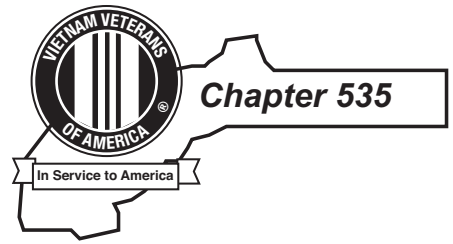




INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

CHAPTER 535



Chapter 535 Web Page www.vva535.org

"It Feels Good to Get Involved"

Volume 24 Issue 6

In Service To America and the Gold Country

June 2014

President's Message

June Speaker – Pat Ward and Dick Panzica “Operation Homecoming, The Return of American POWs from Vietnam in 1973”

During his thirty year career in the Air Force, Colonel Ward had a number of interesting assignments. From 1964 to 1968, he flew over 50 aerial refueling missions in support of USAF operations in Vietnam and the surrounding region. In 1968 Colonel Ward volunteered to serve as a navigator with the 82nd Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron out of Kadena AFB in Okinawa. From 1968 to 1973, he flew 202 combat missions over Vietnam and the surrounding region in the RC-135M, logging over 3,000 hours of combat flying time including 60 missions over North Vietnam.

Major Panzica also flew out of Kadena as a member of the 82nd Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron during the early 70's. He later served as navigator/bombardier on B-52's and as navigator/flight planner on U-2's out of Beale.

Pat and Dick will speak about “Operation Homecoming, The Return of POWs from Vietnam in 1973.

Johnny Cash and Patsy Cline Tribute Concert

Thanks to everyone who helped make this concert a success. We earned over \$11,800 for our Chapter and Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage. Our chapter was joined by the local Post of the American Legion, who ran the bar and volunteers from Friends of Nevada County Military who worked as ushers. Another member of FNCM worked in the Green Room, looking after the members of the band. Members of the Grass Valley Fire Department were in attendance, serving as EMTs. A special thanks to Ralph Remick, who chaired this event. Without his leadership it never would have happened. It took a lot of people from different organizations, all working as a team, to ensure this evening was successful. Congratulations to all for a great evening.

Heroes Astride

Toward the end of this newsletter is a flyer on “Heroes Astride”, a recreational horsemanship program for all veterans and active duty military. This is a great program. If you have any questions or are interested in participating, call the veterans coordinator, Gary Crowder at 916-960-7790.

To the next post...

There is a tradition in the cavalry. We never say goodbye but instead, “to the next post.” After thirteen years as members of “535” Margie and I are moving on...”to the next post.” We’ve had a great time, made many friends and have seen a lot of change. A few friends have passed on. Others have moved away. All are missed. We leave the Chapter in great hands under the leadership of Dick Corn and a strong board of directors. Margie joins me in wishing you the best of luck as you move forward. You can be sure we will be following your activities with great interest and no doubt will show up from time to time.

Fred Buhler, President 265-4878

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Expand Online Sales to all Vets Being Discussed

Source: *MilitaryTimes* | Karen Jowers

Army and Air Force Exchange Service officials want to expand shopping privileges at the online exchange store to all honorably discharged veterans, sources said. That would open the online store to about 20 million veterans, according to a source familiar with the discussions. AAFES officials contend the move would have no negative impact on current eligible shoppers — and would be a boon to revenues and profits that support military morale, welfare and recreation programs on installations. AAFES, which refers to its brick-and-mortar stores and its online store as “The Exchange,” operates the website <http://www.shopmyexchange.com> for authorized customers of all branches of service. Under Defense Department policy, the only veterans currently authorized as exchange patrons are retirees and their families plus and those veterans with honorable discharges who are rated by the Veterans Affairs Department as 100 percent disabled, or hospitalized where exchange facilities are available.

Army and Air Force Exchange Service officials want to expand shopping privileges at the online exchange store to all honorably discharged veterans,

DoD spokeswoman Joy Crabaugh said there have been discussions, but no formal proposal, about opening the online store to all honorably discharged veterans. If a proposal does come forward, she said, it would require extensive review by DoD, including a legal review that would determine whether DoD could unilaterally change the policy, without having to seek a change in law. The Navy Exchange Service Command operates its own online sales website, myNavyExchange.com, which, like the AAFES site, is open to authorized exchange shoppers of any service. NEXCOM has no plans to request or propose changes to its criteria for authorized shoppers, spokeswoman Kathleen Martin said. “However, we will certainly evaluate and respond to any proposals or initiatives presented to us,” she said.

AAFES distributes part of its profits to the services’ MWR programs, proportionately based on the branches of online shoppers. With more customers, officials say they could make purchases on a larger scale like other online discount retailers, and invest in better technology and customer service. The larger scale — with limited increase in overhead — would boost profits, providing more contributions to MWR, the source said. “This is a game-changer,” the source said, adding that within the first five years of ramping up the online store website to include a deeper, better and broader selection of items to accommodate the veterans’ population, officials project an increase in profits of \$70 million to \$100 million. That would be a huge

jump from the current financial situation for online sales. In 2013, AAFES’ online website had a loss of \$4.7 million, spokesman Judd Anstey said. But he said that loss “is reflective of the old site.” AAFES is launching a new, more shopper-friendly website in July, with an improved product mix, he said.

Joyce Raezer, executive director of the National Military Family Association, said her group doesn’t necessarily object to an expansion of the customer base for online shopping. But AAFES first needs to shore up its current customer base, Raezer said. “They aren’t marketing well to their current eligible base, so what makes them think they’ll be able to find enough veterans and be able to entice this new population to switch from other online shopping sites to the Exchange?” she said. But a copy of an AAFES point paper obtained by *MilitaryTimes* states that officials believe the improvements to the website that are already in motion, and the ability to reach a broader customer pool, could help mitigate some of the challenges in sustaining the viability of the exchange benefit, such as troop drawdowns, cuts in installation MWR programs, and fewer customers living on base.



Army and Air Force Exchange Service officials want to expand shopping privileges at the online exchange store to all honorably discharged veterans.

Some advocacy groups say opening the exchange online website to vets is an idea worth considering. “This is a very interesting proposal ... worth further evaluation,” said Joe Davis, a spokesman for Veterans of Foreign Wars. The Retired Enlisted Association also supports the idea in principle, “assuming there are proper controls so that only veterans have access,” said Larry Madison, national legislative director. DoD’s Crabaugh said the Defense Manpower Data Center does maintain information on veterans. AAFES and the other exchanges use DMDC’s Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System to verify customers shopping online. AAFES officials reportedly contend that since the information fields are available in DMDC, the protection and transfer of data about veterans could follow the same authorization procedure now used to validate active-duty members, retirees and their dependents.

Chapter 535 Information Center

Chapter 535 Officers & Board of Directors

Officers-Phone

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Vice-President	
Dick Corn	277-8856
Secretary	
Dave Johnson	885-1230
Treasurer	
Ralph Remick	559-7716
Past President	
Fred Buhler	265-4878

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Dan Davis	272-4110
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Kent Hawley.....	432-3551
Bart Ruud.....	823-1368
Dale Epps	368-6156
Harold Graves.....	470-8507

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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 ...	bholman@succeed.net, 265-8387 Bill Holman
Nominations	Harold Graves
Christmas Year Round	Harold Graves
Concert Committee.....	Ralph Remmick
NCCVC	Margie Buhler
Web Master.....	Ralph Remick

Nevada County Veterans Affairs Rep.

Eric

June Birthdays

6	7	Marty Martines
6	7	Chismark, Kurt
6	8	Dale Epps
6	10	Stangeby, Roy
6	10	Hubbard, Laurie AVVA
6	10	Roy Stangeby
6	11	Sanders, Joseph
6	11	Gregerson, Michael
6	17	Corn, Dick
6	18	Downing, Logan (Gene)
6	24	Shea, Charles

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

The Vinh Son Orphanage, has a new web site

www.friendsofvso.org

Membership Facts Chapter 535

VVA	
Individual members	33
Life members	39
AVVA	
Individual members	1
Life member	2
Total	75



Upcoming Dates and Events

June	5	Chapter Meeting 6 pm
June	21	E-Waste 9 am -1 pm

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 newsletters or hearing from us, please contact Bill Holman at 265-8387.

Harry S. Truman A Frugal Man

During World War I, Harry Truman served in combat in France as an artillery officer in his National Guard unit. After the war, he briefly owned a haberdashery and joined the Democratic Party political machine of Tom Pendergast in Kansas City, Missouri. He was first elected to public office as a county official, and in 1935 became U.S. senator. He gained national prominence as head of the wartime Truman Committee, which exposed waste, fraud, and corruption in wartime contracts. Truman was the final running mate of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944. He succeeded to the presidency (1945-1953) on April 12, 1945, when Roosevelt died after months of declining health. Under Truman, the U.S. successfully concluded World War II; in the aftermath of the conflict, tensions with the Soviet Union increased, marking the start of the Cold War. Truman was a different kind of President. He probably made as many or more important decisions regarding our nation's history as any of the other 32 Presidents preceding him. However, a measure of his greatness may rest on

what he did after he left the White House. The only asset he had when he died was the house he lived in, which was in Independence, Missouri. His wife had inherited the house from her mother and father and other than their years in the White House, they lived their entire lives there.

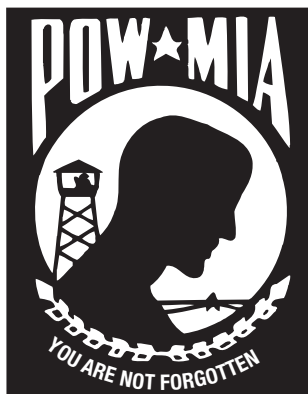
When he retired from office in 1952 his income was a U.S. Army pension reported to have been \$1,350.72 a year. Congress, noting that he was paying for his stamps and personally licking them, granted him an 'allowance' and later, a retroactive pension of \$25,000 per year. After President Eisenhower was inaugurated, Harry and Bess drove home to Missouri by themselves. There was no Secret Service following them. When offered corporate positions at large salaries, he declined, stating, "You don't want me. You want the office of the President, and that doesn't belong to me.. It belongs to the American people and it's not for sale." Even later, on May 6, 1971, when Congress was preparing to award him the Medal of Honor on his 87th

birthday, he refused to accept it, writing, "I don't consider that I have done anything which should be the reason for any award, Congressional or otherwise."



Harry & Bess

As president he paid for all of his own travel expenses and food. Modern politicians have found a new level of success in cashing in on the Presidency, resulting in untold wealth. Today, too many in Congress also have found a way to become quite wealthy while enjoying the fruits of their offices. Good old Harry Truman was correct when he observed, "My choices in life were either to be a piano player in a whore house or a politician. And to tell the truth, there's hardly any difference! We ought to have cloned him for telling it like it is and being frugal with our tax dollars! [Source: <http://www.snopes.com/quotes/truman/truman.asp> Apr 2014 ++]



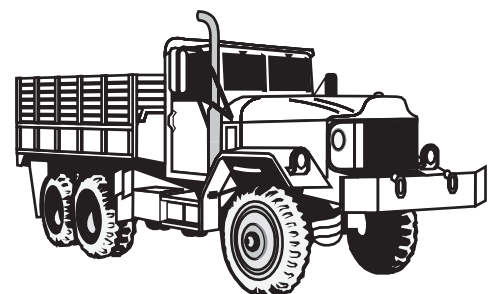
VA Pharmacy

CMOP Receives "Top Performer" Ranking

In 2012, VA medical facilities treated more than 6 million patients at their 1,276 hospitals, clinics and Vet Centers. VA consistently works to provide exceptional care, and it shows: from rankings of "Top Performer" by The Joint Commission to innovations in health care to new tools to help patients and health care providers succeed, you'll find success stories throughout the organization. Most recently, VA received word that its Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP) has the highest customer satisfaction score among the nation's public and private mail-order pharmacies, according to a respected, independent survey - a rating it's held for the past three years.



"Our nation's Veterans deserve a world-class pharmacy as a part of the best health care available," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "It is an honor to hear from Veterans that we are delivering on that commitment." The 2013 independent survey was conducted by J.D. Powers and Associates. Veterans were asked to rate VA on value, delivery, ordering and service of its mail-order pharmacies. Out of 1,000 possible points, VA scored 871.m" The fact that we are rated higher than our private sector counterparts is due in part to our unique partnership with our patients and medical centers," said Dr. Robert A. Petzel, VA's Under Secretary for Health. "In addition to the convenience of mail-order service, Veterans also have a pharmacist available to meet with them face to face." VA participates in this annual survey as a way to compare itself against industry leaders and to ensure VA health care meets the highest standards.



Gravesite Coins Purpose and Meaning

While visiting some cemeteries you may notice that headstones marking certain graves have coins on them, left by previous visitors to the grave. These coins have distinct meanings when left on the headstones of those who gave their life while serving in America's military, and these meanings vary depending on the denomination of coin. A coin left on a headstone or at the grave site is meant as a message to the deceased soldier's family that someone else has visited the grave to pay respect. Leaving a penny at the grave means simply that you visited. A nickel indicates that you and the deceased trained at boot camp together, while a dime means you served with him in some capacity. By leaving a quarter at the grave, you are telling the family that you were with the soldier when he was killed.



According to tradition, the money left at graves in national cemeteries and state veterans cemeteries is eventually collected, and the funds are put toward maintaining the cemetery or paying burial costs for indigent veterans. In the US, this practice became common during the Vietnam war, due to the political divide in the country over the war; leaving a coin was seen as a more practical way to communicate that you had visited the grave than contacting the soldier's family, which could devolve into an uncomfortable argument over politics relating to the war. Some Vietnam veterans would leave coins as a "down payment" to buy their fallen comrades a beer or play a hand of cards when they would finally be reunited. The tradition of leaving coins on the headstones of military men and women can be traced to as far back as the Roman Empire.

There are quite a few superstitions that compel people to leave money on a loved one's grave. By far the most popular reason is based in Greek Mythology. According to legend, Charon, the ferryman of Hades, requires payment of one coin to ferry your loved one's soul across the River Styx that separates the living from the dead. Historically, the coins were placed in the mouths of the deceased, or

according to some sources, over their eyes. People who can't pay the fee are said to be doomed to wander the shores of the river for 100 years. This sounds like reason enough to throw down a penny, just in case. Another popular reason for leaving coins on graves relates to the notorious Donnelly family, known as the Black Donnellys. A longstanding feud with another family resulted in the brutal massacre of five Donnelly family members. Some believe that the Donnelly's will grant a wish for anyone that leaves a penny on the Donnelly family grave. This superstition has expanded, and many now believe that a dead loved one will grant a wish if they leave a penny on their headstone, or that the loved one will watch over them and bring them good luck.

No matter what the original intention of the coin-leaver may be, it seems clear that a coin left on a headstone is a symbol of remembrance and respect. A way of telling all who pass by that the person buried there was loved and visited often. [Source: <http://gravingwithjenn.com/paying-respects-why-coins-are-left-on-headstones>]

Veteran's E-Waste Collection

NCCVC is having a Free-E-Waste collection on Saturday, June 21, 2014, from 9 am to 1 pm in the Grass Valley Veterans Memorial Building parking lot. Bring your electronic e-waste and we will unload it. Your electronic e-waste is valuable to NCCVC. For more information contact Gary at 477-1533 or Margie at 265-4878 (before June 1).



UCP HEROES ASTRIDE™

A Recreational Horsemanship Program for All Veterans and Active Duty Military

The simple act of riding a horse can give many positive results for able-bodied, wounded or injured veterans. The UCP Heroes Astride™ program offers:

- Riding lessons
- Camaraderie
- Muscle building
- Stronger focus, memory skills and well-being

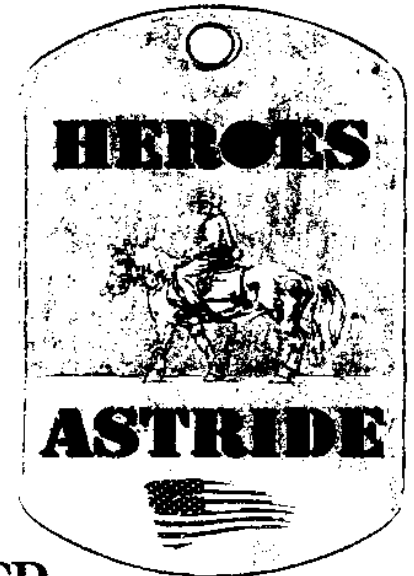
The nine-week program includes a weekly 1-1/2 hour lesson on horseback with support from volunteers who have served in the military and a certified PATH International instructor.

This is a great opportunity for veterans who have experienced:

- Amputation
- Traumatic brain injury or stroke
- Post-traumatic stress or depression
- Vision or hearing impairments



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Offered at no cost

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For more information:

Martha Kubitschek
Program Director
(530) 273-5786 or heroesastride@att.net
www.UCPSacto.org

Heroes Astride Veteran's Coordinator

Gary Crowder
916-960-7790
gary.c.crowder@gmail.com



