



INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

CHAPTER 535



"It Feels Good to Get Involved"

Volume 21 Issue 12

In Service To America and the Gold Country

December 2011

President's Message

Wishing all Vets a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We Heard that Harold Graves got involved in a motorcycle accident and wish him a speedy recovery. Our thoughts and prayers go out to him. Patricia will give an update at the right time.

Well this year we will be having our Annual Christmas dinner at the V.A. building on Dec. 1st. at 6pm. If you can bring an unopened non wrapped gift or some canned goods for the needy it will be appreciated.

Will be signing up for the Victorian Christmas that will be held in Nevada City. We will need help for this one.

Once again, thank you all

Gary Tanaka, President
garytanaka@att.net 272-2317

2011 Chapter 535 Holiday Dinner

Its that time of the year again. I take great pleasure in inviting you to our annual holiday dinner. This year it will be held on December 1st., starting at 6:00 pm at the dinning hall in the Grass Valley veterans building.

We will be having some hors d'oeuvres and then a traditional turkey dinner with all the fixings, Turkey gravy, stuffing, mashed potatoes, vegetables, also we will be having ham. Please bring your own beverage.

Please R.S.V.P to this message if you can come to this dinner or if you cannot come to the dinner.

Please R.S.V.P. Gary Tanka at 272-2317



Contents	Page
Message from the President	1
Chapter Holiday Dinner.....	1
Victorian Christmas.....	1
Second E-Waste Event.....	2
Military History.....	2
Chapter Information	3
Upcoming Dates & Events.....	4
Vacant Committee Chairs	4
Membership Facts.....	4
VA Health Care Update	5
Stand-Down Thank You.....	5
Victorian Sign Up Sheet.....	6
Calendar	7
VVA Application Form.....	8

Victorian Christmas

Its Victorian Christmas time again. The event will be on Wednesdays December 7, 14 & 21 and on Sundays on December 11 & 18. This event is one of the Chapters largest fund raiser and it takes many volunteers to man this event. We will have sign up sheets for booth workers at the December Christmas dinner. So check those dates on your calendar and be ready to sign up. In addition to booth workers we need people who can bake brownies and help with the cider startup.

2nd E-waste Event

Since the E-Waste Event in September 10, 2011 was successful, the Nevada County Consolidated Veterans' Council (NCCVC) is planning a 2nd E-Waste Event on Saturday, February 18, 2012 at the Grass Valley Veterans Memorial Building. The event will be held in the parking lot from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. With the holidays so close and replacing those electrical items that need upgrading or those items that are not usable, not wanted or are damaged, the NCCVC will be happy to dispose of them for you. Check your garage, attic or basement and bring them to the NCCVC Event. We will unload the items for you. Veterans who are unable to deliver items to the Veterans Building on February 18, can call Margie Buhler (VVA) at 265-878 or Jim Goepel (DAV) at 272-2671 to make arrangements for pick-up within the Grass Valley/Nevada City area. The September E-Waste netted \$926.55. (Including a donation of \$30). This was a good start for the project to replace the singled-paned, leaky windows in the Veterans Remembrance Room. Below is a list of those items that CEAR (the recycler) can accept.

We accept the following:

Monitors, television, desktop and notebook PCs, VCRs, stereo equipment, speakers, keyboards, mice, PDAs, digital cameras, zip drives, telephones, cell phones, printers, copiers, toasters, blenders, microwaves, laser and multifunction scanners and fax machines, and most small, electrical household appliances. ALL HARDRIVES ARE PHYSICALLY DESTROYED.

We cannot accept: Household appliances such as refrigerators, washers/dryers, furniture, hazardous household waste, including: fluorescent light bulbs, paint, pesticides, used oil, cleaning supplies, tires, ect.

Margie Buhler
VVA Delegate to the NCCVC

Military History Anniversaries: Significant November events in U.S. Military History are:

Nov 16 1944 - WWII: Dueren, Germany is completely destroyed by Allied bombers.

Nov 16 1945 - Cold War: Operation Paperclip - The United States Army secretly admits 88 German scientists and engineers to help in the development of rocket technology.

Nov 17 1913 - The first ship sails through the Panama Canal, which connects the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Nov 17 1970 - Vietnam: Lieutenant William Calley goes on trial for the My Lai massacre.

Nov 19 1861 - Civil War: Julia Ward Howe writes "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" while visiting Union troops.

Nov 19 1861 - Civil War: The Confederate raider Nashville captured and burned the Union clipper ship Harvey Birch in the Atlantic Ocean.

Nov 19 1863 - Civil War: Lincoln delivers the "Gettysburg Address" at the dedication of the National Cemetery at the site of the Battle of Gettysburg

Nov 20 1943 - WWII: U.S. Marines landed on Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands, one of the bloodiest campaigns waged by American forces against the Japanese in the Pacific.

Nov 20 1950 - Korea: U.S. troops push to the Yalu River, within five miles of Manchuria.

Nov 21 1864 - Civil War: From Georgia, Confederate General John B. Hood launches the Franklin-Nashville Campaign into Tennessee

Nov 23 1863 - Civil War: Union forces win the Battle of Orchard Knob, Tennessee.

Nov 23 1863 - Civil War: The Battle of Chattanooga in Tennessee, one of the most decisive battles of the War, begins.

Nov 23 1941 U.S. troops move into Dutch Guiana, by agreement with the Netherlands Government in exile, to guard the bauxite mines to protect aluminum ore supplies from the mines in Surinam.

Nov 23 1968 - Vietnam: Battle of Nui Chom Mountain. The 4th Bn, 31st Infantry, 196th Inf Bde fought and destroyed the 21st NVA Regiment on Nui Chom Mountain southwest of Da Nang in a fierce six day battle.

Chapter 535 Information Center

Web Page www.nccn.net/~vvanc/welcome.htm

Chapter 535 Officers & Board of Directors

Officers-Phone

President

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Secretary

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Treasurer

Harold Graves haroldgraves@sbcglobal.net..... 470-8507

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Jerry Molloy petem1947@sbcglobal.net 273-4804

Gary Tanaka garytanaka@att.net..... 272-2317

CA State Council Delegates

Pete Burelle, alternate Wayne Simonson

Chapter 535 Committees Chairs

Constitution/Bylaws Vacant

Finance Review Bill Holman (chair) and
Nick deZaparkanszky

4th of July/Constitution Day..... Dick Corn

Product Sales Pete Burelle

Victorian Christmas Jose Gonzales

Membership Affairs Joe Sanders

Newsletter... bholman@succeed.net, 265-8387 Bill Holman

Nominations Vacant

Public Relations Vacant

Nevada County Fair Harold Graves, Jerry Molloy

Christmas Year Round Harold Graves

Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Bill Holman

Entertainment..... Jose Gonzales

Veterans Benefits Refer to VSO Officer

NCCVC Pete Burelle

Nevada County Veterans Affairs Rep.

Eric (530)

273-3396.....



Network Real Estate

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Grass Valley, CA 95945

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www.dickcorn.com



Chapter 535 Web Page

www.nccn.net/~vvanc/welcome.htm

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The Vinh Son Orphanage, has a new web site

www.friendsofvso.org

Veterans Directory

Congress

Senate - Veterans Affairs Committee202-224-9126
 House - Veterans Affairs Committee.....202-225-3527

Department of Veterans Affairs

Board of Veterans Appeals202-233-3001
 Central Office202-233-4000
 Freedom of Information/Privacy Act202-233-3616
 Personnel Locator.....202-233-4000
 Public Information202-233-3056
 Veterans Health Administration202-535-7010
 VA Telephone Care Program800-733-0502
 Cemetery, Burial, & Headstone Info.....800-697-6947

Agencies

Department of Defense703-545-6700
 DEERS Information (California).....800-334-4162
 CHAMPUS (California).....800-741-5048
 Office of Management and Budget Veterans Affairs.202-395-4500
 Small Business Administration Office of Veterans
 Affairs202-205-6773

Locator & Reunion Services

Army Worldwide Locator.....317-542-4211
 Navy Times Locator Services703-750-8636
 Service Reunions703-998-7035
 Vietnam Veterans Locator.....319-388-9023
 Veteran's Locator Service 800-449-VETS

Miscellaneous

Vietnam Women's Memorial Project202-328-7253
 Sons & Daughters In Touch CA805-872-4035
 Retired Pay - Cleveland DFAS.....800-321-1080
 Navy Lodging..... 800-NAVY INN
 Army Lodging 800-GO ARMY

Newsletter Submissions

Please ensure that submissions for the newsletter reach us no-later-than the 15th of the month before the meeting. They may be mailed to:

VVA Chapter 535

Attn: Newsletter Editor
 18455 Augustine Rd, Nevada City, CA 95959
 e-mail to bholman@succeed.net or
 call Bill Holman at (530) 265-8387

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of Vietnam Veterans of America National, State Council, or Chapter 535 or the newsletter editor, but those of the author of the comments.

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Has Your Address Changed?

Please let us know before the Post office quits forwarding your newsletters. If you find your not receiving your newsletter's or hearing from us, please contact Bill Holman at 265-8387.

Vacant Committee Chairs

There are four vacant committee chairs that need to be filled and the position of secretary for the Chapter. This is a good opportunity for a member to become more active in the Chapter. Anyone interested should contact: Pete Burelle (howling_wolf28@yahoo.com) 274-3787.
 Chapter Secretary..... Vacant

Chairs
 Constitution/Bylaws Vacant
 Nominations Vacant
 Public Relations Vacant

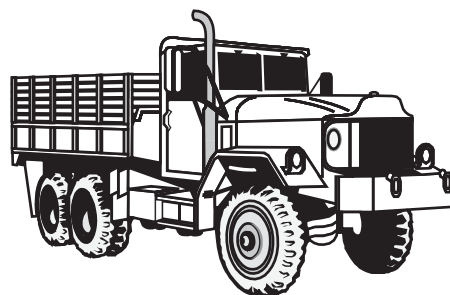
Membership Facts Chapter 535

VVA	
Individual members	34
Applications waiting for (DD214)	
Life members	34
AVVA	
Individual members	2
Life member	1
Total	71



Upcoming Dates and Events

December 1 Chapter Xmas Dinner 6 pm
 December 7 Victorian Christmas
 December 11 Victorian Christmas
 December 14 Victorian Christmas
 December 18 Victorian Christmas
 December 21 Victorian Christmas



VA Health Care Access Update

Some local veterans swear they wouldn't be alive today if it weren't for the health care they receive from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Others say dealing with the VA is like walking through molasses. You may someday reach your destination – if you live that long. Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-22), has been dealing with complaints about the VA from constituents for years. So this week, he and a bipartisan group of congressional colleagues are demanding an independent investigation to find out once and for all what's ailing the VA and what can be done to cure it. "I'm tired of putting a Band-Aid on it," McCarthy said 26 OCT. To that end, he and more than two dozen members of both parties, including Rep. Jim Costa, D-Fresno, signed a letter asking the U.S. Government Accountability Office to begin an inquiry into why veterans commonly experience long delays in the processing of their benefits.

Many also experience difficulty in scheduling and attending medical appointments in the VA's Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, of which Bakersfield is a part. According to the VA's own numbers, disability claims take an average of 236 days to process. That's simply unacceptable, McCarthy said. "This is a structural problem. This is not just someone slipping through the cracks," he said. And the problems are not new. Chuck Bikakis, director of Kern County Veterans Service, said in his 14 years of assisting veterans in Kern County, it has always been thus. One of the central problems boils down to one simple fact: The VA is being asked to serve more veterans with fewer dollars. He's seen the same trend locally. "Rather than call on the GAO to ask the VA what the problem is, just ask the VA. They'll be happy to tell you," Bikakis said. In the early 1970s, about 7,000 employees in the VA's greater Los Angeles system were caring for about 50,000 veterans. Today, according to VA statistics, about 5,000 employees are caring for more than 82,000 veterans. It's a mathematical calculation that leaves many veterans waiting for months to get critical questions answered.

Mike Cortez, 63, an Army veteran who saw combat in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968, says the VA is just another arm of the octopus. "Since the day I first put on a uniform, it's always has been, 'Hurry up and wait,'" he said. "From right off the get. 'You learn right away you're going to wait in line,'" he said. "It may take awhile, but you can't step out or you'll lose your place." Cortez said he lied to himself for more than 35 years about his Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, an illness that would send him flashing back to Vietnam in a split-second. It could be triggered by something as simple as an exploding firecracker on the 4th of July. He's not sure a GAO study will make a lasting difference, but he's happy to know someone cares enough to try. "I'm glad someone

out there is screaming and yelling about these long waits at the VA," he said of the efforts by members of Congress.

Pat Pacana, wife of Vietnam veteran Frank Pacana, said the VA certainly has room for improvement, especially in the area of claims processing. But she and her 73-year-old husband are generally pleased with the service they receive from the VA. "I'm one of the happy ones," said Mrs. Pacana. Besides suffering from PTSD, Frank has undergone quadruple heart bypass surgery and suffers from diabetes and glaucoma. "Without the VA, we'd probably be homeless right now," Mrs. Pacana said. The VA covers the full cost of Frank's meds. They have little trouble getting appointments with a doctor and the service is excellent, she said. "They call you about two weeks before your appointment," she said. "They send you a notice and they call you the day before. "We just thank God we have that coverage."

Larry Fillipo, a spokesman for VA's Veteran Benefits Administration in Los Angeles, said they have received and reviewed the congressional letter, but until the GAO takes action, he said he cannot comment on it. In the meantime, he said, the Veteran Benefits Administration is already headed for a significant "transformation." In 2012, all records will be changed to an electronic format, he said. Whether the new technology will streamline the processing of claims remains to be seen.



Christmas Vietnam 1967.

VVA Chapter 535 Victorian Christmas Booth Schedule

To Sign-up Contact Jose Gonzales, captainjose@att.net. 2743559

Wed 12/7	Cider Startup	Booth	Brownie Bakers
	* _____	* _____	* _____
	* _____	* _____	* _____
	* _____	* _____	* _____
		* _____	
Sun 12/11	Cider Startup	Booth	Brownie Bakers
	* _____	* _____	* _____
	* _____	* _____	* _____
	* _____	* _____	* _____
		* _____	
Wed 12/14	Cider Startup	Booth	Brownie Bakers
	* _____	* _____	* _____
	* _____	* _____	* _____
	* _____	* _____	* _____
		* _____	
Sun 12/18	Cider Startup	Booth	Brownie Bakers
	* _____	* _____	* _____
	* _____	* _____	* _____
	* _____	* _____	* _____
		* _____	
Wed 12/21	Cider Startup	Booth	Brownie Bakers
	* _____	* _____	* _____
	* _____	* _____	* _____
	* _____	* _____	* _____
		* _____	

* _____ = A need for someone to sign Up and Volunteer

Sart Up for Wednesday nights is at 2:30pm sharp at the GV Vets Hall

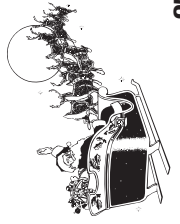
Sart Up for Sunday is at 10:30am sharp at the GV Vets Hall

Booth workers for Wednesday nights meet at the set up the booth in Nnevada City at 4:30 pm sharp to help with the booth set up.The Shift is from 4:30 pm to 9:30 pm.

Booth workers for Sunday meet at the set up the booth in Nnevada City at 12:30 pm sharp to help with the booth set up.The Shift is from 12:30 pm to 6:30 pm.

December - 2011



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				General Membership Meeting and Chapter Christmas Dinner 6:00 pm		
	Andy McRobbie		VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS			
VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS			VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS			
VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS			VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS Al Cillurso			
Christmas Day 		Gary Hess				

Application For Membership
VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC., CHAPTER 535

P.O. Box 37, Grass Valley, CA 95945

Individual membership is open to all Vietnam-era veterans who served on active duty for other than training purposes between August 5, 1964 – May 7, 1975 and In-Country Veterans: February 28, 1961 – May 7, 1975.

Name _____ Sex _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone () _____ Work Phone () _____ Email _____

Marital Status _____ Spouse's Name _____

Chapter No. **535** Sponsor _____ ID No. _____

- ◆ **Membership Type:** Individual – 1 year @ \$20 annual Individual – 3 years @ \$50
(select one) Life Member **Payment Plan** \$50 down, 8 monthly payments of \$25

Select Age Group Ages 49 and under \$250 Ages 50-55 \$225

Ages 56-60 \$200 Ages 61-65 \$175 Ages 66 and over \$150

- ◆ **Payment Method:** Check Money Order Visa MasterCard
(select one)

◆ **Card Number** _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Individual members **must** submit a copy of their DD-214 along with this application and dues payment. Associate participation is open to family, friends, all veterans, and other interested persons.

In Service To America

Address Correction Requested

