



# NEWS AND VIEWS

VVA # 223

THE REDWOOD EMPIRE CHAPTER



Volume 16, Issue 7  
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AUGUST 2014



## The VVA/CSC 14th Biennial State Convention

by Charles Earthman

This past June Chapter 223 sent delegates to Cal Con 14 in Fresno. The weather was not too hot in the central valley. Chapter 223 was well represented at the biennial Convention with eight members. The Chapter had six delegates, CSC First Vice President John Crooker, and Chapter President Ken Holybee who served as election chair.



Charles Earthman

Five members, myself included, took the Amtrak California's San Joaquin train from Martinez to Fresno through the central valley. It was a very pleasant and uneventful ride. John Crooker and his wife, Judy, took a leisurely drive while Ken and Kate O'Hara-Palmer made a stop at SFO to pick up VVA National President John Rowan. We were all greeted with a welcome reception when we arrived at the hotel. It was a nice way to start a busy three days.

The convention got underway Friday morning with the opening ceremony in the Sierra Grand Ballroom.

(Cont'd on page 5)

National Aviation Day - August 19

See page two...

## North Bay Veterans Resource Center Starts New Chapter with Grand Opening

With the ribbon cutting ceremony at their new location, the North Bay Veterans Resource Center on July 10th opened its doors to veterans and local community partners.

The reception was well attended on a warm evening, with refreshments served by the Smokehouse Bar-B-Que Bistro. Welcoming and opening remarks were made by Superior Court Judge Gary A. Medvigy. Judge Medvigy, who is also an Army Brigadier General, spoke to veteran issues in the Judicial System.



Gary A. Medvigy

With little fanfare, short and sweet, VVA 223 member Peter Cameron and James Larson officiated at the ribbon cutting as a good number of invitees looked on.

The new digs for the 'Resource Center' are located at 200 Montgomery Drive, near the corner of Brookwood Avenue. Finding it for the first time is a bit of an adventure.

Executive Director Peter Cameron and James Larson, Chairman of the Board, VRC, jointly cut the ceremonial ribbon to celebrate the grand opening at the new location of the North Bay Veterans Resource Center at 200 Montgomery Drive, Suite 'C', Santa Rosa. The phone number is 707-578-8387.



**VIETNAM VETERANS of AMERICA - REDWOOD EMPIRE CHAPTER 223**

**SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA**

**OFFICE: 707-526-4218 WEB: [www.vva223.org](http://www.vva223.org)**



**Officers**

President: Ken Holybee - [holybee@comcast.net](mailto:holybee@comcast.net) - Phone: 707.887.8891  
Vice President: John McGivney - [mcgivney@pacbell.net](mailto:mcgivney@pacbell.net) - Phone: 707.575.5261  
Secretary: Alan Dalton - [papadal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:papadal@sbcglobal.net) - Phone: 707.538.0428  
Treasurer: Bill Burke - [bbburke@pacbell.net](mailto:bbburke@pacbell.net) - Phone: 707.576.1218

**Board of Directors**

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Lou Nuñez - [scso610ret@yahoo.com](mailto:scso610ret@yahoo.com) - Phone: 707.291.5314  
Brooke McKusick - [brookemckusick@gmail.com](mailto:brookemckusick@gmail.com) - Phone: 707.537.9003  
Bruce Thomson - [thomsonofsr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:thomsonofsr@sbcglobal.net) - Phone: 707.523.3278

Jil McGivney - AVVA Rep. - [mcgivney@pacbell.net](mailto:mcgivney@pacbell.net) - Phone: 707.575.5261

**Women Veteran Committee Chair**  
VVA-223, VVA National and  
California State Council  
*Kate O'Hare-Palmer*  
[koharepalmer@gmail.com](mailto:koharepalmer@gmail.com)  
Phone: 707-775-4123

**VVA 223 PHOTOGRAPHS**  
on SHUTTERFLY

<http://vva223photographs.shutterfly.com>



**Committees**

Chaplain:	Bob Cheadle
Clinic Coffee Cart	Lou Nunez
Color Guard:	Dave Phillips
Dinner/Dance	Lou Nunez
Education:	Bruce Thomson
Finance:	Pat Christen
Food Give-A-Way:	John McGivney
Homeless Outreach:	Dave Phillips
Legislation:	Ken Holybee
Membership	Charles Earthman
Newsletter:	Brooke McKusick
Product Sales:	Bruce Thomson
Scholarship Fund:	Sunny Campbell
UVC	Ken Holybee
Veteran's Building:	John Crooker
Website:	Charles Earthman

**News and Views**

Publisher:	Ken Holybee
Editor-in-Chief:	Brooke McKusick
Associate Editor:	Charles Earthman
Copy Editor:	Nancy Schafer
Staff Writer:	Kate O'Hare-Palmer Michael Hart
Advertising:	Lou Nunez
Photos by:	"McQ6"

**National Aviation Day**

The National Aviation Day (August 19) is a United States national observation that celebrates the development of aviation.

The holiday was established in 1939 by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who issued a presidential proclamation which designated the anniversary of Orville Wright's birthday to be National Aviation Day. Mr. Wright, born in 1871, was still alive when the proclamation was first issued, and would live another nine years.

The proclamation was codified (USC 36:1:A:1:118), and it allows the sitting US President to proclaim August 19 as National Aviation Day each year, if desired. His/her proclamation may direct all federal buildings and installations to fly the US flag on that day, and may encourage citizens to observe the day with activities that promote interest in aviation.

**NOTICE**

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of VVA, Inc., National, State, Chapter 223, or the newsletter staff, but of the corresponding party. All articles by the Chapter have permission for reprint in all Vietnam Veterans of America newsletters. Anything else must come from the original source.

To make a contribution to the News and Views, submit a story, or a photograph, please call or email: Brooke McKusick @ 537-9003, or [mcq6@vbn.com](mailto:mcq6@vbn.com) To make a complaint about the newsletter, please call: Ken Holybee @ 887-8891, or [holybee@comcast.net](mailto:holybee@comcast.net)

VVA Chapter 223 invites you to place an ad in the News and Views, please call:

Lou Nunez @ 291-5314 or Brooke McKusick @ 537-9003

A business card size ad in our newsletter is \$100.00 for a full year... With a 100% Tax Credit!

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# President's Letter



Ken Holybee

Seems like I just finished my last president's report and it is time for another one. At this point we are still working the Santa Rosa Wednesday night market. We are also planning the October dinner dance fundraiser and the September air show. We still have lots of room for more helpers at these events and the morning coffee cart.

Wednesday night market is going good. We speak to a lot of people, older and younger veterans and people that are just curious about veteran benefits. Between the information and the ducky sellers we are able to make a lot of contact with the community. We are noticing a few younger veterans experiencing similar problems that we have seen in ourselves over the years. This is a good place to let them know that we understand a lot of what they are feeling and hopefully point them in the right direction.

The air show is coming up in September this year. With the new date they are hoping for more aircraft and more people attending. People wishing to assist at this event need to see me at the next meeting. We will be putting out a sign-up list so get your name in quickly.

Dinner dance tickets are on sale now. Get them early and avoid the rush. They are \$25.00 per person and we are hoping to run out and have a full house. We will also have a raffle and silent auction at the dance. Bring some friends or come alone. Either way it will be fun.

We are looking into having a chapter picnic next year with the Petaluma chapter. I am asking if late spring or late summer would be best, so let us know. We are planning on having a family event so you can even bring you grandchildren. We will need a few people to help organize this so we can have entertainment for the children as well as the adults. We used to do this every year in September but when it moved to Yountville, and was always held on POW recognition day, a lot of our members quit attending. We can over run a park in Santa Rosa, and everyone will still be close to home.

In this newsletter, is a picture of Steve Torliatt in memoriam. Steve grew up in Petaluma and graduated a year ahead of me. Before we went to Vietnam, we would hang out and try not to get into too much trouble. Ron Sidbeck's brother, Steve and I almost succeeded. They were both in the Navy, so I felt the Army was the place for me to keep out of trouble.

It seems that we could put many memorials in our newsletter each month. Our national magazine, The Veteran, lists our members that have passed since the last issue. It is getting to be the longest section of the periodical.

# THE COFFEE CART

## A Good Idea That Keeps Getting Better

by Charles Earthman



Charles Earthman

In January, 2013, staff and volunteers at the Santa Rosa VA Outpatient Clinic thought it would be a good idea to serve coffee to the veterans waiting in the cold for VA transport to the VA hospital in San Francisco. They asked Lou Nunez if he could get a few volunteers together and garner support from local veterans' organizations to buy coffee and supplies. It was a good idea and Lou Nunez was the right guy to make it happen.

By the summer of 2013 the coffee cart was a big success and provided enough revenue to make it self-sustaining. No one had predicted that the cart itself would generate excess funds from donations. As things went forward, snacks were added to go with the coffee and water was offered. Later, our product sales team started taking donations for hats and duckys. The coffee cart had become a popular stop on the way into the VA Clinic. It was also a hit with the Clinic staff.

But the most important benefit of the coffee cart at the Santa Rosa VA Outpatient Clinic is that it is an oasis for veterans coming to the Clinic and traveling to and from the VA hospital in San Francisco. This is because of the volunteers that staff the coffee cart. The attitude and demeanor of these veterans has a very positive effect on the people they come in contact with. There is a lot of stress that comes with having to visit a medical clinic or having to travel from points far to the north all the way to San Francisco. It can be stressful and depressing. The coffee cart has become a respite along the way, a place to get a cup of coffee and a friendly smile. This happens daily for many veterans that are served by the volunteers at the cart. They respond by giving donations when they can and their heartfelt thanks.

On behalf of the entire Sonoma County veterans' community, we thank these volunteers for their outstanding efforts to provide this important service to all who pass their way: **Earl Walters, Jim Wheeler, Jerry Kromer, Bob Evans, Bruce Carpenter, Al Duncan, Dennis Paulson, Joe Cholewa, Bob Stover, Anthony Tate, Norma Johnson, James McGary, Jim O'Neil, John & Jil McGivney, Bruce Thomson and Frank Mantellina**

Every single one of you make a huge difference.



# WOMEN VETERAN COMMITTEE REPORT as of July 10, 2014

*by Kate O'Hare-Palmer*  
Women Veteran Committee Chair  
VVA#223 and VVACSC

June 26-28, 2014 was our VVA California State Council Convention in beautiful downtown Fresno. It is a great time to meet so many other veterans from all over the state and see what is going on in their chapters. We are an active group! Plus, we had the elections for our state officers.



**Kate  
O'Hare-Palmer**

John Rowan, our VVA national president, attended and started off the weekend with some interesting statistics on the current VA Scandal. The VA has received more budget money than ever, but it is what they are doing with that money that is in question. We are definitely not seeing it in the quality of care for the VA Hospitals. The backload of outpatient appointments cannot be fixed unless there is hiring of more doctors and other health care providers. The VA is now offering bonuses and stipends to help get the education costs covered for MD training. If patients are outsourced to the community, they are finding few doctors that will accept them because of difficulty in getting payment from the VA. John suggested calling up the National Guard doctors and medics TDY to do initial visits to get a handle on the backlog and see what the true level of the problem is.

We need to become more involved at each city level with the mini and major mcs (oversight meetings) that are held at the VA clinics and hospitals. This something that our president, Ken, has been talking about for months.

John also talked about the success of the Agent Orange town hall meetings. It is a great way to get the communities together. There are now claims being submitted for the children with agent orange illnesses. All these claims are being sent to Denver for adjudication... knowing that they will be denied for now. We need this data to help get legislative backing. These claims will get a true data base started.

Another topic that was discussed was "LOSS," or late onset stress syndrome. This is beginning to show in our Vietnam veteran population as retirement sets in. It is seen in many who were considered workaholics and that is how they handled much of their PTSD without true treatment. Now that retirement has set in and the cobwebs start to come undone...the brain starts firing off some of the old memories and events that have been stored away.

We had our women veteran committee session and did not have any resolutions to be brought forward to the state council.

>>>>

The national resolutions for women veterans committee were handed out to be reviewed. Our resolutions regarding congressional oversight and accountability on all VA medical centers is still timely. The resolutions regarding MST care for both National Guard and Reserve forces as well as veterans, and the pay for travel for veterans seeking MST related specialized in-patient or residential treatment programs are still being evaluated. We also have a national resolution about the removal of immediate chain of command oversight for MST service member complaints. This bill failed to pass the senate vote December 2013 for the Military Justice Improvement Act. However, an amendment to that bill is supposed to be coming out of Senator Gillibrand's office soon.

Other topics during the committee meeting included the possibility of "sensitivity training" for the chapters in how to communicate with our female veterans. This seems to be an issue for many service organizations. Our Sonoma County Veterans Service officer was putting together a program to bring into each group on this subject and I will see if we can't schedule that for one of our chapter meetings.

I showed a you tube video on "A look Inside Fet (US Marines Female Engagement Teams)". There are some very interesting videos available showing what it is that women in service are doing currently. Today's women fill 96% of all jobs offered in the military. It gives you a better perspective on the drastic changes they face when coming home.

I also attended the Constitution committee and the PTSD committee and will give a report at our chapter meeting.

## In Memoriam



**Steve Torliatt**

*February 12, 1947 - June 22, 2014*

## *Do you remember where you were on July 20th forty-five years ago?*



**Apollo 11** was the spaceflight that landed the first humans on the Moon, Americans Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, on July 20, 1969, at 20:18 UTC. Armstrong became the first to step onto the lunar surface six hours later on July 21 at 02:56 UTC. Armstrong spent about two and a half hours outside the spacecraft, Aldrin slightly less, and together they collected 47.5 pounds (21.5 kg) of lunar material for return to Earth. A third member of the mission, Michael Collins, piloted the command spacecraft alone in lunar orbit until Armstrong and Aldrin returned to it just under a day later for the trip back to Earth.

Launched by a Saturn V rocket from Kennedy Space Center in Merritt Island, Florida, on July 16, Apollo 11 was the fifth manned mission of NASA's Apollo program. The Apollo spacecraft had three parts: a Command Module (CM) with a cabin for the three astronauts, and the only part that landed back on Earth; a Service Module (SM), which supported the Command Module with propulsion, electrical power, oxygen, and water; and a Lunar Module (LM) for landing on the Moon. After being sent toward the Moon by the Saturn V's upper stage, the astronauts separated the spacecraft from it and traveled for three days until they entered into lunar orbit. Armstrong and Aldrin then moved into the Lunar Module and landed in the Sea of Tranquility. They stayed a total of about 21½ hours on the lunar surface. After lifting off in the upper part of the Lunar Module and rejoining Collins in the Command Module, they returned to Earth and landed in the Pacific Ocean on July 24.

Broadcast on live TV to a world-wide audience, Armstrong stepped onto the lunar surface and described the event as "one small step for [a] man, one giant leap for mankind." Apollo 11 effectively ended the Space Race and fulfilled a national goal proposed in 1961 by the late U.S. President John F. Kennedy in a speech before the U.S. Congress: "before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth."

## **Chapter 223 at the State Convention**

VVA National President John Rowan addressed the convention floor. President Rowan spoke of the problems in the VA health care system -- a subject of concern to all veterans and especially Vietnam veterans attending the convention.

The AVVA luncheon was one of the highlights of the convention. After lunch some delegates attended a



**One of the students from the King River School making the "Rolling Thunder" presentation ...**

meeting on secondary PTSD that was very enlightening. Committee meetings and discussions by many of the CSC committee chairs took place the rest of the afternoon. After dinner there was a POW/MIA ceremony with a "Rolling Thunder" presentation by students from the King River School. The convention day ended with the candi-

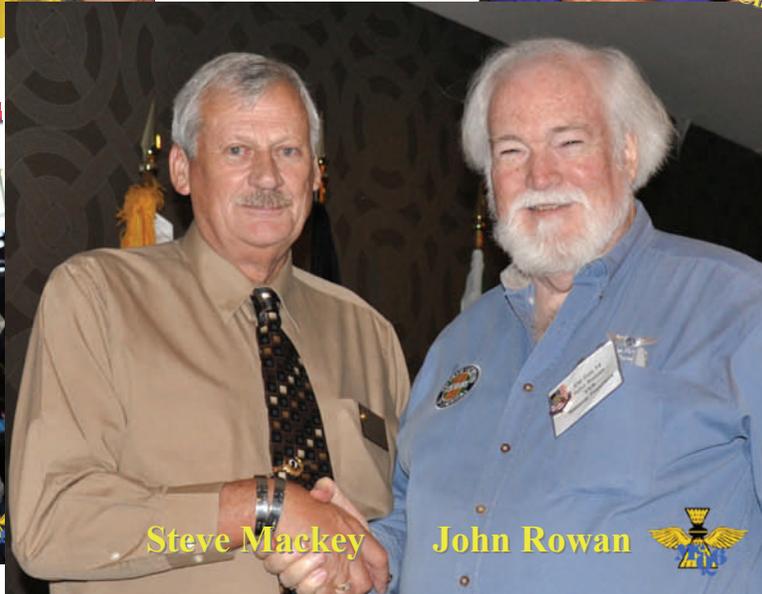
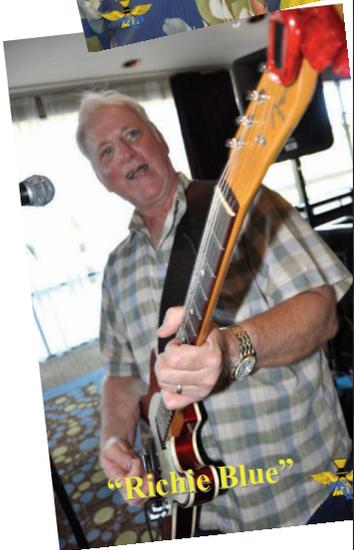
dates' forum chaired by Ken Holybee.

On Saturday morning the convention reconvened; in the afternoon delegate voting took place. Chapter 223 had two members stand for office. John Crooker lost a bid for re-election to the First Vice Presidents Chair and Lou Nunez lost his bid to unseat the incumbent for the Northern District Director to the CSC. Neither candidate was as well-known as his opponent. The convention was adjourned and all that remained was the Awards Banquet.

The Awards Banquet was held in the Sky Room atop the hotel. This was the final time VVA members from all over the state would be together for two more years. CSC President Steve Mackey presented two awards to Chapter 223's newsletter editor Brooke McKusick and associate editor Charles Earthman for best electronic and printed newsletter. This is the second time *News and Views* has had this honor.

As Vietnam-era veterans, our ranks grow smaller. Unlike other veterans' organizations, VVA will one day no longer exist. As California VVA members, we must help and support our state council. Those of us still able must do what we can to work for programs and legislation to make life as beneficial and positive as possible for all veterans and especially for Vietnam-era vets.

# 2014 CALIFORNIA STATE CONVENTION





Steve Mackie Al Sickle



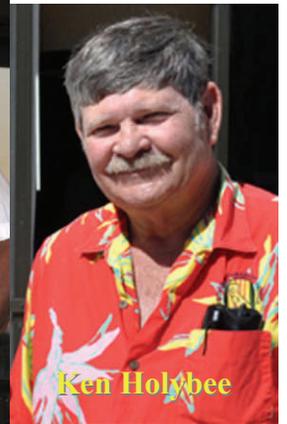
Debbie Kennedy Nina Schloffel



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC.  
NEWSLETTER OF THE YEAR  
Awarded To  
CHAPTER 223  
Santa Rosa, CA  
2014



Steve Mackey Brooke McKusick Charles Earthman Ponce



Ken Holbee



Bob Chaney Celli Croucher Henry Iasiello



Retire the Colors



Butch Frederickson & Kelly Molatore



Sharon Hobbs



Elayne Mackey



James Maddox



Peter Burrelle



## THE GRAPEVINE

### Health Talk Around Redwood Empire Chapter

By Charles Earthman

We aging Vietnam veterans face many health issues and vision health is one we can't overlook. Diabetes and other Agent Orange-related ailments also increase our propensity for vision loss.

Losing have a great your ability to routine activi- living such as watching TV, bills and taking personal finances. to day-tasks almost impossi- tity to self- cause of the read labels on tles can lead to consequences. can also have a fect on mobil- loss of the abil- worse, move around safely.



your sight can impact on perform the ties of daily r e a d i n g , or paying care of per- Normal day- can become ble. The abil- medicate be- inability to medicine bot- d a n g e r o u s Vision loss profound ef- ity, with the ity to drive, or

But vision loss does not have to prevent you from living an active and healthy life. There are resources to help you learn to retain your independence. Organizations like the American Foundation for the Blind provide assistance for veterans. Additionally, vision rehabilitation services and instruction can provide you with techniques that can help you accomplish many daily living skills safely and independently.

>>>>

The VA also provides for veterans with vision loss. In order to treat these veterans and help them adjust to life with limited vision or blindness, the VA has expanded their number of rehabilitation programs for blind and low vision veterans. Under this continuum of care, which started in 2007, the VA has established a total of 55 out-patient programs. VA optometrists strive to help visually impaired Veterans maintain functionality and independ- ence by addressing visual problems, determining goals, and evaluating specialized devices to aid Veterans in achieving those goals.

If you are experiencing vision loss, make an ap- pointment at the VA Clinic. We have very good optomet- ric care facilities in this area and we should take advan- tage of this service.

That's it for now, but let's keep the conversation going. If you would like to contribute anything to the Grapevine, go to [www.VVA-223.org](http://www.VVA-223.org) or Charles Earth- man at 707.318.2837.



"I'm sick of hot beer..."

**3725 Westwind Blvd  
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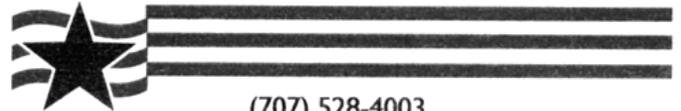
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## FREE ADMISSION TO THE AIR SHOW FOR VOLUNTEERS

Like the Wednesday Night Market booth, the Air Show booth at *Wings Over Wine Country* is a wonderful way to connect with other veterans and the community at large. We talk to the public and disseminate information to interested parties.



**MSgt Duckbill**

Did I say party? With the Ducky Brigade surrounding the VVA 223 information booth, its like a rolling party or in our case, group therapy. Those Ducky guys really know how to party!

Ken Holybee is organizing this years event at the air show, so please contact Ken at 887-8891 for more information or attend the general meeting on August 19th.



I asked God for a bike, but I know God doesn't work that way. So I stole a bike and asked for forgiveness.



## Coffee and Ducky Emporium



Hey sailor, how 'bout a nice cup of coffee. I said, "cup of coffee!" Now that the coffee cart has PX status, bring the whole family out for a great cup of Joe. Grand Pa, bring the kiddies so they can select a new ducky for their collection.

Featured this month, FRESH REAL FRUIT!

Volunteers are always needed to fill in behind the counter, so please call Lou Nunez at 291-5314



# SONOMA COUNTY VET CONNECT



**Veterans Drop In Center for FREE Resources & Services  
Every Tuesday - 9 am to noon**

Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building - 1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa  
(Across from the Fair Grounds)

Information, Assistance and Referrals

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**Phone 387-5623**

These services are, also, available at the Veterans Memorial Buildings in **Guerneville** on the 2nd Thursday, **Sonoma** on the 3rd Thursday, and **Petaluma** on the 4th Thursday of every month. Please note the time schedule for these resource and service meetings is: Noon to 3 pm

**ALL VETERANS ARE WELCOME, NO CHARGE SERVICE**



**CHAPTER 223**  
**GENERAL MEETING**  
**AUGUST 19, 2014**  
**BE THERE EARLY!!!**

**REDWOOD GOSPEL MISSION -**  
**HOMELESS OUTREACH PROGRAM -** Every Monday evening @ 5:30 pm. **101 6th Street, Santa Rosa.**

**SONOMA COUNTY VET CONNECT -** Every Tuesday morning, 9:00 am to noon @ the VETS building. Vets helping vets solve problems. Coffee and donuts served. See page 7.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING -** Second Tuesday of the month, 1:00 pm @ the VETS building. Look for the guys looking for the room...

**VVA-223 GENERAL MEETING -** Third Tuesday of the month. **POTLUCK @ SIX.** Meeting starts at 7 PM. See above...

**FOOD-GIVE-AWAY PROGRAM -** Fourth Tuesday of the month. Volunteers will please check in with **John McGivney @ 570-9201** for time and station.

**POKER SCHEDULE -** Cards in the air at 6:00 pm. Check-in and pizza 5:00 to 5:55 pm... Usually the first Saturday of the month... **August 16th** September 6th, October 4th, November 1st, December 6th.

**WINGS OVER WINE COUNTRY - PACIFIC COAST AIR MUSEUM 2014 AIR SHOW**  
**Sat. & Sun. September 20 & 21, 2014**

**VVA 223 3rd ANNUAL DINNER/DANCE**  
**October 11, 2014**

# COMIC'S CORNER

Associated Press Seems a bit unclear on the whole idea... Execution Drugs Harm Breathing and Heart Function -  
-AP

"A new study reveals that parents who spend more time on their smart phones have more negative interactions with their children. While parents who spend less time on their smart phones are really mad that they forgot their charger." --  
Seth Meyers

"Lawmakers in Jamaica are now considering a bill that would legalize marijuana. Let me repeat myself: Lawmakers in Jamaica are considering a bill to legalize marijuana. In related news, lawmakers in Italy are considering a bill to legalize spaghetti, and lawmakers in Ireland are considering a bill to legalize whiskey."

--Jimmy Fallon

Husband's Message (by cell phone): Honey, I was involved in a car accident. Paula brought me to the Hospital. They have been doing tests and taking X-rays. The blow to my head was pretty bad, fortunately it seems like it did not cause a concussion. But I have three broken ribs and a compound fracture in my left leg. Wife's Response: Who is Paula?

Usually, One Must Go to Walmart to Meet Someone of His Caliber... Man, 35, Kisses His Way Through an Omaha Walgreens Before Licking an Employee's Head --Omaha (Neb.) World-Herald headline

Communication Breakdown - Daffynitions: Afghanistan n. The world's driest quagmire. Ask England and the Soviet Union. The word still hasn't gotten to the United States, more's the pit.

Browning's Observation: maxim. The inner eye requires an outer focus to be anything beyond self-absorption.

Prediction (pre-dik-shun), noun. definition: when you know you're going to get screwed.

"A new study shows that young adults suffering from insomnia are at higher risk of a stroke. So, that information should help you finally get some sleep." --Seth Meyers

"Some scientists now believe that Jesus Christ had a wife. They also believe that Jesus' nephew called Jesus' wife the "Auntie Christ." --Conan O'Brien

Washington State last year passed two laws -- legalized gay marriage and legalized marijuana. The fact that gay marriage and marijuana were legalized on the same day makes perfect biblical sense, because Leviticus 20:13 says: "If a man lies with another man they should be stoned." We just hadn't interpreted it correctly before.





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OFFICE: 707-526-4218  
WEB: www.vva223.org

