



Listening Post

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

May, 2023

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Joe Richardson, Vice President
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Board of Directors

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Bud Gray
(805) 890-7645
Bob Citron
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Howard Tench
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Committees

**Chaplain/Housing
Improvements**
Open

Merchandise
Open

Parades/Work Party
Open

Fundraising
Open

POW/MIA
Ron Fitzgarrald
(805) 218-3489

Listening Post
Bob Citron
(805) 320-7767

James Ray Scholarship
Joe Richardson
(805) 659-2387

Membership
Joe Richardson
(805) 659-2387

President's Message:

First, I want to apologize to VVVC Member Doug Temple, I omitted his name in last month's LP as a member of the Color Guard in San Luis Obispo for the Wall that Heals. Thanks, John Cabrera, for bringing it to my attention.

Happy Anniversary to the Pina's

On April 25th members of the VVVC joined other veterans in attending the Ventura County Board of Supervisor's meeting, as students from ACE High School made their presentation to the Board, regarding the adding of two statues to the County Veterans Memorial. Their power point presentation was outstanding. I'll let our Public affairs Officer Ron talk about that.

On April 12th, Ron and Joe began this year's Vietnam Presentations, by speaking at Anacapa Middle School. For the month of May, our schedule is shown in the Upcoming Events section on page 7 of this newsletter.

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Memorial Day, remember Ojai will be doing a Wall of pictures of all veterans, please send a picture of yourself in the military to Nancy via Patti Bagley, email: pattibagley@gmail.com

Also, a reminder, our own Secretary Debora, is a DAV Chapter 24 Service Officer, if the County Veterans Service Office has a long lead time, you can contact her to assist you in filing a claim.

PACT ACT update:

Claims filed to date: 430,000 plus.

Claims completed: 180,000 plus.

Claims pending: 289,000 plus.

Non-PACT ACT Claims pending: 495,000 plus.

Ventura VA Clinic update: Note that it takes 1 year for the certification process for primary care applicants. Until next month.

Respectfully,

Richard F Camacho

President

VVVC Feb/March 2023 **Membership Report**

Annual Members:	19
Life Members:	97
Total Members:	116

VP/Membership Chair
Joe Richardson

Sick Call...

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

Laurie Richardson (Recovering)
Joe Richardson (Surgery 5/3)
Dave Wilson
Bobbie Mills
Ed Evans
Ed Hunt
Mike Logie
Howard Tench (recovering)
Manuel Gonzales
Laurie Abbe (hip replacement)

“The nation which forgets its defenders, will itself be forgotten”

-Calvin Coolidge

POW/MIA REPORT Mar '23 – Apr '23

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

European & Pacific Theaters: 0

USS Oklahoma: 0

Total from World War II: 0

Currently there are 72,233 Americans (approximately 26,000 are assessed as possibly-recoverable) still unaccounted for from World War II

Korean War: 1

***Army Sgt. Richard E. Crotty**, 22, of Geneva, Illinois, was accounted for Feb. 3, 2023.

Currently there are 7,495 Americans still unaccounted for from the Korean War.

Vietnam: 2

U.S. Air Force Major **Ernest L. De Soto**, 37, was accounted for March 23, 2023.

U.S. Air Force 1st Lt **Frederick M. Hall**, 25, was accounted for March 23, 2023.

Currently there are 1,566 American servicemen and civilians still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War

Iraq Theater & Other Conflicts: 6

Operation El Dorado Canyon, 1986 MIA: 1

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

Operation Desert Storm, 1991 MIA: 2

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

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

Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003-2010 MIA: 3

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

Mr. **Timothy E. Bell**, of Mobile, Ala., DoD contractor, was lost on April 9, 2004, while working in Baghdad, Iraq. Mr. **Adnan al-Hilawi**, of Orlando, Fla., DoD contractor, was lost on March 3, 2007, while working in Baghdad, Iraq.



Ron Fitzgarrald
POW/MIA Chairman

Helpful Resources:

- Vets and their survivors can learn more about the **PACT Act-related benefits** by visiting www.va.gov/PACT, or by calling 1-800-698-2411.
- **Homeless Veteran Resources:** If someone you know needs help, call 1-877-424-3838. Available Mon-Fri, 8am-8pm ET.
- If you disagree with VA's decision on your service-connected disability claim, you can request a **higher level review**. Information on how to do this can be found at www.va.gov/decision-reviews/higher-level-review.
- The **My HealtheVet** site used by many of us to manage our healthcare will be getting a new home soon. Over the next 2 years, it will be combined with My VA Health into a single location: My HealtheVet on VA.gov. In the interim, you can still access the portal like you do now.
- For more references regarding Veteran's health, go to: Health.mil, the official website of the Military Health System (MHA) and Defense Health Agency (DHA). If you are having difficulty with access due to a disability, contact the DHA Program Management Office at <https://www.Section508.gov> where you can view and use the accessibility requirements tool.
- Senators Julia Brownlee (CA), Debbie Stabinow (MICH.) and Peter Welch (VT), have introduced **HR1278/S592** to increase mileage reimbursement rates for Veterans to be in line with what federal employees receive. This is called the **DRIVE act**. Hasn't happened yet, so encourage your representatives and Senator to support it, if they aren't already.





Federal Benefits: https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp

CalVet Benefits: https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Documents/Veteran%20Resource_%20Book.pdf

CalVet Benefits Checklist:

https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Documents/2012%20VeteransBenefits_Checklist.pdf#search=CHECKLIST%20FOR%20BENEFITS

Veterans Collaborative of Ventura County

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

Veteran in crisis? Call 1 800 273-8255, press 1

<https://youtu.be/tgV60la0ui0> (veterans' mental health – you are not alone)

In Humble Service,

Tammy Bender
Veterans Program Coordinator
HMC, USN (Ret.)

(805) 477-5155 (main office)

(805) 477-5485 (desk number) (805) 477-5418 (fax)

Website: www.vchsa.org/veterans

Recent Events/Ceremonies:

- **On April 25th**, a formal presentation was made at the **Ventura County Board of Supervisors meeting**, regarding an upgrade proposal to the Veteran's Memorial at the corner of Telephone Road and Victoria Ave. The upgrade would add two life-size statues: one of a Soldier remembering the fallen, and the second would be the Gold Star Mom clutching the folded American Flag.

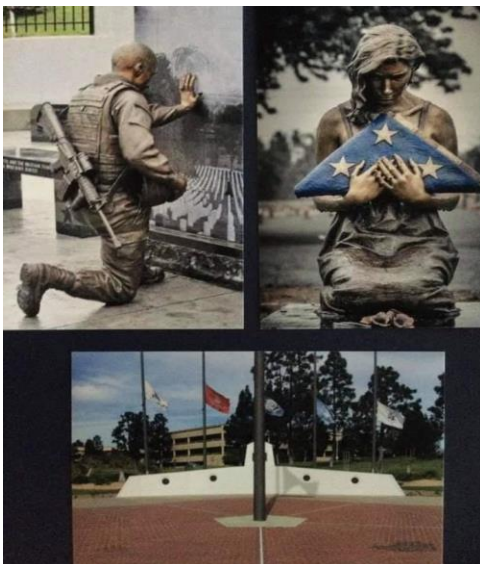
The primary speakers for the presentation included Ron Fitzgerald of the VVVC, John Middleton (Principal of ACE Charter High School in Camarillo), Marzieh Nikkhah (Architecture Teacher) and two students representing the team from ACE that put together the excellent 3D drawings and PowerPoint presentation used. Several others also spoke to the Board asking for their approval as well, including Richard Camacho (VVVC President). The project received unanimous approval!

Ron Fitzgerald speaks to the ACE Charter High School student team who prepared 3D drawings and Powerpoint presentation for the meeting.



County of Ventura – General Services Agency member David Sasek, Clint Garman, (District Representative of Supervisor Matt LaVere’s Office), Brian Miller (Chief of Staff - Supervisor Kelly Long’s Office), and Debora Ehrich (VVVC)

Unanimous approval given by County Board of Supervisors from all 5 districts



Photos representing the proposed statues and location. The Soldier would be installed at the left edge of the wall, and the Gold Star Mom would be at the right edge.

- On April 1, 2023 a Color Guard presentation was made during the Celebration of Life for “Yaqui Joe” Asebedo at the Ventura College Outdoor Stage. Yaqui Joe was an activist, advocate and volunteer who worked for the betterment of everyone, Native American – Indigenous Nations and the four legged.



Outdoor Stage at Ventura College



Color/Honor Guard members John Cabrera, Richard Camacho, Bob Citron, Richard Pina, Barry Jenkins and Debora Ehrich (not pictured, photographer)

- Veterans helping Veterans:** Frank Lopez and Howard Tench helped a fellow Veteran (Ron) move a bed from Ventura to Oxnard. This is what we do, folks. Kudos to Howard and Frank for responding to the call!



Upcoming Events:

- VA Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center BBQ/Party will be held in the Quad area on Thursday, May 4 at 11:00 am and 1:00 pm. Everyone is invited.
-  On **Sunday, May 7, 2023** the Ventura Elks #1430 will be sponsoring a golf tournament at the Olivas Links golf course as a fund raiser for the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter 24 of Ventura. It will be a Scramble format, with prizes and a BBQ afterwards at the lodge which is located at 2126 Knoll Dr., Ventura 93003. For further information and registration call **Rayner Spencer at (805) 407-3405**.
- VVVC members will be speaking at local schools about their experiences in Vietnam. The dates/locations are:
 - 5/15 and 16 – Newbury Park High School (Tim Tobin, Joe Richardson)
 - 5/17 and 18 – Foothill High School (Ron Fitzgerrald, Ed Evans)
 - 5/23 – Thousand Oaks High School (Richard Camacho, Ed Evans)
 - 5/26 - Moorpark High School (Joe Richardson, Ed Evans, Richard Camacho)
- On **Memorial Day (May 29, 2023) at 1:00 pm** there will be a special event for **all Veterans** put on by the American Legion Post 482 of Ojai. The “Wall of Remembrance” will be at Libby Bowl in Ojai. **An important reminder here:** Nancy Hill (parade coordinator) & Patti Bagley of Daughter of the American Revolution (DAR) are asking members if they would like to have a personal profile poster made of them for the Libby Bowl display. They are requesting any photos and short descriptions (name, rank, rating, years of service, where you served). They would like to receive these by May 5th, if possible. They can be sent to: PattiBagley@gmail.com. The flyer for this event is attached to this LP issue.
- VVVC Board member Robert Buckley has been active on a proposal to turn **St. Mary’s Cemetery** into a National cemetery, in honor of the 79 Vets interred there. Headstones of those buried were removed and it’s currently being used as a dog park. He spoke to the Mayor of Ventura who supports him and will speak to Parks & Recreation about relocating the dog park. Robert has also spoken to National Cemetery representatives, and was told that it cannot be a National Cemetery because civilians are buried there also. They proposed just making it a cemetery again, and erect a monument to honor the 79 Veterans buried there. There will be an on-site ceremony on **Memorial Day, May 29**.
- A request has also been made for the VVVC to present a Color Guard on **June 6, 2023** at the Palm Garden Hotel in Thousand Oaks for a Garden Club Convention. Time is **4:00 pm**. Stay tuned.
- The VVVC will open for the **July 4th parade** in Ojai this year. Walking distance is approximately a mile; the open trailer will be behind the walkers for those who need or want to ride. After all, there’s a BBQ at the American Legion Post 482 afterwards and Vets are free!

Attention All Veterans

Your presence is cordially requested



Ojai VFW Post 11461

Presents

Ojai Memorial Day 2023

Monday, May 29

1:00pm

Libbey Bowl

Speakers / Singers 1:00PM to 3:00PM

The Wall of Remembrance

View Ventura County Veterans Photographs

Free to all



Barbeque to follow at –

**American Legion Ojai Post 482
843 East Ojai Avenue, Ojai, CA**

Barbeque 3:00PM; \$10.00 / Veterans Free (be early)