



# NEWS AND VIEWS

VVA REDWOOD EMPIRE CHAPTER 223

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## #THREE BRAVE WOMEN

by Dave Richey

On March 19, 2018, a memorial service was held for Dr. Jennifer Gray Golick, Christine Loeber MSW LCSW, and Dr. Jennifer Gonzales Shushereba. These *three brave women* lost their lives on March 9 while trying to help one of their former clients at The Pathway Home. The service was at the Lincoln Theater on the campus of the Yountville Veterans Home.

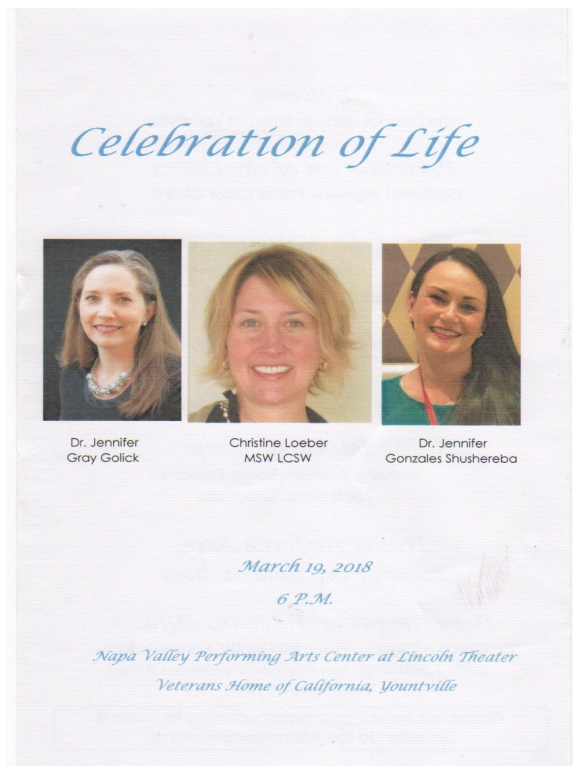
Guests began to arrive before 4:30 PM for the 6:00 PM service, anticipating a “full house” at the 1200-seat theater. At about the same time, members of the Patriot Guard Riders, The American Legion Riders, other rider groups and veterans organizations (including this writer) stood in a Flag Line to greet those coming to pay their respects. And the theater did indeed fill to capacity, with some standing to pay tribute to the three heroines.

John Dunbar, the Mayor of the Town of Yountville, was the Master of Ceremonies for the memorial. He introduced each of the elements of the service, starting with the Presentation of Colors by the California Highway Patrol Color Guard, followed by Kellie Fuller singing the National Anthem. Pastoral Care Chaplain, Ira Book, led the invocation. Several dignitaries, including Representative Mike Thompson and CalVet Secretary, Vito Imbasciani, spoke of the work and impact of the three women on the lives of many inside and outside the veterans' community. Board President of The Pathway Home, Dorothy Salmon, gave a beautiful description of working with Christine and the two Jennifer's. Perhaps the most moving tribute was presented by Zach Skiles, a graduate of The Pathway Home program. The *Travis Air Force Base Band of the Golden West* played *America the Beautiful* and *Amazing Grace*. Dr. Carolyn Clancy, Veterans Health Administra-

tion, and Keith Armstrong, of San Francisco Veterans Affairs – Healthcare System, added remarks describing the invaluable work by these three brave women. Closing words were offered by the Mr. Gonzales, the father of Jennifer Gonzales Shushereba.

A few volunteers from the Santa Rosa CBOC Coffee Cart – Angie Hand and Dave & Jackie Richey – joined some of the staff of the CBOC and the VA Medical Center San Francisco on a VA bus to Yountville. Some of those staff members had worked with and/or knew Jennifer, Christine and Jennifer. We felt like family by the time we completed the return trip...

Anyone who wishes to donate to the families of these Angels, can do so by visiting [www.thepathwayhome.org](http://www.thepathwayhome.org). Look for #3bravewomen.



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Contributors to the News and Views: Ken Holybee, Kate O'Hare-Palmer, Bill Burke, and Dave Richey. Thanks to all. Would like to see more articles next month. Support the chapter. I don't write articles, I just put it together. There are a lot of interesting stories out there, send them to Ken and he will forward them to me.

**NOTICE**

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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, Ken Holybee**

Spring is upon us with a passion. I got almost three inches of rain overnight to start the new season. We are on a very busy schedule for the next few months. Check out the web site and the calendar to see if there is anything you would like to attend or assist with. While writing this we are planning a week of events that many of you are not advised about because of the late start on some of them. They have been advertised on the web site and we have fliers at the clinic, vets building and other places. Lou has put out the fliers on his Facebook page and other social media sites. We have the Vietnam Wall up on our hallway wall in the vets building and there is a ribbon cutting event while this is being printed. Working with congressman Thompson's staff we had a small window to get him involved. We are also having the BBQ that was advertised last month with a notation to contact us for the time and place.

We are holding chapter election of officers and state council representative at the April meeting. Currently the current officers are running, and Kate is running for state council representative. Come to the next meeting and put your name in or just come and vote. We are still attempting to get an email list of our members to be able to send out important information and announcements.

In May we have a lot of upcoming projects. We have the Wednesday Night Market in Santa Rosa beginning on the first Wednesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Hopefully we will have nice evenings without rain or freezing nights. Sometimes when the sun goes down it gets downright chilly, but we hang in there. We can always use a few volunteers of just stop by and chat for a while.

We also have the town hall with the VA on Monday the 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 pm. This is a good time to come in and ask questions of the leadership from San Francisco and our clinic. This is our third annual town hall and we have made some changes in our care by participating in these. They do listen, and they do make changes that we suggest when we have the backing of other veterans. We are hoping that we can have everyone invite all the younger veterans you run into, so we can get their input and concerns. In case you have not heard, we have over 9,000 veterans using the Santa

Rosa clinic and we could really use more staffing.

On the national level we are working to stop the VA from being privatized by those that want to dismantle it and put all veterans in the private health sector. This attempt is a real thing and there are groups that are working in the dark to undermine the leadership. When people talk about public private partnerships, what do they really mean. Some are helpful, but some are just a way to move veterans away from the VA health care system. When funds are added to the choice program, they are taken from other VA budget programs not new money. Using the choice program to receive care that is not available in the VA is one thing but using it to take away from the health care of veterans is wrong. The VA is the best medical teaching program in the world. Look at the history of how they became this. No where can doctors learn from not just wounds and illnesses but be allowed to do research to help in the treatment of these issues. We need to defend our health care and make sure the people that run it are held accountable. We must also make sure that the information we receive and put out is current and correct. There is way too much misinformation spread than we can keep up with. If you have questions, contact us and we can get the answers if we don't already have them.

We have a couple of events this summer. First is the state convention, June 21 to 24 in Fresno. This is for the election of officers and amendments and resolutions. We are authorized six delegates to represent the chapter. It is also open to anyone that wants to attend to see what is happening and how it works. Only delegates can vote or be on the floor of the convention area but there is an area for the public. The other big event is the national leadership and education conference being held in Palm Springs. This is from July 24 till 28. As you can tell this is the best time of the year to go to Palm Springs. At this meeting the two working groups will give a report to the membership on the future of VVA. If you can work, it into your schedule try to attend. Information on these events can be found on the VVA web site for the leadership conference and the state council web site for the state convention. Some may think that all these web sites are a bit much but, it is no longer the future, but it is the now.

# TAPS

It is with great regret that we report the recent deaths of three of our chapter members.

Member John Quinne passed away on November 20, 2017. No other information is available.

Life member Robert Steinnard passed away October 4, 2017 from a stroke. Robert served in the U. S. Army from July 29, 1966 through July 28, 1969 working in Engineer Equipment Maintenance serving 2 tours in Vietnam.

Life member Dennis Keefe passed away November 6, 2017 from cancer. Dennis served in the U. S. Navy from January 6, 1966 through September 30, 1969 as a Gunners Mate serving in Vietnam from November 1966 through January 1968.

## Wednesday, March 21, 2018

### Agent Orange Linked to Increased Risk of MGUS in Some Vietnam Veterans

#### READ THE STORY

#### Summary

US Air Force veterans who participated in the spraying missions of Agent Orange during the Vietnam War have a more than twofold increased risk of developing a condition called monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance, or MGUS, a precursor to multiple myeloma. An association between Agent Orange and multiple myeloma has been suspected based on other studies involving farmers and agriculture workers, but this study provides the first direct evidence linking Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange with MGUS. Fifty years after the US Air Force began spraying Agent Orange in Vietnam, new research shows that veterans exposed to the herbicide are more than twice as likely to develop monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS), a precursor to multiple myeloma.

A team of researchers led by Ola Landgren, Chief of Memorial Sloan Kettering's Myeloma Service, analyzed serum samples from 459 US Air Force personnel involved in aerial herbicide spray missions during the Vietnam War, as well as 459 samples from veterans who served there at the same time but were uninvolved in the spraying missions. All of these veterans served between 1962 and 1971, when the US military dropped more than 19 million gallons of herbicides in Southeast Asia during Operation Ranch Hand.

Researchers tested for the presence of MGUS and also concentrations of TCDD, a contaminant of Agent Orange that's been classified as a human carcinogen since 1997.

Posted by AgentOrangeZone at 11:12 AM No comments:

Good Morning Everyone

Please join VVA-500, in Honoring all Vietnam Veterans at the

Annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, now formally called National Vietnam War Veterans Day at the California Vietnam Veteran Memorial in Capitol Park.

I have attached a copy of the flyer for your convenience.

Please attend and receive a 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War for all Vietnam Veterans.

Hope to see you all there !!!!!!!!!!!

Marty Snezek II, President Chapter 500

## Phunnies, From Chapter 53

### Estate Planning...

My friend we'll call him "David", was a single guy living at home with his father and working in the family business. He knew that he would inherit a fortune once his sickly father died "Dave" wanted two things: To learn how to invest his inheritance & to find a wife to share his fortune. One evening at an investment meeting, he spotted the most beautiful woman e had ever seen. Her natural beauty took his breath away. "I may look like just an ordinary man," he said to her, "but in just a few years, my father will die, and I'll inherit 200 million dollars." Impressed, the woman obtained his business card.

Two weeks later, she became his stepmother. Women are so much better at estate plan than men.....

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March 2018  
National Women's History  
Project's Honorees

### **Linda Spoonster Schwartz**

**Linda Spoonster Schwartz** overcame a military injury to become one of the nation's leading veterans' advocates, focusing especially on the unmet needs of women veterans. The Honorable Linda Spoonster Schwartz has served our country, since 1967, as an Air Force Nurse, veteran advocate and public servant. After 16 years of Military Service, she was medically retired after sustaining injuries in a 1983 aircraft accident, while serving as a USAF Flight Nurse. She looked to the Veterans Administration (VA) for help but found a pervasive attitude of neglect toward women veterans (inadequate facilities, lack of privacy, and physicals that didn't include breast or gynecological exams). Inspired to make a difference and impervious to her injuries, she earned a Master's from Yale School of Nursing and Doctorate in Public Health from Yale School of Medicine.

**Schwartz** has testified over 24 times on women veteran issues before both Houses of Congress. She spearheaded legislative efforts to authorize VA's "Center for Women Veterans". As Chair of VA's Advisory Committee on Women Veterans, she emerged as a credible leader-champion for equal benefits, care, and services for women veterans.

**Schwartz** served as Connecticut Commissioner/Commandant of Veterans Affairs (2003-2014) focusing on improving programs for women veterans, homeless veterans, and mental health ser-

vices. In 2013, President Obama nominated her to be Assistant Secretary of Veteran Affairs for Policy and Planning where she continued to fight for issues such as veteran suicide prevention, and survivors of military sexual trauma. She has served on the National Boards of the American Nurses Association, Vietnam Veterans of America, and the Vietnam Women's Memorial. She is the first and only woman elected President of the National Association of State Directors of Veteran Affairs. Among her many honors are being inducted into the American Academy of Nursing, National Commendation Medal of Vietnam Veterans of America for "Justice, Integrity, and Meaningful Achievement" and both the Ohio and Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame. After leaving Federal Service, **Dr. Schwartz** returned to Connecticut where she has resumed many of her veteran advocacy activities.

**Linda is one of many great Ladies being Honored and we are proud to know her as a VVA Veteran and advocate for women and for veterans in GENERAL RIGHTS Thanks Kate for forwarding this information to me.**

### **Phunnies, from Chapter 53 again.....**

Why do people constantly return to the refrigerator with hopes that something new to eat will have materialized?


Why is it that no plastic bag will open from the first end you try?

How come you never hear father-in-law JOKES?

Do you ever wonder why you gave me your email address in the first Place??????



# April 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1 EASTER</b> 1968—operation Pegasus begins	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Poker set up at 4 PM
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Ken DC 1987—SF becomes separate branch of ARMY	<b>10</b> Board Meeting 1 PM	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 1983—Aviation branch established	<b>13</b> Thomas Jefferson B-day	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> Ken home from DC	<b>16</b>					<b>21</b> Newsletter Articles Due
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Copy Newsletter	<b>17</b> Gen Mtg 6 PM potluck —7PM Mtg Election of Officers	<b>18</b> CAVBF Board MTG	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>28</b> 1965—US invades Dominican Republic
<b>29</b> CSC ends at noon	<b>30</b>					

# May 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Wednesday night Market for	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Poker Game set up at 4 PM—
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Board Meeting at 1 PM	<b>9</b> Wednesday night Market	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 1969—Battle of Dong Ap Bia (Hamburger Hill) begins	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> Mothers Day	<b>14</b> 1967—Operation Junction City Ends	<b>15</b> General Meeting eat at 6 PM	<b>16</b> Wednesday night Market	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Rose Parade, (I think) newsletter articles DUE Armed Forces Day
<b>20</b> 1969—Hamburger Hill Ends	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Food Distribution at 7 AM	<b>23</b> Wednesday night Market	<b>24</b> Fold Newsletter 10 AM	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> Motor Cycle Run Clammers All Day	<b>28</b> Memorial Day Flags up at 6 AM Flags down at 3	<b>29</b> Cal Vet Leadership Conference	<b>30</b> Wednesday night Market	<b>31</b>		


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Membership Application for:  
Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter # 223

Membership is open to US 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 August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975.

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**IF YOU ARE A VIETNAM-ERA VETERAN YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN VVA OR JOIN AVVA AND SERVE YOUR VETERAN COMMUNITY**