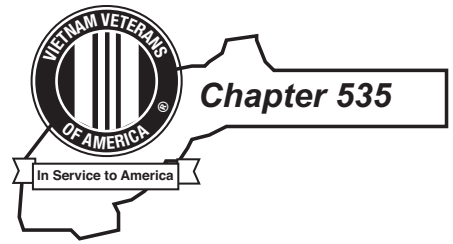




# INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA  
**CHAPTER 535**



Chapter 535 Web Page [www.vva535.org](http://www.vva535.org)

*"It Feels Good to Get Involved"*

Volume 24 Issue 4

*In Service To America and the Gold Country*

April 2014

## **President's Message**

### **Chapter Annual Meeting & Elections**

It's that time of year again. April 3rd is our Chapter's Annual Meeting and Elections. Come join us for pizza and vote for the officers and members of the board of directors who will lead the Chapter for the next twelve months.

### **Concert Update**

You will recall our Chapter, in partnership with Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage, is sponsoring a concert on May 17th, Armed Forces Day, at the Grass Valley Veterans Hall. We need your help. As of last count, we've sold 60 tickets. We only need to sell 840 more tickets! If each of us commits to sell ten tickets, we'll be in great shape.

We need help putting posters in local businesses and other places, and selling tickets. If you can share an hour or two putting out posters, give Ralph Remick a call (559-7716). Also, tell your friends about the concert. One on one contacts are far more successful than impersonal advertising. Tickets can be ordered on line at [www.vetsconcert.com](http://www.vetsconcert.com) or by telephone 1-800-838-3006. Ralph also has tickets available if you need tickets to sell.

### **DOD Personnel Costs**

You may have read recently about discussions between Congress and the Department of Defense on growing personnel costs. This challenge has the potential of impacting salaries and benefits not only for active duty military but also veterans. Failure to address this may also impact funding for operations. Later in this newsletter we are including an article "Personnel Costs May Overwhelm Department of Defense Budget" by Veronique de Rugy, an economist with the Mercatus Center at George Mason University.

### **Memorial Walk**

Friends of Nevada County Military will again sponsor the "Local Heroes Memorial Bridge Walk and Bus Tour" on Memorial Day, following the Memorial Day Ceremonies in both Nevada City and Grass Valley. This will be the third

year honoring service men from our county who died while serving our country in Vietnam and Iraq and whose names appear on plaques on our bridges. Pat Nelson and Catherine Ione will again spearhead this effort, which will include

- a bicycle tour of Nevada County Memorial Bridges between Nevada City and Grass Valley, led by Connie Strawser, Tour of Nevada City, leaving Pioneer Park after the Veterans of Foreign War Ceremony in Nevada City (about 9:15 am);
- a walking tour of the Grass Valley Memorial Bridges, led by Friends of Nevada County Military, after the American Legion's Ceremony at the Grass Valley Veterans' Hall; or
- a bus tour of Nevada County Memorial Bridges between Nevada City and Grass Valley, led by Friends of Nevada County Military, after the American Legion's Ceremony at the Grass Valley Veterans' Hall.

*Continued on page 2*

Contents	Page
Message from the President .....	1
Chapter Information .....	3
Membership Facts.....	3
Upcoming Dates and Events .....	3
Chapter Birthdays .....	3
Vietnam Veteran Buckle.....	3
Nevada County Consolidated Veterans Report .....	4
Lewis Albanese.....	5
Department of Defense Budget .....	5
Johnny Cash/Patsy Cline Tribute Show .....	7
VVA Application Form.....	8



As in past years, Friends of Nevada County Military will be asking for volunteers to act as doscents. I hope you will consider joining us on on Memorial Day.

## Special Operations

Earlier this week Margie and I spent an hour in the Hawthorne Ordnance Museum in Hawthorne, Nevada. While speaking to a doscent at the museum, we learned the team that raided Bin Ladin's house in Pakistan trained for their mission in the desert near Hawthorne. In recent years Hawthorne was used to prepare troops for deployment to Afghanistan, particularly Special Ops. I think we have all been impressed by the growth in Special Operations over the past several decades. The following article by Daniel Pipes, which caught my attention this week, raises concern about the future of Special Operations and the overall direction of our military strategy. Particularly in light of proposed reductions in force.

The Worrisome Future of Special Operation Forces

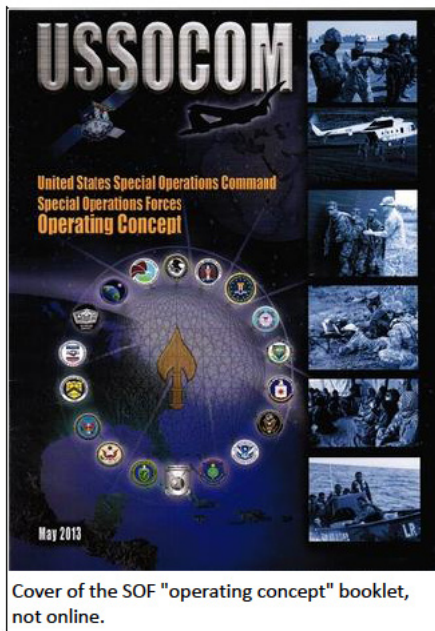
by Daniel Pipes Mar 23, 2014

<http://www.danielpipes.org/blog/2014/03/the-worrisome-future-of-special-operation-forces>

I just had the opportunity to spend an afternoon with a Council on Foreign Relations group at the United States Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. Its commander, the famed Admiral William H. McRaven, started the briefing, followed by his staff.

I expected to learn about Navy SEALs, Army Rangers, and their air force and marine counterparts. I thought I would hear about the exploits of this 67,000-strong command operating in 84 countries, maybe even about the taking down of Osama bin Laden. But that was not to be. Instead, he and the other officers talked at length about their new mission, starting with the command's motto, "You can't surge trust."

It took some time for it to sink in because of their turgid language, but here's a key paragraph from the Operating Concept for special operations forces (SOF) that was handed out to the CFR group:



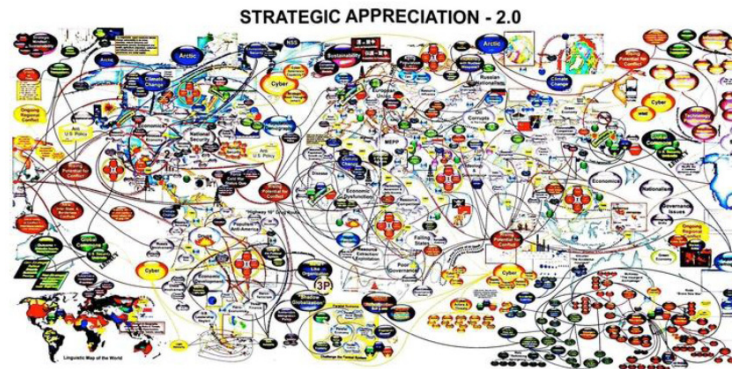
Cover of the SOF "operating concept" booklet, not online.

The Special Operations Forces Operating Concept captures the essence of the SOF heritage as it could be - as it should be in the year 2020 and beyond. The concept moves beyond the first decade of the 21st Century, when SOF primarily supported large-scale contingency operations by conducting counterterrorism operations to find, capture, or kill our adversaries. Although of great value to the Nation, these operations were never intended to be decisive. Operating through the Global SOF Network in support of our Geographic Combatant Commanders and Chiefs of Mission, SOF now have the opportunity to achieve strategic outcomes by working with and through interagency and foreign partners to understand and influence relevant populations.

### Translated into English, this says:

Special Operations Forces used to be about capturing or killing America's adversaries; its new mission is to shape public opinion.

Or, in the words of a bullet point in the Operating Concept, the goal is "Elevating SOF non-lethal skills to the same level of expertise as lethal skills." As radical a shift as this is, at least I could comprehend it. Not so the following graphic, "Strategic Appreciation - 2.0," which was projected onto a large floor for most of our briefing and which makes no sense to me:



Comments: (1) I came away from this briefing unsure if the special operations leadership really believes this stuff or is mouthing it to distract the public from discussing its real mission. (2) If it's sincere, I worry about our future defense. (March 23, 2014)

## Announcements

April 3 Chapter Annual Meeting and elections

April 16 Chapter Board Meeting

April 26-27 California State Council, Fresno

Fred Buhler, President 265-4878

# Chapter 535 Information Center

## VVA Belt Buckles For Sale:

Eagle with Flag and Vietnam Service Ribbon: \$25 Or, MAKE YOUR OWN! Buy an "Eagle only" buckle and add your choice of insignia. They glue on fairly easily. Price for the "Eagle only" buckle - \$12.



Call Margie (530-265-4878) or e-mail at [margie95959@earthlink.net](mailto:margie95959@earthlink.net)

## Chapter 535 Officers & Board of Directors

### Officers-Phone

<b>President</b>	
Fred Buhler .....	265-4878
<b>Vice-President</b>	
Dick Corn .....	277-8856
<b>Secretary</b>	
Dave Johnson .....	885-1230
<b>Treasurer</b>	
Harold Graves <a href="mailto:haroldgraves@sbcglobal.net">haroldgraves@sbcglobal.net</a> .....	470-8507
<b>Past President</b>	
Fred Buhler .....	265-4878

### Directors

Ric Sheridan <a href="mailto:rfsheridan@sbcglobal.net">rfsheridan@sbcglobal.net</a> .....	274-1413
Dan Davis .....	272-4110
Pete Burelle <a href="mailto:howling_wolf28@yahoo.com">howling_wolf28@yahoo.com</a> .....	274-3787
Bill Holman <a href="mailto:bholman@succeed.nett">bholman@succeed.nett</a> .....	265-8387
Kent Hawley.....	432-3551
Ralph Remick.....	559-7716

### CA State Council Delegates

Pete Burelle, Fred Buhler (alternate) 265-4878

## Chapter 535 Committees Chairs

Finance .....	Ralph Remick & Dave Johnson
Parade and Honor Guard .....	Pete Burelle
Membership Affairs .....	Margie Buhler
Newsletter ...	<a href="mailto:bholman@succeed.net">bholman@succeed.net</a> , 265-8387 Bill Holman
Nominations .....	Dick Corn
Christmas Year Round .....	Harold Graves
Shredding Program .....	Dan Davis
NCCVC .....	Margie Buhler
Web Master.....	Ralph Remick

### Nevada County Veterans Affairs Rep.

Eric .....(530) 273-3396

## April Birthdays

4	1	Ferrier, James
4	20	William Hald

The Vinh Son Orphanage, has a new web site

[www.friendsofvso.org](http://www.friendsofvso.org)

### Membership Facts Chapter 535

<b>VVA</b>	
Individual members	33
Life members	39
<b>AVVA</b>	
Individual members	1
Life member	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>



Welcome to New Member: Peter Hidalgo

### Upcoming Dates and Events

April	3	Chapter Meeting 6 pm
May	17	Cash & Cline Concert

## Veterans Directory

### Congress

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

### Department of Veterans Affairs

Board of Veterans Appeals .....	202-233-3001
Central Office .....	202-233-4000
Freedom of Information/Privacy Act .....	202-233-3616
Personnel Locator.....	202-233-4000
Public Information .....	202-233-3056
Veterans Health Administration .....	202-535-7010
VA Telephone Care Program.....	800-733-0502
Cemetery, Burial, & Headstone Info.....	800-697-6947

### Agencies

Department of Defense .....	703-545-6700
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 Affairs .....	202-205-6773

### Locator & Reunion Services

Army Worldwide Locator.....	317-542-4211
Navy Times Locator Services .....	703-750-8636
Service Reunions .....	703-998-7035
Vietnam Veterans Locator.....	319-388-9023
Veteran's Locator Service .....	800-449-VETS

### Miscellaneous

Vietnam Women's Memorial Project .....	202-328-7253
Sons & Daughters In Touch CA .....	805-872-4035
Retired Pay - Cleveland DFAS.....	800-321-1080
Navy Lodging.....	800-NAVY INN
Army Lodging.....	800-GO ARMY

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## NCCVC Report - E-Waste

The January E-Waste collection netted \$1,012.60. Funds raised will be used for repairs to the Grass Valley Vets building. Thanks to all who helped make this a successful event. The next E-Waste collection is scheduled for June 21 from 9 AM to 1 PM in the parking lot behind the Vets building. Your E-Waste is valuable to us. Call Margie at 265-4878 or Gary at 477-1533 for more information.



## 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](mailto: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.

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapters are hereby given permission to reproduce any locally produced articles published in this newsletter. Permission to reprint anything else must come from the original source.

### Has Your Address Changed?

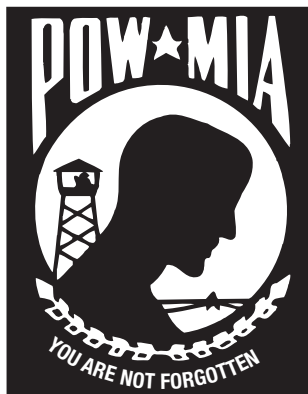
Please let us know before the Post office quits forwarding your newsletters. If you find your not receiving your newsletters or hearing from us, please contact Bill Holman at 265-8387.



## Congressional Medal of Honor Albanese, Lewis

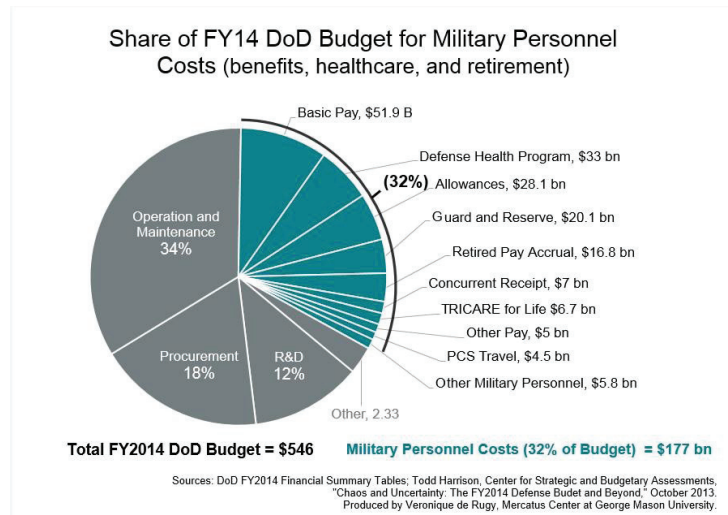
- Rank and Organization: Private First Class, U.S. Army, Company B, 5th Battalion (Airmobile), 7th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division
- Date of Issue: 3 April 1968.
- Place and Date: Republic of Vietnam, 1 December 1966

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life and beyond the call of duty. Pfc. Albanese's platoon, while advancing through densely covered terrain to establish a blocking position, received intense automatic weapons fire from close range. As other members maneuvered to assault the enemy position, Pfc. Albanese was ordered to provide security for the left flank of the platoon. Suddenly, the left flank received fire from enemy located in a well-concealed ditch. Realizing the imminent danger to his comrades from this fire, Pfc. Albanese fixed his bayonet and moved aggressively into the ditch. His action silenced the sniper fire, enabling the platoon to resume movement toward the main enemy position. As the platoon continued to advance, the sound of heavy firing emanated from the left flank from a pitched battle that ensued in the ditch which Pfc. Albanese had entered. The ditch was actually a well-organized complex of enemy defenses designed to bring devastating flanking fire on the forces attacking the main position. Pfc. Albanese, disregarding the danger to himself, advanced 100 meters along the trench and killed 6 of the snipers, who were armed with automatic weapons. Having exhausted his ammunition, Pfc. Albanese was mortally wounded when he engaged and killed 2 more enemy soldiers in fierce hand-to-hand combat. His unparalleled actions saved the lives of many members of his platoon who otherwise would have fallen to the sniper fire from the ditch, and enabled his platoon to successfully advance against an enemy force of overwhelming numerical superiority. Pfc. Albanese's extraordinary heroism and supreme dedication to his comrades were commensurate with the finest traditions of the military service and remain a tribute to himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.



## Personnel Costs May Overwhelm Department of Defense Budget

By Veronique de Rugy



While most Americans are cognizant of the pressures that rising health costs place on big-ticket budget items like Medicare and Social Security, defense spending is often framed strictly in terms of military action. The same pressures that strain the general federal budget also affect military funding, but its opaque nature obscures rising health care and retirement costs for military personnel. If this trend in military spending continues, personnel costs—including health, income, and retirement spending—will consume unsustainable pluralities of defense spending.

This week's chart uses data from the Department of Defense's FY 2014 budget request and an analysis by Todd Harrison of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments to display DoD outlays and personnel costs for 2014. If current trends hold, personnel costs on health care, income, and retirement may consume larger portions of the DoD budget with each succeeding year.

The DoD budget is itemized into three broad categories: Operation and Support, which includes the subcategories of Operation and Maintenance and Military Personnel; Acquisition, which includes the subcategories of Procurement and Research and Development; and Infrastructure, which includes the subcategories of military construction and family housing. Additionally, the off-budget

“Overseas Contingency Operations” (OCO) fund, which is not subject to Budget Control Act spending caps, funds overseas military operations outside of the DoD’s “official” budget.

The DoD budget is generally presented by listing the major categories and subcategories (without OCO funding) and summing the total. However, this method conceals the size of personnel spending. For instance, \$218.7 billion in spending categorized as “Operation and Maintenance” funds health care services and pharmaceuticals administered by the Military Health System. Civilian personnel costs, too, are categorized as “Operation and Maintenance” spending rather than “Military Personnel” spending. This concealed personnel spending represents a considerable portion of the spending categorized as “Operation and Maintenance.”

Once the budget categories are broken down to distinguish personnel spending from the rest, the picture looks quite different. On-budget personnel costs will total \$177 billion in 2014. The largest personnel category, basic pay, amounts to \$51.9 billion. This amount is supplemented by \$28 billion in allowances for service members to fund housing and general subsistence, \$5 billion in special incentive pay, and \$2.3 billion for recruiting and reenlistment bonuses. Health care costs, too, are a big budget item, with \$33 billion in spending allocated in the Military Health System in 2014.

A CBO analysis of trends in DoD spending is sobering. Their projection of DoD spending under three different budget scenarios shows that military personnel spending on compensation and non-compensation will grow to the largest budget item by 2022 if action is not taken. Rising expected health care expenditures lead this growth in overall personnel costs; the Military Health System alone is expected to spend roughly \$70 billion by 2022. While the CBO notes that growth in health care costs is likely to eventually decelerate, they project that this won’t occur until 2030 or later. Barring major reform, this problem will likely persist for at least two expensive decades, adding to an already strained fiscal situation.

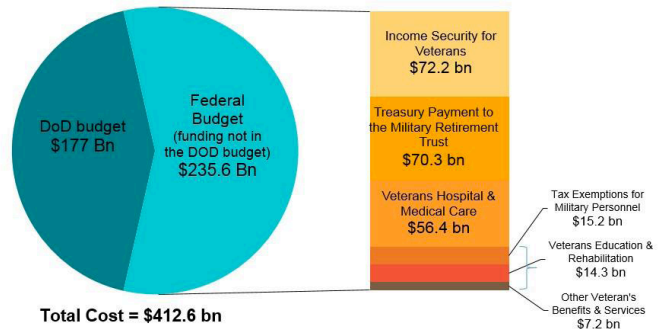
Examining the DoD’s on-budget personnel spending just scratches the surface of all military-related personnel spending. Harrison notes that most military personnel spending is actually funded outside of the DoD budget. The chart above displays the breakdown of off- and on-budget personnel costs.

Veteran care comprises a majority of off-DoD-budget military personnel spending, with \$56.4 billion planned for veteran health care, \$72.2 billion dedicated to veteran income security, \$14.3 billion funding veteran education, training, and rehabilitation, and a remaining \$7.2 billion to provide miscellaneous veteran benefits. The Treasury Department’s payments for the Military Retirement Trust comprise a formidable \$70.3 billion in spending, while tax exemptions for military personnel amount to another \$15.2 billion in costs. All told, total military personnel spending will reach \$412 billion in 2014, \$235.4 billion of which is off the DoD’s official budget.

Proposals to control DoD’s spiraling health costs largely focus on shifting financial burdens to military personnel by raising enrollment fees, deductibles, or copayments. While these reforms likely are to be unpopular among the enlisted personnel, they merely tinker at the edges of the problem.

Ballooning personnel costs are merely a symptom of the larger problems of open-ended conflict and general health care price inflation. Until those catalysts are addressed, the DoD will need to make many tough budget choices to accommodate this growing liability. As long as it fails to do so, the US military may spend more of its resources providing benefits packages and less of its resources providing defense.

Total Military Personnel–Related Costs for FY2014



Sources: DoD FY2014 Financial Summary Tables; Todd Harrison, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. "Chaos and Uncertainty: The FY2014 Defense Budget and Beyond," October 2013. Produced by Veronique de Rugy, Mercatus Center at George Mason University.



**JOHNNY**  
**CASH**

**PATSY**  
**CLINE**

**TRIBUTE SHOW**

With **Johnny & Dee Price**

and *The Rhythm Riders*



**Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Armed Forces Day**

**8:00PM** 255 South Auburn Street, Grass Valley  
**VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING**

**TICKETS: GENERAL ADMISSION \$25**  
**PREMIUM \$35 (FRONT 10 ROWS & PARKING)**  
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT 800-838-3006, ONLINE AT [WWW.VETSCONCERT.COM](http://WWW.VETSCONCERT.COM)  
AND AT BRIAR PATCH AND SPD MARKETS

PRESENTED BY VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA  
AND FRIENDS OF VINH SON ORPHANAGE



**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, \$25/mo Until paid in full  
**Select Age Group**  Ages 56-60 \$200     Ages 61-65 \$175  
    Ages 66 and over \$150     Ages 72+ \$100

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

◆ **Card Number** \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*In Service To America*

Address Correction Requested



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