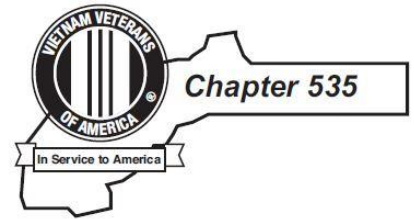




INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

CHAPTER 535



Website: www.vva535.org

Volume 32 Issue 12

December 2022

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CHAPTER 535
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
December 2022

California State Council Insights

On a quarterly basis, the CA VVA State Council meets formally to conduct its business affairs as dictated by VVA National. From quarter to quarter the actions taken range from routine to inspiring, inspiring because there is often important information to take home to respective chapters. At present there are 28 VVA Chapters in California.

Renewal of friendships and camaraderie are facets of some value but when respective chapters report on their activities, a chapter representative in attendance might find a significant takeaway. Examples of takeaways are fundraising activities that might be replicated, or in the case of issues of poor attendance at chapter meetings, learning of inspiring meeting venues or changing from evening meetings to daytime meetings could be all it might take to bring chapter vigor back into the realm. Other important takeaway insight is information shared by the State Council's Treasurer, and information shared by the Council's AVVA group. One more takeaway will

be information shared by State Council officers who share insights gained from attendance at National VVA meetings such as the National VVA Convention and the National Leadership Conference.

Inspiration and purpose will always be critical needs and it is just these factors that sustain the Vietnam Veterans of America. "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another," is an avowed promise of the VVA.

Bart Ruud

VVA Chapter 535 Mission Statement

To foster camaraderie among members and assist those with disabling mental and physical injuries, to promote the welfare of our brethren affected by the war, and to engender public understanding of the sacrifice, patriotism and bravery of those who served, those who gave all, and those left behind.

Veterans Crisis Line
DIAL 988 then PRESS 1
(Put this number into your phone)

Attention

If you do not drive and need a ride to a meeting or any VVA-535 function, please contact Bart Ruud or any local VVA-535 member and we will do our best to arrange transportation for you.

Christmas Open House



CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE!
**COME JOIN US FOR FOOD, FRIENDS,
 AND OUR CHRISTMAS VILLAGE!**

*This years donations will benefit a local nonprofit:
 "The Vietnam Veteran's of Nevada County"
 In honor of Dave Middleton*

**HOSTED BY JOANNE MIDDLETON
 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10
 12:00pm - 6:00pm
 12704 BANNER LAVA CAP ROAD
 NEVADA CITY, CA 95959
 530-205-9375
jojozee27@comcast.net**

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Upcoming Events

NCCVC Meeting – December 1, 2022
December 1, 2022 – Christmas potluck dinner
 Dec. 10 – **Middleton Open House** 12:00 – 6:00 p.m.
 December 17, 2022 Wreaths Across America
 VVA 535 General Meeting – January 5, 2023
 CSC: January 6-8, 2023 – Visalia

Chapter 535 Officers

President David Chaix
 dmcb402@gmail.com
 1-530-269-1431

Vice-President Keith Grueneberg
 kgberg0178@sbcglobal.net
 916-425-1121

Treasurer
 Ralph Remick 530-559-7716

Secretary
 Bart Ruud 530-305-0493

Directors

Dick Corn 530-277-8856
 Enrique Vasquez 530-575-4416
 Ray James 530-478-1126
 Ric Sheridan..... 530-274-1413
 Corbin Smith 916-833-7860

Committee Chairs

Finance ...Ralph Remick & Dave Johnson
 Parade and Honor Guard Dick Corn
 Membership AffairsRic Sheridan
 Newsletter Interim Editor Bart Ruud
 Victorian Christmas Cancelled for 2022
 Nominations Ralph Remick
 Veterans Assistance..... Dave Chaix
 NCCVC Dave Chaix; Dick Corn
 Speakers Bureau Ray James

Web Master Ralph Remick
Quartermaster Dick Corn
Facebook Master Mike Laborico
Nevada County Fair Open
CA State Council Rep..... Open

Nevada County Veterans Services Officer

David West II
Nevada County Veterans Service Officer
988 McCourtney Rd.
Grass Valley, CA 95949
David.West@co.nevada.ca.us
(530) 265-1446 (Office)
(530) 913-5046 (Cell phone)

“Walk-In” opportunities are available M – F.

Placer County Veterans Services Officer

Matthew Galvin ... 916-780-3290.
1000 Sunset Blvd., Suite 115, Rocklin, CA
Mon. – Fri., 8:00 – 12:00 and 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. The
Auburn office, at 11562 B Avenue, Auburn, CA 95603, is open every
Tuesday 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. The Carnelian Bay
office, at 5252 N Lake Blvd, Carnelian Bay, CA 96140, is now open every
3rd Monday (excluding Holidays) 9:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.-
3:00 p.m.

County VSO Resource Closet Needs

Sleeping bags, duffel bags, small lightweight
tents, socks, briefs, bras, tee shirts (white/olive
drab), sweatshirts, sweatpants, jeans, shoes,
boots, hygiene supplies, grocery store gift cards,
gas cards, blankets.

These kinds of items will become components of
life packs to assist those in need that are seen by
staff at VSO David West’s office. Thank you for
your assistance with this project.

Matters of Interest as outlined at the Meeting of November 3, 2022

JoAnne Middleton is hosting an open house on
Saturday, December 10, 2022. (See the notice,
above.) VVA 535 will be benefactors, in memory
of Dave Middleton.

After two years of service, NCCVC Chairman
Gary Miller has tried to stepped back from the
chairmanship of the NCCVC. At the present, no
one has stepped up to chair the group.

Neither President Dave Chaix nor Bart Ruud
anticipate being available to attend the CSC
meeting in Visalia, January 6-8, 2023. We are
actively seeking someone to attend this meeting.

Margie Buhler

We have learned with great sadness of Margie’s
passing on November 12, 2022 after a long
struggle with cancer. Margie was a tireless
advocate for VVA 535 and for veterans all
through the years she and Fred were local
residents. Currently, we extend sympathy and
heartfelt condolences to Fred. No further details
are known.

Lend a Hand

We are aware that our friend, JoAnne M., could
use assistance with weed eating to fire harden
the lot upon which her home is located. A
military veteran widow in need is a good cause.
J.M. has some hand tools but thoughts are that
power weed eaters, rakes and similar might be
needed. We could use a Project Leader for better
coordination. Currently, we are waiting for
Autumn rainfall before we move forward on this
project. Thank you for your willingness to lend a
hand when the time comes.

SILENZIO'...BEAUTIFUL AND HAUNTING

About six miles from Maastricht, in the
Netherlands, lie buried 8,301 American soldiers
who died in "Operation Market Garden" in the
battles to liberate Holland in the fall/winter of
1944. Every one of the men buried in the
cemetery, as well as those in the Canadian and
British military cemeteries, has been adopted by
a Dutch family who mind the grave, decorate it,
and keep alive the memory of the soldier they
have adopted. It is even the custom to keep a
portrait of "their" soldier in a place of honour in
their home.

Annually, on "Liberation Day," memorial services are held for "the men who died to liberate Holland." The day concludes with a concert. The final piece is always "Il Silenzio," a memorial piece commissioned by the Dutch and first played in 1965 on the 20th anniversary of Holland's liberation. It has been the concluding piece of the memorial concert ever since.

This year the soloist was a 13-year-old Dutch girl, Melissa Venema, backed by André Rieu and his orchestra (the Royal Orchestra of the Netherlands). This beautiful concert piece is based upon the original version of taps and was composed by Italian composer Nino Rossi.

Wait until the last note is reached ..

<http://www.flixxy.com/trumpet-solo-melissa-venema.htm>



VVA Life Member Carl Cieslikowski & "Valentine" aka "Valor"

Carl acquired Valentine in October 2022 from America's VetDogs, based in Smithtown, NY.

Dog sponsors who make a \$6,000 donation to VetDogs.org, can select the name of a puppy. Sponsors can choose a Labrador or a Golden Retriever, male or female. Valentine received his name because he was born on or near Valentine's Day.

Assistance dogs undergo a comprehensive training program, and only the best of the best complete the training and become working assistance dogs. In short, dogs are taught the four foundations of service dog training tasks; push, tug, brace and retrieval. There are over 200 tasks that can be trained based on these foundations. Once a client is matched with a dog, our instructors customize their training with each dog in order to meet that specific client's needs.

What is the client taught during training?

During the training program, clients will learn how to lead their dog; gain an understanding of pack theory; basic learning theory, which will address the commands the dog already knows; and advanced learning theory that will include the learning of advanced commands and tasks that each dog was trained to carry out to help mitigate each client's particular disability. Opening and closing doors, retrieving a variety of items, turning on and off lights, and providing balance and stability are just some of the specific tasks dogs can be trained to do.

Students will learn how to work with their dogs in various settings that include walks; mass transit situations, including train platforms, subway, and bus travel; outings to malls and other stores; and other types of real-world situations. In addition, they learn about proper care of the dog, which ranges from feeding to grooming to medical issues. Access laws, public awareness and other issues also are covered during the two-week program.

EVERYONE HAS EQUAL ACCESS

Accessibility refers to the ability for everyone, regardless of disability or special needs, to access, use and benefit from everything within their environment. It is the "degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is available to as many people as possible. The goal of accessibility is to create an inclusive society for people with physical, mobility, visual,

auditory or cognitive disabilities. This means everyone has equal access to perceive, understand, engage, navigate and interact with all elements of the physical and digital world.

- Under the America's with Disabilities Act (ADA) a service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities.
- State and local governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations that serve the public generally must allow service animals to accompany people with disabilities in all areas of the facility where the public is normally allowed to go.
- Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices.

Are there things I should or should not do when I am around an assistance dog?

The general rule is that working dogs should be ignored. Distractions take their concentration away from the work they have to do—which can put the dog and its teammate in jeopardy. Do not pet or feed an assistance dog and do not encourage the dog to misbehave.

Victorian Christmas - Kicks Off on December 4th



The aroma of roasted chestnuts fill the air, along with cries of street vendors hawking their wares and lamp-lit streets filled with Christmas treasures. It's the one & only Victorian Christmas. Welcome the holiday season in Nevada City. It's a magical setting of hilly streets with authentic gas lamps, wandering carolers dressed in Victorian attire, and visitors sharing holiday cheer and good tidings.

This annual, family tradition takes place two Wednesday evenings and three Sunday afternoons in December. There are holiday activities for all ages including live entertainment, yuletide treats and libations, and Father Christmas! We look forward to welcoming the best of the holiday season with you!

KNOW & GO

When: Sundays December 4, 11, & 18 from 1:30-6pm

Wednesdays December 7 & 14 from 5-9pm

Where: Downtown Nevada City

Shuttle: Parking is limited, ride the shuttle for \$5 to avoid the hassle

More Info: nevadacitychamber.com



Calling all Marine Corps Vietnam Vets!

The National Museum of the Marine Corps is looking for donations of Vietnam War artifacts and personal memories to help rebuild its Vietnam War display. The current display dates back to the opening of the museum in 2006 and its collection of artifacts is poor compared to the other periods featured in that museum. There are currently no descriptions of key elements of our war, such as combat in the lowlands, Combined Action Platoons (CAPs), The enemy types we faced (Local VC, "Hard Core VC", the NVA), the items we and the enemy wore, the more common kinds of booby traps we encountered, the support that we required for a long distance war and no discussion of the opposition we encountered on our return home.

They are looking for personal statements and original items of our war, particularly items with a personal history, to be made available to the museum's collection for a future update of the Vietnam War display.

Museum Contact information:
Michael Westermeier, Exhibit Curator, National Museum of the Marine Corps
1775 Semper Fidelis Way
Triangle VA 22172
Michael.westermeier@usmcu.edu

If any of my Vietnam War Veterans have questions about what they'd like to send or discuss anything related to this request, they can also contact me at lindseyf@earthlink.net.

LtCol Forrest Lindsey USMC (ret)
B 1/11 and Echo/Golf 2/1 1966-7

Military Myths and Legends: The Unbearable Weight of Medieval Knight Armor



Somewhere along the way, film and television got it into their heads that the medieval armor knights wore was so heavy that it restricted their movement. One common belief is that the armor was so heavy that knights going into battle had to be hoisted onto their horses with the help of a crane.



While going into battle fully protected by armor would be important to a soldier in any era, those of us who have worn body armor in combat will tell you the body armor also has to be functional. After all, if you're wearing armor, but you can't kill the enemy or adequately defend yourself, all you've done is make yourself a target.

Eventually the enemy will figure out how to penetrate the armor. Since you can't get away due to the bulky armor and you can't take any of it with you, why even go into battle in the first place?

The armor most of us think of at the mention of the medieval knight is called full plate armor, which became popular around the high Middle Ages, around the years 1000 to 1300 AD, reaching its peak in the 1500s. Its decline for use in battle coincided with the rise of the flintlock musket for obvious reasons.

The plates were made of bronze, iron, or steel, and a full suit of armor could weigh between 30 and 60 pounds. While this sounds like a lot of weight, a well-made suit of armor spreads the weight across the entire body, allowing the wearer to run, jump and even swim while wearing it – although the swimmer would have to seriously consider his endurance and abilities. To put it into perspective, an average American firefighter carries 35-40 pounds of equipment into a burning building. Would they brave that kind of situation in protective gear that restricted their movement? Absolutely not (we hope).

Plate armor protected the wearer from sword slashes, spears, pikes, and blunt objects while giving them the ability to return the same kind of sword slashes and pike thrusts. Knights needed to be in top physical condition to prepare for that kind of combat in full armor. Battles could last for hours or days and carrying that extra weight could still wear on them after a while.



Knights had complete weight training regimens on top of their combat training, with many wearing the full suit of armor as they trained. The axiom of “train like you fight” has always been an important part of military training, and knights needed it more than anyone. Some even used extra-heavy versions of their weapons and armor in training so they could move and kill more effectively on the battlefield.

The French knight Jean II Le Maingre developed a special training technique that not only allowed him to endure hours of riding in full armor, fighting battles, and riding home but also allowed him to mount his horse without this squire's assistance, climb walls, perform somersaults, and even run miles, all while wearing his armor. If you consider that it was his only job and the training would keep him “battlefield ready” – and thus, alive at the end of the battle – then it's easy to see why knights would put themselves through that kind of training.

We all know the people of the Middle Ages weren't as intelligent or educated as we are today, but the soldiers aren't stupid. Career soldiers who make it to old age have figured out what it takes to survive combat, and being a slow-moving target on the battlefield isn't the way to make it to retirement.

Congress Wants America to Thank Veterans in the Most Awkward Way Possible



When “Thank you for your service” usually comes from a well-meaning civilian, veterans often fumble for an appropriate and respectful response. Saying “thank you” to a “thank you” seems awkward, and saying “your welcome” feels a little pompous. So imagine having to reply when someone says, “thank you for our freedom,” as if you’re Captain America, personally dealing death to the terrorists and various supervillains.



No matter how awkward that might feel for veterans, two members of Congress seem to think that the highfalutin phrase should be the official way to thank vets and want to make it official.

Reps. Jack Bergman (R-Michigan) and J. Luis Correa (D-California) introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives on September 29

to replace “thank you for your service” with “thank you for our freedom,” despite neither phrase having an official status of any kind in U.S. law or policy.

“As a Nation, we have an obligation to support the brave men and women of our Armed Forces who risk their lives to protect the freedom of the American people and our allies,” Bergman said in a press release that related a 70-year-old story that inspired him to actually introduce the idea when we all have better things we could be doing.

The U.S. military faces a number of high-profile problems. All branches are struggling to meet Manning requirements, the U.S. Army is recommending food stamps to military families, and Fort Hood is still an evolving tragedy – just to name a few of the real issues Congress could be fixing.

Although likely unintentional, the language of the resolution is surprisingly self-aware, acknowledging congressional shortcomings in dealing with the actual problems faced by troops, veterans, and their families, stating, “for far too long, our Nation has fallen short in our obligation to our military.”



Thanking the troops who are putting up with moldy barracks and jet fuel-flavored water while Russian President Vladimir Putin threatens them with nuclear weapons is where

Congress decided to begin addressing its obligation. It is literally the least they could do.

“All gave some, and many made the ultimate sacrifice,” Correa said, paraphrasing legendary American Billy Ray Cyrus in Bergman’s press release about the resolution.

The non-binding resolution was referred to the House Armed Services Committee the same day it was introduced. There, it will likely die a death as meaningless as its existence. Even if it were ever to pass, it can’t be enforced.

Veterans, Gold Star Families get free lifetime pass to national parks, wildlife refuges, other public lands

New pass provides free lifetime access and waived recreation fees for Veterans



On Veterans Day 2022, the National Park Service will unveil a lifetime pass providing free entrance to [national parks](#) for Veterans and their families. The Interagency Military Lifetime Pass waives entrance fees for the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and standard amenity recreation fees for the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sites for current military service members and their dependents, Veterans and Gold Star Families.

Veterans and their families have free access to approximately 2,000 public locations spread out across more than 400 million acres of public lands, which host activities to fit any lifestyle—

from serene to high octane, including hiking, fishing, paddling, biking, hunting, stargazing, camping, and much more.

The Military Pass has been expanded to include a pass that does not expire for Veterans and Gold Star Family members. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2022 authorized a free lifetime pass to national parks and other federal recreational lands for eligible Veterans and Gold Star Families. In recent years, they were able to receive annual passes.

Are you eligible?

For purposes of this program, a Veteran is identified as an individual who has served in the United States Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserve, and is able to present one of the following forms of valid (unexpired) identification:

- Department of Defense Identification Card
- [Veteran Health Identification Card \(VHIC\)](#)
- [Veteran ID Card](#)
- Veterans designation on a state-issued U.S. driver’s license or identification card

Gold Star Families are next of kin of a member of the United States Armed Forces who lost his or her life in a “qualifying situation,” such as a war, an international terrorist attack, or a military operation outside of the United States while serving with the United States Armed Forces.

The America the Beautiful – the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass (Interagency Pass) Program

The Interagency Pass Program includes a free annual pass for active-duty members of the U.S. Military and their dependents. Current Military service members must show a valid (unexpired) Department of Defense ID. Dependents of

current service members must show a valid (unexpired) DD Form 1173 AD or DEC.

Other free or discounted passes, including some lifetime passes, are available for persons with permanent disabilities, fourth grade students, volunteers and senior citizens age 62 years or older.

How to get your Interagency Pass

Interagency Passes can be obtained in person while visiting a participating site. Visit [Places to Get Interagency Passes](#) for a searchable list and be sure to contact the site before you go, to make sure they are open and have passes in stock. In addition, Military passes, as well as those for seniors and persons with permanent disabilities, are available online through the [USGS Online Store](#) with an additional processing fee. Existing passes remain valid. You do not need to obtain a new pass if you already have a Lifetime Senior or Access Pass.

For more information about eligibility and passes, visit [Free Entrance to National Parks for Veterans and Gold Star Families \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#).

The participating agencies also offer several fee-free days for everyone throughout the year to mark days of celebration and commemoration. Examples of fee-free days include the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., National Public Lands Day, Veterans Day and the signing of the Great American Outdoors Act.

Fee-free days and fee policies vary among the agencies, so it's best to check the agency website or contact the site you plan to visit in advance of your trip.

[APPLY FOR A VETERAN ID CARD](#)

[APPLY FOR A VETERAN HEALTH IDENTIFICATION CARD \(VHIC\)](#)

Writing Your Story for INCOMING

(Ongoing repeat solicitation)

Ideas for your story:

- Think about what you appreciated about the Vietnam experience. There is surely a means to segue into that with very little reflection on the negative aspects of war.
- What did you appreciate about the Vietnamese people during your deployment?
- Can you steer away from the bad stuff and reflect on the best experience you had in the Nam?
- Surely you had a close buddy and you supported each other. Maybe there is a story in that.
- What really got you through the day-to-day anxieties and fears? There might be a positive recollection in that regard.
- How did your experience instill in you a sense of patriotism that you possibly express every day of your life.

So far we have heard from Ruud, Epps, Chaix, Hamer, Chuck Holmes, current Marine LCpl. Jesse Hernandez, Kent Hawley, Mike Laborico and Dave Johnson. (Thank you!)

No writer needs to dwell on the negatives of war. Each of us who was there lived the negatives, and all of us are better people for having served, especially when we look at how we matured as a result of our experiences. Each of us has derived a sense of being and an energy that is different from what it might have been had we not been sent across the pond.

Do share with us, in your own words, something of that chapter of your life. And, thank you for your service.

Forward your story to Bart Ruud at bruud45@gmail.com or hand deliver to Bart.

VVA 535 Member Biographies

Do you know _____

*Now, our readership and Brotherhood knows
_____ better than we might ever
have known this man, this leader.*

Who will be next to share?

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

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

Membership is open to U.S. armed forces veterans who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975, or in **any duty location** between November 1, 1955 and May 7, 1975.

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____ Cell Phone: (_____) _____

Email Address: _____ Gender: _____

(Optional) Chapter Number: _____ Sponsor: _____

_____ I am already a VVA member and I want to become a Life Member. My VVA Number is _____.

Membership: Individual Life Membership: \$50. (Effective Oct. 20, 2018)

ATTENTION New members: You must submit a copy of your DD-214 form along with this application and dues payment.

Payment Method: ___ Check ___ Money Order ___ Credit Card (Visa, MasterCard, AMEX, Discover)

Credit Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Return your completed application, payment and a copy of your DD-214 to:

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., Chapter 535
P.O. Box 37
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Revised: January 2021

November

2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Operation Rolling Thunder ends (1968)	3 VVA-535 Board & General Meeting	4	5
6 Daylight Savings ends	7	8	9	10 Marine Corps Birthday	11 Veterans Day	12
13	14 Battle of Ia Drang begins (1965)	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Thanksgiving	25	26
27	28	29	30			

December

2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 VVA 535 Pot Luck Holiday Dinner	2	3
4	5	6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8	9	10 Middleton Christmas Open House 12:00 – 6:00
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Hanukkah (begins at sundown)	19	20	21 Winter begins	22	23	24
25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve

January

2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5 VVA 535	6 CSC Visalia	7 CSC Visalia
8 CSC Visalia	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 Battle of Khe Sanh begins (1968)
22	23 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	24	25	26	27 Paris Peace Accords signed (1973)	28
29	30 Tet Offensive begins (1968)	31				

February

2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 VVA-535 Board & General Meeting Groundhog Day	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18
19	20 Presidents' Day	21	22 Ash Wednesday	23	24	25
26	27	28				