guadalupe St., Guadalupe, CA; last Saturday each month at 11 a.m.
1024 *	735 South Brea Blvd. Brea, CA	president@vva1024.org vva1024.org	Wayne McVeigh	Meetings 2nd Wednesday each month, 7 pm, Brea Veterans Club, 735 South Brea Blvd., Brea CA
1031	PO Box 2742 Escondido, CA 92033-2742 760-666-9806 / Fax: 760-598-9184	scott@vva1031.org vva1031.org	Scott Wolf	Meetings 1st Tuesday each month, 7 pm, at Moose Lodge #1874, 25721 Jesmond Dene Rd., Escondido

**Vietnam Veterans of America Inland Empire Chapter 47
& Riverside National Cemetery Support Committee**

Present a "Raffle" for an

Orange County Choppers®

CUSTOM MOTORCYCLE

<p>TICKETS: \$25.00 EACH/5 FOR \$100.00</p> <p>RAFFLE WILL BE HELD: JULY 4, 2010 - JULY 4, 2011</p> <p><i>Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. Ch. 47 Riverside National Cemetery Support Committee</i></p> <p>WINNER NEEDS NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN</p> <p> DRAWING: JULY 4, 2011 </p> <p><small>Disclaimer: Winner will be responsible for tax, license & shipping fees.</small></p> <p>OCC CUSTOM BIKE</p>	 <p>STATER BROS. Charities</p>
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Steve Mackey
VVA Chapter 47
Cell: 951-231-7268
email: Nebhuskfan@aol.com

**FOR RAFFLE
TICKETS CONTACT:**

Mike Kennedy
VVA Chapter 47
Cell: 909-563-0107
email: mike3sps@verizon.net

tional, and I extend my deepest gratitude for their invaluable service. We will be forever in their debt."

It is hoped that our new governor and the Legislature will continue Operation Welcome Home and the enhanced veterans outreach programs started by Gov. Schwarzenegger while our country remains at war and California's military and veterans are still in need of federal and state benefits they have earned by virtue of their service to our country and our state.

VA RECORDS ACCESS

VA Testing Quicker Access to Medical Records

WASHINGTON (Nov. 29, 2010) - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is working to significantly reduce the average time needed to obtain health-care records from private physicians with the help of a private contractor and the Internet to speed claims decisions.

"Innovations that will speed, simplify or improve our services to Veterans are receiving rigorous tests at VA," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "We are committed to harnessing the best technology and the

brightest minds in the government and private sector to ensure Veterans receive the benefits they have earned."

One innovation is using a private contractor to assist VA in collecting health-care records. When private medical records support a Veteran's application for benefits, a contractor will quickly retrieve the records from the health-care provider, scan them into a digital format and send the material to VA through a secure transmission.

This pilot project hopes to validate initial estimates that a specialized contract can yield records required to process Veterans' disability compensation claims in seven to 10 days instead of VA's average 40 days. In addition, the additional contract frees VA staff to focus on core duties to process claims more quickly.

Exploring economical contract support for time savings is one of more than three dozen initiatives supporting VA's claims transformation plan, which aims to ensure that by 2015, Veterans' claims are decided within 125 days.

VA officials emphasize that in all cases Veterans must sign documents approving the release of their medical records to the department from private health-care providers.

The test is expected to involve about 60,000 records requests among regional benefits offices in Phoenix; New York City; St. Louis; Portland, Ore.; Chicago; Anchorage, Alaska; Indianapolis, and Jackson, Miss. At the conclusion of the test, VA officials will decide whether to cancel, modify or expand any changes in procedures nationwide.

**HEROES OF THE VIETNAM
GENERATION**

By James Webb

The rapidly disappearing cohort of Americans that endured the Great Depression and then fought World War II is receiving quite a send-off from the leading lights of the so-called 60s generation. Tom Brokaw has published two oral histories of "The Greatest Generation" that feature ordinary people doing their duty and suggest that such conduct was historically unique.

Chris Matthews of "Hardball" is fond of writing columns praising the Navy service of his father while castigating his own baby boomer generation for its alleged softness

and lack of struggle. William Bennett gave a startling condescending speech at the Naval Academy a few years ago comparing the heroism of the "D-Day Generation" to the drugs-and-sex nihilism of the "Woodstock Generation." And Steven Spielberg, in promoting his film "Saving Private Ryan," was careful to justify his portrayals of soldiers in action based on the supposedly unique nature of World War II.

An irony is at work here. Lest we forget, the World War II generation now being lionized also brought us the Vietnam War, a conflict which today's most conspicuous voices by and large opposed, and in which few of them served. The "best and brightest" of the Vietnam age group once made headlines by castigating their parents for bringing about the war in which they would not fight, which has become the war they refuse to remember. Pundits back then invented a term for this animus: the "generation gap." Long, plaintive articles and even books were written examining its manifestations. Campus leaders, who claimed precocious wisdom through the magical process of reading a few controversial books, urged fellow baby boomers not to trust anyone over 30. Their elders who had survived the Depression and fought the largest war in history were looked down upon as shallow, materialistic, and out of touch.

Those of us who grew up, on the other side of the picket line from that era's counter-culture can't help but feel a little leery of this sudden gush of appreciation for our elders from the leading lights of the old counter-culture. Then and now, the national conversation has proceeded from the dubious assumption that those who came of age during Vietnam are a unified generation in the same sense as their parents were, and thus are capable of being spoken for through these fickle elites.

In truth, the "Vietnam generation" is a misnomer. Those who came of age during that war are permanently divided by different reactions to a whole range of counter-cultural agendas, and nothing divides them more deeply than the personal ramifications of the war itself. The sizable portion of the Vietnam age group who declined to support the counter-cultural agenda, and especially the men and women who opted to serve in the military during the Vietnam War, are quite different from their peers who for decades have claimed to speak for them. In fact, they are much like the World War II generation itself. For them, Woodstock was a side show, college protestors were spoiled brats who would have benefited from having to work a few jobs in order to pay their tuition, and Vietnam represented not an intellectual exercise in draft avoidance, or protest marches but a battlefield that was just as brutal as those their fathers faced in World War II and Korea.

Few who served during Vietnam ever complained of a generation gap. The men who fought World War II were their heroes and role models. They honored their father's service by emulating it, and largely agreed with their father's wisdom in attempting to stop Communism's reach in Southeast Asia.

The most accurate poll of their attitudes (Harris, 1980) showed that 91 percent were glad they'd served their country, 74 percent enjoyed their time in the service, and 89 percent agreed with the statement that "our troops were asked to fight in a war which our political leaders in Washington would not let them win." And most importantly, the castigation they received upon returning home was not from the World War II generation, but from the very elites in their age group who supposedly spoke for them.

Nine million men served in the military during Vietnam War, three million of whom went to the Vietnam Theater. Contrary to popular mythology, two-thirds of these were volunteers, and 73 percent of those who died were volunteers. While some attention has been paid recently to the plight of our prisoners of war, most of whom were pilots; there has been little recognition of how brutal the war was for those who fought it on the ground. Dropped on the enemy's terrain 12,000 miles away from home, America's citizen-soldiers performed with a tenacity and quality that may never be truly understood. Those who believe the war was fought incompletely on a tactical level should consider Hanoi's recent admission that 1.4 million of its soldiers died on the battlefield, compared to 58,000 total U. S. dead.

Those who believe that it was a "dirty little war" where the bombs did all the work might contemplate that it was the most costly war the U. S. Marine Corps has ever fought;

five times as many dead as World War I, three times as many dead as in Korea, and more total killed and wounded than in all of World War II.

Significantly, these sacrifices were being made at a time the United States was deeply divided over our effort in Vietnam. The baby-boom generation had cracked apart along class lines as America's young men were making difficult, life-or-death choices about serving. The better academic institutions became focal points for vitriolic protest against the war, with few of their graduates going into the military. Harvard College, which had lost 691 alumni in World War II, lost a total of 12 men in Vietnam from the classes of 1962 through 1972 combined. Those classes at Princeton lost six, at MIT two. The media turned ever more hostile. And frequently the reward for a young man's having gone through the trauma of combat was to be greeted by his peers with studied indifference of outright hostility.

What is a hero? My heroes are the young men who faced the issues of war and possible death, and then weighed those concerns against obligations to their country. Citizen-soldiers who interrupted their personal and professional lives at their most formative stage, in the timeless phrase of the Confederate Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery, "not for fame or reward, not for place or for rank, but in simple obedience to duty, as they understood it." Who suffered loneliness, disease, and wounds with an often-contagious elan. And who deserve a far better place in history than that now offered them by the so-called spokesmen of our so-called generation.

Mr. Brokaw, Mr. Matthews, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Spielberg, meet my Marines. 1969 was an odd year to be in Vietnam. Second only to 1968 in terms of American casualties, it was the year made famous by Hamburger Hill, as well as the gut-wrenching Life cover story showing pictures of 242 Americans who had been killed in one average week of fighting. Back home, it was the year of Woodstock, and of numerous anti-war rallies that culminated in the Moratorium march on Washington. The My Lai massacre hit the papers and was seized upon the anti-war movement as the emblematic moment of the war. Lyndon Johnson left Washington in utter humiliation.

Richard Nixon entered the scene, destined for an even worse fate. In the An Hoa Basin southwest of Danang, the Fifth Marine Regiment was in its third year of continuous combat at operations. Combat is an unpredictable and inexact environment, but we were well led. As a rifle platoon and company commander, I served under a succession of three regimental commanders who had cut their teeth in World War II, and four different battalion commanders, three of whom had seen combat in Korea. The company commanders were typically captains on their second combat tour in Vietnam, or young first lieutenants like myself who were given companies after many months of "bush time" as platoon commanders in the Basin's tough and unforgiving environs.

The Basin was one of the most heavily contested areas in Vietnam, its torn, cratered earth offering every sort of wartime possibility. In the mountains just to the west, not far from the Ho Chi Minh Trail, the North Vietnamese Army operated an infantry division from an area called Base Area 112. In the valleys of the Basin, main-force Viet Cong battalions whose ranks were 80 percent North Vietnamese Army regulars moved against the Americans every day. Local Viet Cong units sniped and harassed. Ridgelines and paddy dikes were laced with sophisticated booby traps of every size, from a hand grenade to a 250-pound bomb. The villages sat in the rice paddies and tree lines like individual fortresses, crisscrossed with the trenches and spider holes, their homes sporting bunkers capable of surviving direct hits from large-caliber artillery shells. The Viet Cong infrastructure was intricate and permeating. Except for the old and the very young, villagers who did not side with the Communists had either been killed or driven out to the government controlled enclaves near Danang.

In the rifle companies, we spent the endless months patrolling ridgelines and villages and mountains, far away from any notion of tents, barbed wire, hot food, or electricity. Luxuries were limited to what would fit inside one's pack, which after a few "humps" usually boiled down to letter-writing material, towel, soap, toothbrush, poncho liner, and a small transistor radio.

We moved through the boiling heat with 60 pounds of weapons and gear, causing a typical Marine to drop 20 percent of his body weight while in the bush. When we

stopped we dug chest-deep fighting holes and slit trenches for toilets. We slept on the ground under makeshift poncho hootches, and when it rained we usually took our hootches down because wet ponchos shined under illumination flares, making great targets. Sleep itself was fitful, never more than an hour or two at a stretch for months at a time as we mixed daytime patrolling with night-time ambushes, listening posts, foxhole duty, and radio watches. Ringworm, hookworm, malaria, and dysentery were common, as was trench foot when the monsoons came. Respite was rotating back to the mud-filled regimental combat base at An Hoa for four or five days, where rocket and mortar attacks were frequent and our troops manned defensive bunkers at night. Which makes it kind of hard to get excited about tales of Woodstock, or camping at the Vineyard during summer break.

We had been told while training that Marine officers in the rifle companies had an 85 percent probability of being killed or wounded, and the experience of "Dying Delta," as our company was known, bore that out. Of the officers in the bush when I arrived, our company commander was wounded, the weapons platoon commander wounded, the first platoon commander was killed, the second platoon commander was wounded twice, and I, commanding the third platoons fared no better. Two of my original three-squad leaders were killed, and the third shot in the stomach. My platoon sergeant was severely wounded, as was my right guide. By the time I left, my platoon I had gone through six radio operators, five of them casualties.

These figures were hardly unique; in fact, they were typical. Many other units; for instance, those who fought the hill battles around Khe Sanh, or were with the famed Walking Dead of the Ninth Marine Regiment, or were in the battle of Hue City or at Dai Do, had it far worse.

When I remember those days and the very young men who spent them with me, I am continually amazed, for these were mostly recent civilians barely out of high school, called up from the cities and the farms to do their year in hell and he return. Visions haunt me every day, not of the nightmares of war but of the steady consistency with which my Marines faced their responsibilities, and of how uncomplaining most of them were in the face of constant danger. The salty, battle-hardened 20-year-olds teaching green 19-year-olds the intricate lessons of the hostile battlefield. The unerring skill of the young squad leaders as we moved through unfamiliar villages and weed-choked trails in the black of night. The quick certainty when a fellow Marine was wounded and needed help. Their willingness to risk their lives to save other Marines in peril. To this day it stuns me that their own countrymen have so completely missed the story of their service, lost in the bitter confusion of the war itself.

Like every military unit throughout history we had occasional laggards, cowards, and complainers. But in the aggregate, these Marines were the finest people I have ever been around. It has been my privilege to keep up with many of them over the years since we all came home. One finds in them very little bitterness about the war in which they fought. The most common regret, almost to a man, is that they were not able to do more for each other and for the people they came to help.

It would be redundant to say that I would trust my life to these men. Because I already have, in more ways than I can ever recount. I am alive today because of their quiet, unaffected heroism. Such valor epitomizes the conduct of Americans at war from the first days of our existence. That the boomer elites can canonize this sort of conduct in our fathers' generation while ignoring it in our own is more than simple oversight. It is a conscious, continuing travesty.

Former Secretary of the Navy James Webb was awarded the Navy Cross, Silver Star, and Bronze Star medals for heroism as a Marine in Vietnam. His novels include *The Emperor's General* and *Fields of Fire*.

STOLEN VALOR

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA DISPUTES CALIFORNIA COURT FINDING THAT STOLEN VALOR ACT IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL

(WASHINGTON, DC) – "The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit has struck down a federal law making it a crime to falsely claim a military honor or decoration, and this is a most regrettable decision," said John Rowan, national president of Vietnam Veterans of America. "We

trust that this case will be reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court. We hope that the court will agree with those legal experts who hold that the Constitution of the United States does not protect egregious false statements of fact." In a 2-1 ruling on August 17, the appeals court found the Stolen Valor Act—a 2006 federal law that prohibits falsely claiming to have won a military decoration, making it a crime to lie about receiving the Medal of Honor and other military decoration—unconstitutional, throwing out the conviction of Xavier Alvarez, an elected member of a California water district board, who, on several occasions, falsely claimed to be a recipient of the Medal of Honor.

"The right to speak and write whatever one chooses—including, to some degree, worthless, offensive and demonstrable untruths—without cowering in fear of a powerful government is, in our view, an essential component of the protection afforded by the First Amendment," Judge Milan Smith said in the majority opinion.

Said Rowan, "While we embrace the right of any American citizen to express opinions freely, lying about one's alleged military accomplishments in order to gain future prospects for advancement is simply wrong. This ruling degrades the honor that has been earned by our military personnel for their sacrifices in combat. Further, this is more than an issue of the violation of one's constitutional rights. In essence, it approves lying and could have significant implications in efforts to police false statements in political ads and campaigns."

EIGHT MAY GO TO SUPREME COURT
Associated Press

DENVER -- The Justice Department is battling to save a federal law that makes it illegal to lie about being a war hero, appealing two court rulings that the statute is an unconstitutional muzzle on free speech.

The fight could be carried all the way to the U. S. Supreme Court, where it would face an uncertain fate, legal analysts said.

"This is a Supreme Court that is friendly to parties asserting speech rights and skeptical about restrictions on those rights," said Kannon Shanmugam, a former Justice Department official.

Supporters of the law take the opposite view.

"It could wind up being the kind of landmark decision that the Supreme Court is going to have to give very serious and very broad consideration to, and I think they'll come down on our side," said Doug Sterner, a military historian.

The Stolen Valor Act makes it a crime punishable by up to a year in jail to falsely claim to have won a military medal, whether or not an impostor seeks financial gain.

A three-judge panel of the 9th U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco and a federal district court in Denver have both ruled the law is unconstitutional on First Amendment grounds.

Last week, government lawyers in California asked the full 9th Circuit to reconsider the ruling, calling it a decision of "exceptional importance." Prosecutors noted that the three-judge panel was split 2-1 with sharply differing views, and that the law is also under challenge in Colorado. The 9th Circuit hasn't said whether it will take a second look.

In Colorado, prosecutors announced last week they would ask the 10th Circuit to overturn the district court decision. That appeal is expected to be filed in early November.

The Stolen Valor Act, which breezed through Congress in 2006, revised and toughened an existing statute that forbade anyone to wear a military medal that was not earned.

The California and Colorado cases were among the early prosecutions under the newly strengthened law.

Xavier Alvarez, a local water board official from Pomona, CA, was indicted in 2007 after saying at a public forum that he was a retired Marine who received the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military decoration. Alvarez apparently never served in the military.

Alvarez pleaded guilty on condition that he be allowed to appeal on First Amendment grounds. The 9th Circuit ruled in his favor in August.

His attorney, Jonathan Libby, said Friday he believes both the full 9th Circuit and the U. S. Supreme Court would also find the law unconstitutional. Rick Glen Strandlof, who founded a veterans group in Colorado Springs, was arrested in 2009 after claiming he was a former Marine who was wounded in Iraq and had received the Purple Heart and Silver Star. The Marine Corps said it had no record that Strandlof ever served.

A Denver federal judge threw out the case against Strandlof in July.

Strandlof's attorney, Robert Pepin, said he is optimistic about winning at the appeals court or at the Supreme Court.

"It really ends up being a very interesting argument, with solid arguments on our side and strongly articulated arguments on their side," he said.

If government lawyers can't persuade the appeals courts to revive the law, they will likely ask the Supreme Court to hear the case, said Shanmugam, who served as the Justice Department's assistant solicitor general under President George W. Bush. The solicitor general is the government's top lawyer in arguments before the Supreme Court.

"When a federal court declares a federal statute unconstitutional, the solicitor general feels a strong obligation to defend the statute, where a reasonable argument can be made," Shanmugam said.

Shanmugam and others cited two 2010 Supreme Court rulings as indicators that the justices might overturn the Stolen Valor Act.

In one, the court overturned campaign spending limits on corporations and unions, and in the other it struck down a federal ban on videos that show graphic violence to animals. Both were viewed as free-speech cases.

Jonathan Turley, a professor at George Washington University Law School, said the Stolen Valor Act answers no real legal need but was written for political reasons, so lawmakers could show they are on the side of real heroes by punishing impostors.

"There's already a considerable deterrent for people who are engaged in this kind of conduct," he said. "Many of these people are charged with fraud. If someone is only wearing medals without seeking any form of gain, it becomes highly questionable."

Eugene Volokh, a UCLA law professor, said the court traditionally requires the government to prove it has a compelling interest to restrict free speech, which could be difficult in this case.

"I don't think that anybody's going to stop being a brave Soldier, or be a less brave Soldier, or have less respect for a brave Soldier, because some number of people lie about it," he said.

Sterner, the military historian, said he believes the law has a good chance of surviving, citing the divided vote by the three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit.

"The fact that we had a 2-1 split bodes well at the 9th Circuit," said Sterner, whose wife, Pam, wrote a policy analy-

sis in college that became the basis of the bill.

The bill's author in Congress, Colorado Democratic Rep. John Salazar, defended the law and said the rulings against it were misguided.

"You go out and you sacrifice and you earn these awards because of heroism. If somebody comes and tries to act like a hero, it kind of degrades what they did," he said. "It's defending their honor, as I see it."

VETS GROUPS LOSE AT SUPREME COURT

Lee Ross, Fox News

Two veterans groups lost in their effort to have the Supreme Court force bureaucrats in the Department of Veterans Affairs to move more swiftly in processing claims, as the Supreme Court announced Monday they will not hear a case challenging a supposed lack of brevity from the government.

The Vietnam Veterans of America and the Veterans of Modern Warfare allege that the VA takes far too long to process claims made by its members and for all veterans. They contend that officials can take more than a year to respond to an initial claim and upwards of five years for the appeals process to wind its way through a "Byzantine system of procedural hurdles."

While the groups complain about the number of veterans who are denied claims or offered less assistance than what they're seeking, their suit only challenged the duration of the claims process. "Veterans waiting for the VA to issue a decision have lost their homes to foreclosure, been forced to declare bankruptcy, suffered through divorce, and had to endure declining mental and physical health due at least in part to the VA's delays," lawyers for the groups wrote to the high court.

The groups wanted a ruling that would lead to a mandate forcing the VA to respond within 90 days time for all initial claims and 180 days to resolve appeals.

Lower courts ruled against the veterans taking issue with their use of average wait times as proof of harm. "[O]ne can not have standing in federal court by asserting an injury to someone else," wrote Judge Laurence Silberman in a unanimous opinion of the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Monday's decision effectively upholds that ruling.

BENEFITS IN JEOPARDY?

Repealing benefits for veterans, as a way to lower the deficit.

As I have said on many occasions "Everybody loves you when you are 18 years-old and jumping out of a perfectly good helicopter or airplane. But when you are 55 years old with bad knees, a bad back, type II diabetes and a little quirky on the personality side you can not be kicked to the side of the road fast enough"

We are in need of a lot of Good Samaritans, because veterans are going to be on the side of the road beaten and rob by the politicians and their friends in the congress.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
Individual membership is open to Veterans who served on active duty in the US Military (for other than training purposes) from February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975 or from August 5, 1964 and May 7 1975 for Vietnam-era Veterans.

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ + _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Individual membership or Associate membership Dues:
\$20 for Annual ___ / \$20 for Renewal ___ / \$50 for 3 Year Membership ___

Life Memberships:
\$250 ___ (age 49 and under) \$225 ___ (50-55) \$200 ___ (56-60) \$175 (61-65) \$150 (66+)

For individual membership a DD214 is required if not already on file.
Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America is an adjunct organization with VVA, Both Veterans and non-Veterans may join. If joining AVVA you are eligible to be a member of VVA Yes ___ No ___
Print this page and fill out and mail with DD214 (if needed) to our address above.

If you are a current member, to renew provide your Membership # _____ Chapter _____

VETERANS - CIVILIANS

When a Veteran leaves the 'job' and retires to a better life, many are jealous, some are pleased, and others, who may have already retired, wonder if he knows what he is leaving behind, because we already know.

1. We know, for example, that after a lifetime of camaraderie that few experience, it will remain as a longing for those past times.

2. We know in the Military life there is a fellowship which lasts long after the uniforms are hung up in the back of the closet.

3. We know even if he throws them away, they will be on him with every step and breath that remains in his life. We also know how the very bearing of the man speaks of what he was and in his heart still is.

These are the burdens of the job. You will still look at people suspiciously, still see what others do not see or choose to ignore and always will look at the rest of the Military world with a respect for what they do; only grown in a lifetime of knowing.

Never think for one moment you are escaping from that life. You are only escaping the 'job' and merely being allowed to leave 'active' duty.

So what I wish for you is that whenever you ease into retirement, in your heart you never forget for one moment that you are still a member of the greatest fraternity the world has ever known.

NOW! Civilian Friends vs. Veteran Friends Comparisons

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Get upset if you're too busy to talk to them for a week. **VETERAN FRIENDS:** Are glad to see you after years, and will happily carry on the same conversation you were having the last time you met.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Have never seen you cry. **VETERAN FRIENDS:** Have cried with you.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Keep your stuff so long they forget it's yours. **VETERAN FRIENDS:** Borrow your stuff for a few days then give it back.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Know a few things about you. **VETERAN FRIENDS:** Could write a book with direct quotes from you.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will leave you behind if that's what the crowd is doing. **VETERAN FRIENDS:** Will kick the crowd's ass that left you behind.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Are for a while. **VETERAN FRIENDS:** Are for life.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Have shared a few experiences... **VETERAN FRIENDS:** Have shared a lifetime of experiences no citizen could ever dream of...

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will take your drink away when they think you've had enough. **VETERAN FRIENDS:** Will look at you stumbling all over the place and say, 'You better drink the rest of that before you spill it!' Then carry you home safely and put you to bed...

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will talk crap to the person who talks crap about you. **VETERAN FRIENDS:** Will knock the hell out OF THEM for using your name in vain.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will ignore this. **VETERAN FRIENDS:** Will forward this.

A veteran whether active duty, retired, or reserve- is someone who, at one point in their life, wrote a blank check made payable to 'The Government of the United States of America' for an amount of 'up to and including my life'. From one Veteran to another, it's an honor to be in your company. Thank you.

Veterans Affairs Secretary Shekesei is a true friend to veterans. He has been pushing the administration and the V. A. to be more responsive. However my fear is that he will be the next sacrifice as the plan voiced by Alan Simpson, gains traction

Please let your congressional representative know that you support veterans and expect that they will give more than lip service to veterans.

A final thought, rarely do we ever hear a politician ever mention "support the veterans", it always "support the troops". Yes, support those troops who will someday be veterans and get the same if not worse treatment.

James Maddox President/Veterans Service Representative
Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 446
jomaddox@earthlink.net

AGING VETS' COSTS CONCERN OBAMA'S DEFICIT CO-CHAIR
Mike Baker, Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — The system that automatically awards disability benefits to some veterans because of concerns about Agent Orange seems contrary to efforts to control federal spending, the Republican co-chairman of President Barack Obama's deficit commission said Tuesday.

Former Wyoming Sen. Alan Simpson's comments came a day after The Associated Press reported that diabetes has become the most frequently compensated ailment among Vietnam veterans, even though decades of research has failed to find more than a possible link between the defoliant Agent Orange and diabetes.

"The irony (is) that the veterans who saved this country are now, in a way, not helping us to save the country in this fiscal mess," said Simpson, an Army veteran who was once chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has also allowed Vietnam veterans to get money for ailments such as lung cancer and prostate cancer, and the agency finalized a proposal Tuesday to grant payments for heart disease — the nation's leading cause of death.

Simpson declined to say whether the issue would become part of his work on Obama's panel examining the nation's debt. He looked to Congress to make a change.

Sen. Daniel Akaka, a Hawaii Democrat who currently chairs the VA committee, said Tuesday he will address the broader issue of so-called presumptive conditions at a hearing previously set for Sept. 23. The committee will look to "see what changes Congress and VA may need to make to existing law and policy," Akaka said in an e-mail.

"It is our solemn responsibility to help veterans with disabilities suffered in their service to our country," said Akaka, who served in the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II. "That responsibility also requires us to make sure limited resources are available for those who truly need and are entitled to them."

Virginia Sen. Jim Webb, a Democrat and Vietnam combat veteran, has also raised questions about the spending. The leading Republican on the committee, North Carolina Sen. Richard Burr, has not responded to several requests for comment on the topic in recent months.

Because of concerns about Agent Orange, Congress set up a system in 1991 to grant automatic benefits to veterans who served in Vietnam at any point during a 13-year period and later got an ailment linked to the defoliant. The VA has done that with a series of ailments with strong indications of an association to Agent Orange, including Hodgkin's disease, soft-tissue cancers and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Other ailments have been added even though and Institute of Medicine review has found they only have a potential association and that they could not rule out other factors. Those maladies include prostate cancer, lung cancer and diabetes. The committee has said that, for diabetes, more powerful influences include family history, physical inactivity and obesity.

The AP found in reviewing millions of VA compensation records that diabetes is now the most frequently compen-

sated ailment, ahead of post-traumatic stress disorder, hearing loss or general wounds. VA officials use a complex formula when awarding benefits and do not track how much is spent for a specific ailment, but AP calculations based on the records suggest that Vietnam veterans with diabetes should receive at least \$850 million each year.

Paul Sullivan, executive director for the advocacy group Veterans for Common Sense, said it would be unreasonable for veterans to have to prove on a case-by-case basis that their illness came from Agent Orange. He believes the science supports the decision by VA to grant presumptive benefits. "The presumptive law is absolutely essential," he said. "Money should not be an issue. Sullivan also said many veterans file claims not for the compensation but for access to free health care.

The VA also acknowledged in its heart disease rule Tuesday that it could cost billions more than initially anticipated. The initial projection was that the new ailments, mostly heart disease but also Parkinson's disease and certain types of leukemia, would total \$42.2 billion over 10 years. But that was based on disease prevalence rates for the general population, not representative of the aging class of Vietnam veterans.

VA used an age-adjusted formula in its latest proposal and estimated that it could cost some \$67 billion in the next decade.

"It's the kind of thing that's just driving us to this \$1 trillion, \$400 billion deficit this year," Simpson said. "It's not that I'm an uncaring person, but common sense is the most uncommon thing in Washington."

FINAL AGENT ORANGE RULES

Vietnam Veterans of America Applauds Publication of the Final Rules on Agent Orange New Presumptive Diseases

(Washington, D.C.)—“Vietnam Veterans of America welcomes the long-anticipated final rules governing the addition of three new diseases to the list of diseases presumptively service connected for exposure to Agent Orange. Under these new rules, published today in the Federal Register by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), veterans who served in Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, are presumed exposed to Agent Orange for Parkinson's disease, B-Cell leukemias, and ischemic heart disease (IHD),” said VVA National President John Rowan.

The effective date of the rules, which appear <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-21556.pdf>, is August 31, 2010. However, VA cannot start paying benefits under the rules, as the Congressional Review Act (CRA) requires a 60-day wait. “It is anticipated that the VA will start paying on the back claims on or after October 31, 2010, and unless Congress acts to deny implementation of the rules, Agent Orange-exposed veterans suffering from any of these diseases will get the help they need and have earned,” noted Rowan.

The published rules state Parkinson's disease is covered, however the rules do not include parkinsonian syndromes and/or parkinsonism, as well as multiple systems atrophy (MSA), progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP), and other parkinsonism caused by stroke, encephalitis, meningitis, corticobasal degeneration, certain antipsychotic and metoclopramide medications, other toxins, and head trauma.

The rules add all chronic B-Cell leukemias to the presumptive list, including 14 kinds of lymphomas involving B-cell leukemias. B-Cell leukemias include B-Cell chronic lymphocytic leukemia/small lymphocytic lymphoma; Acute lymphoblastic leukemia, mature B-cell type; B-cell prolymphocytic leukemia; Precursor B lymphoblastic leukemia; and Hairy cell leukemia.

For Ischemic Heart Disease (IHD), the rules outline what the VA will and will not recognize: According to the published rules, the VA “interprets IHD, for purposes of service connection, to encompass any atherosclerotic heart disease resulting in clinically significant ischemia or requiring coronary revascularization. In the notice of proposed rule making, we explained that the term ‘ischemic heart disease’ does not encompass hypertension or peripheral manifestations of arteriosclerotic heart disease, such as peripheral vascular disease or stroke.” VA points out that IHD includes “Prinzmetal's Angina, and Stable and Unstable Angina.”

Veterans exposed to Agent Orange herbicides and who suffer from one of these diseases should file a claim immediately, and may apply on line at: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>. Exposed veterans who filed a claim prior to August 31, 2010, may be covered under a court class ruling, *Nehmer v. Department of Veterans Affairs (Nehmer)*, which, in most cases, provides for payment back to the date of the original claim filing date. Nehmer also allows payment of back benefits to the surviving spouse or to the veteran's estate. Veterans who have filed a claim prior to August 31, 2010, should contact a Veterans Service Officer to ensure all benefits are received. "We urge all veterans with past claims for one of the new diseases to call the VA at 1-800-827-1000 and inform them that their claim may be subject to the Nehmer court ruling," said Rowan.

Noted Rowan, "VVA contends that many Vietnam-era veterans were also exposed in their service elsewhere in Southeast Asia during the war, including in Thailand and Laos, and aboard Navy vessels off the coast of Vietnam, as well as certain military bases located in the continental U.S. and its territories. We will continue to fight for all who suffer long-term health effects as a result of their service to our nation."

MCCAIN VISITS SAN DIEGO

Senator John McCain Visits San Diego

Arizona Congressman John McCain warmly greets VVA Chapter 472's 1st VP Don Barnard during his visit to the Veteran's Museum & Memorial Center, Balboa Park, on October 10.

The Senator placed his hand on the veteran's shoulder after



learning Don was in Airborne. Don and 20 other Vietnam Veteran motorcyclists escorted the McCain entourage to the museum for a Veteran's Rally. The Senator also signed on the Triumph & Tragedy mural, one of six murals; a six year undertaking by Vietnam era veteran Richard DeRoset, a member of the 472 and a world famous maritime



artist. Senator McCain signed his name in the special area next to fellow POW Everett Alvarez, who was also present for the visit and among three hundred or more POW's, of all wars who have signed their names. Other names on murals are on the adjacent mural of the Pearl Harbor at-



tack, which bears the name of John FINN, the first to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor in WWII, and other equally heroic soldiers and sailors of that time.

PROSTATE SCREENING



As the year is winding down I was looking at some old e-mails at the chapter and found these photographs from the

Prostate Cancer Screening that we (CSC) again sponsored. Real men Cook Foundation had to cancel because of a change



in the protocol for Prostate Cancer Screening issued by the Cancer Society.

Rather that let the effort die, Trinity Bap-

tist Church in Los Angeles picked up the task. Again VVA was a supporter of this effort.



James Maddox, President VVA Chapter 446

CHAPTER 756 - VA LAND

Standing tall, even in the recent California storms, members of Chapter 756 keep the issue of the West LA VA



Land in the public eye. We need physical support and money to help this group - Now!!! Larry standing with me is a Vietnam Vet and



Bob is a Vietnam era Vet. We stood out there in the wind and rain (junior monsoon) and talked and laughed about no time out, can't stay in Nam cause its raining and how it did, going threw what all of us went threw in our own personal experience we didn't quit then and we will not quit.

Conrad, Secretary VVA #756, Long Beach

DEALING WITH 'NAM...ANEW

"Let every nation know,
Whether it wishes us well or ill,
That we shall pay any price,
Bear any burden, meet any hardship,
Support any friend, oppose any foe,
To assure the survival and the success
Of liberty...." JFK-1961

(We promised to help guard the freedom
Of allies everywhere;
It's this noble cause we proudly claimed
We'd fight for over there.
But this grand concern for freedom's fate
on some far-distant shore,
Would fade with our mounting casualties
In the Vietnam War.)

We vowed we'd stand-by South Vietnam,
Her struggle we would share;
Adversity mocked, "This war's all wrong!
Freedom's too costly there!"
Fault their leaders, their people, their troops,
Blame tactics, blame terrain;
Rationalize it's a civil war
So why should we remain?
Then abandoning our pledged support
We chose to quit that field,
Leaving behind a condemned ally,
Her freedom's fate now sealed.
(We called it "Vietnamization,"
As their troops took our place;
To South Vietnam it's "Betrayal,"
Dressed-up to save some face.)

Back home, we welcomed returning troops
With a demonstration
Of jeers and worse, or indifference—
Like some foreign nation!
(Troops would land stateside, out of harm's way,
To this strained reception:
"For safety, you must wear civvies home!
Don't attract attention!"
So forget about "proud" uniforms
And loved ones to impress,
Sneak home in wrinkled "R and R" rags—
Scapegoats in "battle-dress.")
Orphaning those who answered our call,
Who went to war, who bled,
We offered pardons for those who ran
To Canada, instead.
And what of those captured, not released,
Seen alive, left behind?
Political pawns, waiting in vain,
For us to prove we mind.
Our leaders who directed this war,
Proclaimed, now, "peace long sought!"
(But only for those who could forget
The war was fought for naught).
"The Wall" of fifty-eight thousand names
Mourns wronged, those faithful dead—
Their "cause" and "sacrifice" forfeited
For peace, at home, instead. (1983) irj
...ANEW

I've fed off bitterness all these years—
The anger, grief...the shame.
But at last, thank God, I've found His rest,
Forgiving those I blame.
Sounds crazy I know, and yet it's so,
I forgive even "Jane!"
For as His love in me grows, hate goes—
Prime author of my pain.
So now let me dwell on the good times—
Fond memories renew—
The brotherly bonds, the comradeship,
The buddies I once knew. (2007) irj



General Colin Powell accepting the VVA National Minority Affairs Committee National Diversity Award at the National Board of Directors meeting in Silver Spring, MD on October 8, 2010. L to R: John Rowan, VVA National President, Jerry Yamamoto, Minority Affairs Chair, Gen. Colin Powell



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VVA CA State Council contact info inside - page 2

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IN THIS ISSUE:

- Agent Orange Information
- Legislative Information
- Veteran News
- Chapter Activities
- And more...

VVA & CSC MEETING DATES & EVENTS
 January 28-30, 2011 - Fresno
 April 22-24, 2011 - Fresno
 National Convention - August 15-21, 2011 - Reno, NV