



NEWS AND VIEWS



VOLUME 20 ISSUE 7 July 2018
PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH OTHER VETERANS

Presidents Message

Out of town.

I have spent a few days in May out of town. I started with the Mental Health Matters Day in Sacramento on May 23rd and ended the month with three days in Sacramento for the CalVet Leadership Summit.

Mental Health Matters Day is an annual event in Sacramento at the Capital that has spaces to put out information on various programs helping people with mental health issues. I had a booth there representing the California Veterans Benefit Fund, a sponsor of the event. I attend many events as the president of the California Veterans Benefit Fund, a 501©3 not for profit fundraising organization that raises funds for veteran programs. This year the VA did not have a booth so there was a limit to the amount of information regarding veteran mental health. We did talk to a lot of service providers and a few politicians that came by. There was a lot of concern regarding programs for veterans and a few people talking about their veteran programs. This event could probably use a little more outside coverage.

I also attend the CalVet Leadership Summit from May 29 to 31, also in Sacramento. I spent part of the time as president of the California Veterans Benefit Fund and part of the time as chapter 223 president. Sometimes this was determined by what I was speaking to and who I was speaking to. This is the third annual meeting put on by the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet). It is a two and a half day of reports, speeches, workshops, panel discussions and networking. This event brings in veteran and other leaders from all over the state and speakers from all areas. The focus is on housing issues, mental health, benefits and other veteran



related issues. Some of our speakers included Assembly member Jacqui Irwin, Senator Josh Newman, Brigadier General Kevin J. Killer USMC, Joe Quinn (Project Headstrong), Under Secretary Randy C. Reeves (VA Memorial Affairs) and Hosted by CalVet Secretary Dr. Vito Imbasciani MD. The event was a success because of his hard-working staff, Under Secretaries, June Iljana, Lindsey Sin and Keith Boylan.

These three Under Secretaries make a difference in your life every day. Without the work they do we would have less benefits and services and not be able to accomplish the work that we do with and without CalVet. They are a wealth of information. If you sign up for email notification from CalVet you will be informed of all the meetings and events they manage. Sign up for CalVet connect and follow them with the new blog www.calvetconnect.blog.com. If I was to write down the information I have from this meeting I would be writing for a week and would probably have the start to a book. I have some of the workshop material in the chapter office and they will be giving it all to us by email soon. I am always ready to share any information that I have if you ask. For you that know me the best, you know I am always willing to talk. I have also heard that we need to get into the next generation of communication. We send out a newsletter and we have a web site. What we need is Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, U Tube and a chapter blog. If this sounds strange to most of you it is because we are behind. We should be working on this at the board level and at the chapter meetings. I think we have people that can instruct is in these adventures if we listen to them. Keep watching

Presidents message continued on page 4

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If you would like to purchase a Business Card sized **sponsorship** to put in our NEWSLETTER, Please call the chapter office. Phone number is: 707-526-4218

Contributors to the News and Views: Ken Holybee, Kate O'Hare-Palmer, Bill Burke, Carlton Simini, and Gabe Arevalo. 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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Rohnert Park/Cotati Rotary Veterans Appreciation Expo

Submitted by Dave Richey

On Saturday, June 16, the Rotary Club of Rohnert Park/Cotati held their first annual Veterans Appreciation Expo. The members of the Club had the desire to honor and show appreciation to the veterans in their local community. There was a series of several weekly meetings to plan the event, attended by a committee of Rotary members and other veteran-oriented organizations such as AMVETS, VFW, Veterans Resource Center and Vietnam Veterans of America. The committee hoped to see between 100 and 150 veterans and family members.

The event was held at the Cotati Veterans Building. Sally Tomatoes supplied the food, which by all reports was fantastic. There were activities for the kids, like jump house, face painting, and games; there were speakers from the WWII era to the Iraq era. Veterans organizations had informational and membership booths for attendees to browse. In all, there were about 125 people that made it out to the Expo. The committee chair, Bob Stewart, considered this a great success. He wants to make this an annual event.

Members who attended from AMVETS and VVA were Jay Matthews, Joe Cholewa, Tony Rambonga and Brian McKeown. Others who attended planning meetings, but were unable to attend, were Lou Nunez, Dianna Waite, and Dave and Jackie Richey

Same Story—Veterans Appreciation— Different Article & Writer

Duane DeWitt

Brian McKeown a Santa Rosa native who served with the US Army 10th Mountain Division and holds a Combat Infantryman's Badge recently was a highlighted speaker at a Veterans Appreciation Expo. The event was held on Saturday June 16 by the Rohnert Park – Cotati Rotary Club at the Cotati Veterans Memorial Facility. During the speech Brian gave, he spoke about a "Soldier's Transition to Civilian Life." He told the assembled visitors to the BBQ Lunch about how his experiences in re-integrating back to his community involved accepting change in society and in himself. Also important to returning veterans such as him is the need to "understand who we are." He pointed out to the crowd the ideas of "Why we tick" plus "How service in the military affects civilian life" for returning veterans. He went on to explain methods of "how to manage it." He also elaborated on the different "outlets" veterans pursue and the aspects of "alcohol, music and drugs" some may indulge in using. The talk he gave was well received by the crowd and Carlton Smirni, an Air Force Veteran from Chapter 223, who was in attendance said, "It was one of the best speeches I have

heard". Brian is an Associate member and Associate Liaison of VVA 223 and is a good advocate for veterans locally. He volunteers with the Chapter 223 Veterans food "give away" and has been a welcome addition to our local chapter. Thank you Brian for your service and your willingness to speak to others on behalf of veterans. Come to the next meeting and you may see Brian there with one or both of his sons. Strike up a conversation and be a friend to this good young man and his family.

Have Your Chapter or State Council Featured in Our Calendar-VVA

Submitted by Kate O'Hare-Palmer

Have you taken photos at your VVA Chapter or State Council activities and community events? We're looking for candid action shots of Chapters or State Councils providing services and hosting events within their communities or for fellow veterans. **Enter your photos in our contest today** for a chance to have them featured in our 2019 Calendar, which is mailed to more than 97,000 VVA Members and supporters! Click below for the Official Rules & Submission Guidelines—and to submit your photos. **Contest ends June 15! SEE WEB WEEKLY FOR DETAILS.**

Presidents Message continued from page 1

and start looking at our web site to see when we start these programs. Mixed in with all these trips I attended the motorcycle run for Memorial Day at the vets building. On Memorial Day I presented our wreath at the ceremony at the cemetery before leaving for Sacramento. We are also staffing a booth at the Wednesday Night Market in Santa Rosa. Come down and see the new material we are giving out. Wherever I go I seem to find new ideas and handouts that we can use. On the first Thursday of the month I attend the Continuum of Care meeting and try to get up to date on the local homeless programs. We also had our third annual town hall meeting with the VA at the vets building on the 21st. the leadership decided that they did not need to attend. I will now be asking the San Francisco leadership to come up and explain the issues they were supposed to bring to us. One is with the telehealth and internet programs available to us, why did they not come and tell us about the VA app store and the apps available to us and how they can help us. Did you know they have U Tube videos that explain how things work? These are the things they were **page 7 Please for ending**

Understanding the Cause of PTSD.

John R. McQuaid, Ph.D.

Chief of Mental Health

San Francisco VA Healthcare System

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), in addition to interfering with people living the lives they want to live, can be frustrating and confusing. People will sometimes say the symptoms they have don't seem to make sense. In reality, symptoms of PTSD are often very normal and predictable responses to extreme and intense events. Understanding that can help in understanding how treatment works and why PTSD is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of the body and mind doing their best to adapt to extreme situations.

PTSD occurs in response to one or more severe events that involve actual or threatened death, severe injury, or sexual violence. A person might experience this directly, witness something, or in some cases here about an event occurring to a loved one. However, exposure to an event alone does not mean someone will have PTSD. Three aspects of how humans learn and change will influence how that event changes a person. They are classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and cognitive processing.

Classical conditioning means that when something that causes intense reactions (for example, hitting a roadside bomb) is paired with something that previously did not cause intense reactions (for example, driving), the emotions and reactions of both things get connected. A person who had experienced a roadside bomb may feel the same adrenaline rush, fear, or anger of combat the next time they drive. This is natural. If you have heard of Pavlov's dog and pairing a bell with food, it is exactly the same process. However, it is confusing if you don't understand that this is how the human body works. In addition, sometimes we don't even realize what has been paired together with the trauma, so when the symptoms arise it feels like they are coming out of nowhere. Symptoms of PTSD like hyperarousal and intrusive memories arise from this process.

Operant conditioning means that we change our actions based on consequences. If we do something and we feel better, we do it more; if we feel worse, we do it less. When someone has experienced a trauma and now has reactions to things (driving) that were previously benign, they may start avoiding them. Although avoiding painful things may make sense, it can actually maintain the

symptoms because it prevents "deconditioning," the process of breaking the link between the trauma and other actions. This is why avoidance is a very problematic PTSD symptom.

Cognitive processing basically means how we think. People over time develop beliefs about themselves, other people, the world, and how things work together, and when they have new experiences they need to fit the new information into those beliefs. When people are in intense, traumatic situations, it can be very hard to fit the new information into their old beliefs. They often start to question all they ever understood about themselves, the world, and other people. For example, someone who had been raised to believe that the world is "Just" may be unable to reconcile the terrible, arbitrary, and uncontrollable things that happen in war. The difficulty of incorporating traumas in our previous understanding of the world, others, and ourselves lead to negative emotions, disconnection from others, confusion, and often very intense negative beliefs about oneself, others, or the world. Again, cognitive processing of new information is a natural process. However, in traumatic situations, it can lead to ways of thinking and feeling that are understandable but not helpful.

There are two important messages here. First, PTSD is not weakness, but a natural response to extremes. In fact, symptoms of PTSD (e.g., hypervigilance and reactivity, avoidance of triggers), can be life-saving and adaptive in a combat situation. The second important message is that when you understand the processes that contribute to PTSD, you can figure out how to treat it. In the next newsletter I will describe how treatment works to address each of these areas.

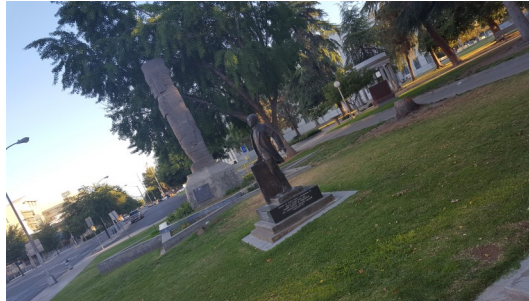


Steve Mackey at beginning of STATE CONVENTION

PHOTO BY KATE



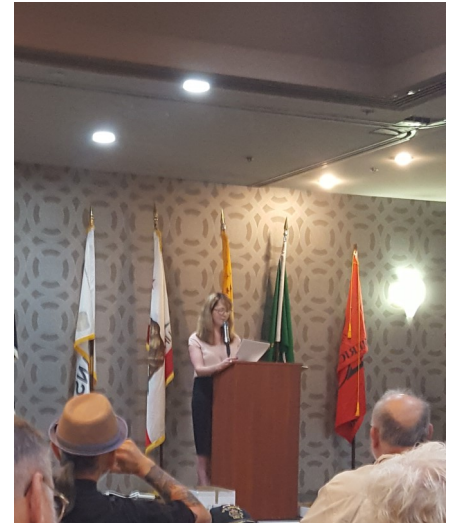
POW/MIA CEREMONY
Bob Chaney conducting



These two pictures are from Fresno Park, across from the hotel



To the Right is Guest Speaker; CDVA Director of Women Veterans Affairs, Lindsey Sin



All pictures except John Rowan are taken by our own Kate O'Hare-Palmer



AVVA
LUNCHEON
These two pictures



Last month I was elected to be Commanding General of the Masonic War Veterans of the State of New York (MWV). My two predecessors, Brian Will and Don Kune-go, as well as a number of our members are VVA members. Some of the MWV Posts work with their neighbor VVA Chapters. Thanks, John Rowan, VVA President



NEW BOARD: L to R Barry Schloffel, Treasurer, Dean Gotham, 1st Vice President, Steve Mackey, President, Alan Cook, At-Large, , North District, Al Sickle, Central District, Bill Holdges, Secretary, Jerry Orleman, Southern District. Missing in Action, Dick Southern, 2nd Vice President



Town Hall Panel



People asking questions of the Panel



Healdsburg FFA Parade
SOS Float



Dustin
and Mary
St Clair
Healdsburg FFA



Side of SOS Float



Mary
talking
to
some-
one!!

Anne Castelleon
with Flag

Rifle Squad, Memorial Day



Memorial Day—Ken Holybee, 223, Richard Jones, Vet Connect, Jay Matthews and Ismael last two are with Am Vets

Kate took this one



Flag Folding, Memorial Day



Some of the
Crowd and
standing in
right picture
are the singers
the Cordsman
at Memorial
Day Services



Kate O'Hare-Palmer
Main Speaker at
Memorial Day Ser-
vice

Photos by Kate and Memo-
rial Day by Joe Cholewa

This Is The Military Base Water Contamination Study The White House Didn't Want You To See

By Jared Keller on June 21, 2018

Toxic breast milk. Contaminated umbilical cords. Testicular cancer. Organ failure.

These are just some of the side effects of the chemical compounds that have poisoned drinking and groundwater sources at dozens of military bases across the country, according to a major government study that the White House and Environmental Protection Agency sought to keep from the American public.

After a March DoD report to the House Armed Service Committee revealed that at least 126 U.S. military installations tested at “higher than acceptable” concentrations of the per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) found in military firefighting foam in water supplies, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) conducted its first-ever in-depth analysis on the health impacts of the chemicals.

- According to the HHS study, the health effects of exposure to PFAS chemicals in humans include pregnancy complications, liver damage, high cholesterol, decreased response to vaccines, and an increased risk of thyroid disease, asthma diagnosis, and long-term fertility issues. Even more alarming, PFAS chemicals can contaminate human breast milk and umbilical cord blood, massively increasing the potential of birth defects among affected fetuses.

The effects on laboratory animals are just as alarming. An analysis of 187 studies of PFAS exposure in laboratory animals revealed “liver toxicity, developmental toxicity, and immune toxicity” — as well as total organ failure. But even worse, comparisons between human and animal exposures reveal it takes human beings *four years* to expel toxins that rodents purge in just a few hours.

If you want a visceral portrait of the horrifying impact of PFAS contamination, I highly recommend this [jaw-dropping reporting](#) from Military Times’ Tara Copp, who spent the last several weeks speaking to veterans and their families who have had their lives destroyed by chronic issues that are likely connected to years of exposure to the chemicals. In one case, Copp spoke to a female airman who was told “don’t get pregnant at George Air Force Base” when she PCSed there in the mid-1970s.

“You rely on the service to keep you safe,” she told Copp. “And although there’s no guarantee of safety, when you’re stateside you certainly don’t expect toxic exposure.”

Read the whole HHS report below and Copp’s full report <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2018/06/20/why-women-were-told-dont-get-pregnant-at-george-air-force-base/>



****WOMEN VETERANS****

SAVE THE DATE. 11.9.18. 5-7pm

VVA Women Veterans Committee

Hosting a Reception Celebrating

25th Anniversary of

Vietnam Womens Memorial

@ DAR O'Bryne Gallery

Washington, D.C.

Please contact Pattie Dumin

Vice Chair: pmdumin77@att.net.

Information for all events for

25th Anniversary Of VNWM

Veterans Day Weekend

November 9-11, 2018 on :

Vietnamwomensmemorial.org

Headquarters Hotel: Embassy Suites

1250 22nd Street NW,

Washington, D.C. Georgetown

Ph: 1-202-857-3388



Special group code: VWM

Presidents Message Completed from Page 3


supposed to be bring to us. We had 70 people signed in to the town hall meeting. The people asking questions asked some good questions. Some, or most, received good answers. I would have liked to have had more discussion on how to access these apps that I did not know existed.

Next month should be just as exciting and busy as this month was. Hope I can put together a good record of my travels.

July

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 1962 Military Intelligence Branch est.	2	3	4 Happy 4th Wed night market	5 First Combat ground forces in Korea (task Force Smith)	6	7 POKER
8	9	10 Board Meeting 1 PM, 1999 1st Bat. 26 Inf in Kosovo	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 General Mtg. 6 PM Dinner, 7 pm Meeting	18	19	20	21 Newsletter Articles Due
22	23 Copy Newsletter	24 VVA National Leadership Food Distribution 7 AM	25 IN Palm Springs UVC 7 pm	26 Fold Newsletter 10 AM 1948 -Exec. Order 9981 ends Segregation in Military	27 1953—Korean War Armistance	28
						
29 Leadership Ends 	30	31				

August 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sonoma County	Fair	August 2—12	1 Wed Night Mrkt	2 1990—Operation Desert Shield begins	3	4 1950-Defense of Pusan Perimeter begins
5	6 1945 — Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima	7 1942—US Forces land on Guadalcanal	8 Wed Night Mrkt	9 1945—Atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki	10	11
12	13	14 Board Mtg 1 PM	15 Wed Night Mrkt 1945 — Japan accepts unconditional surrender terms	16	17 1955—Birthday of Civil Affairs Branch	18
19	20	21 General Mtg 6 PM Dinner 7 PM Meeting	22 Wed Night Mrkt	23	24 CSC MEETING	25 Newsletter Articles Due 1944 - Allied Forces Liberate Paris
26 	27	28 Food Distribution 7 AM	29 Wed Night Mrkt UVC—7 PM	30 Fold Newsletter 10 AM	31	

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News and Views

Volume 20 Issue 7 July 2018

A Publication of:

Vietnam Veterans of America

Redwood Empire Chapter 223

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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