



RECON REPORT

- Serving Veterans and the Community Since 1985 -

AUGUST 2014

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Chapter 218

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Next Chapter Meeting

September 10, 2014 | 5:45 pm

Santa Barbara Elks Lodge
150 N. Kellogg Ave., Goleta

Dinner Available
\$8.00 per person

*"Never again
will one generation
of veterans
abandon another..."*

President's message...

First and foremost, my grateful thanks to everyone who had a hand in making our food booth at this year's Fiesta a successful and fun event. Your participation, whether it was to help with the construction, prep and cleaning, staffing or take down of the booth, is greatly appreciated. (See Don Matter's Fiesta report in this issue).

After taking a hiatus for August, our next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, September 10 at 5:45pm at the Elks Lodge in Goleta. We should have an interim report on Fiesta along with an outlook for chapter activities over the next several months, including plans for our annual holiday dinner which has tentatively been set for Saturday, December 19; time and location to be announced.

You are always welcome to contact me at peterbie@cox.net with questions or concerns.

Welcome Home,
Peter

Chaplain's Corner | Pattie Murdy

On June 25, I was invited to participate in a Memorial Service for Homeless Veterans at McDermott Crockett Mortuary Chapel. This was a long-standing goal of Jennifer Parks, General Manager and her staff. There was music, reflections and readings and the presentation of Military Honors by the Navy Honor Guard, Ventura Naval Base.

The most memorable part of the service was the presentation of the American flag to yours truly. I am honored and humbled for having received this gift.

Several members of the community were also in attendance including our Homeless Veterans Advocate, Craig Burleigh of the SBPD.

We continue to collect new and gently used clothing, household goods, sleeping bags, twin size sheets, towels along with kitchen items. Our request is that donations of socks, underwear, tee shirts be purchased new.

Speaking of donations, our friends and neighbors have generously donated clothing, athletic shoes and hygiene supplies to our cause. This month we honor the following: Marge Beavers & Family, Keith M. Criado, John Selfridge, Sandra and Houston Winters, George Ogle, Tom Palmeri and the Cummings Family.

Special recognition and gratitude should be made to John Kerr who donated his time, his truck, and his energy to bring everything to Carpinteria.

See you in September (as the old song by The Happenings goes...)
Pattie

Old Spanish Days Fiesta | Don Matter

Fiesta 2014 was another success! The figures are not in yet, but we should have them for you no later than the October general meeting--depending on when the bills arrive.

My thanks to all who volunteered their time and put so much energy into helping make the Fiesta booth successful and, just as importantly, FUN!

As always, I start the list with Cathy Matter. She did so much research and behind the scenes work to make sure everything ran smoothly. She's also the one who came down to the booth every evening around six and "shanghaied" Tom and me and took us to dinner to allow us to wind down.

Thanks to my "right hand man", Tom Palmeri. He makes running the booth smooth and easy for me. We were at the booth daily from 8am to closing. Tom drove all the way from Phoenix to be here--now that's dedication. We did take in a few restaurants, plus Tom and I went to the dirt track races in Santa Maria, so it's not "all" Fiesta all the time. And thank you Tom for donating two new ice chests.

To Mike Mazur: for making sure all the parts were ready to go and that the parts were in their proper place. To Chris Galbraith: for being at the booth on the Sunday through Tuesday before Fiesta and being there at zero dark thirty for Sunday take down.

Thanks to KEYT Channel 3 and John Palmenteri for interviewing me and actually airing it. (I even surprise myself sometimes).

Thanks to CE1 Michael Brown, BM1 Dave Fontenelle, BM2 George Oteng and BM2 Gustavo Benavides of the US Navy Seabees from Ventura Naval Base for their invaluable assistance to us "old guys." The Seabees also furnished us with a lift gate truck to haul equipment. On the Sunday after Fiesta the keys couldn't be found, but undaunted, they still showed up. The booth next to us that sells tacos was kind enough to lend us their lift gate truck and in turn we helped them disassemble their booth. Their group is the Santa Barbara Grunions Rugby Club and they support the Special Olympics. They also asked if the Navy guys might be interested in learning some rugby!

Thank you to Laura Pettit for procuring and preparing the

pulled pork. We owe you, big time! Thanks to Jeff Vinion of Jordano's, who has always been there for us to assist since the booth began. Thank you to Peter and Madeline of Ethnic Breads for making the sandwiches delicious.

To the following folks, I am indebted to you more than you know: George Ogle, Gerry Roberson, Ed Foster, Pablo Carlon, Madeline Moreaux, Bobby Neustadt, Mike Mauro, Doug Neilsen, Dave Barnes (Sarge), Vicky Barnes, Pepper Westerman and her husband Bryan, Ron Westerman (no relation), Dan Oroz, Fred Golin, Tom Elliot, Laura's crew from Foster's Freeze in Carp, Andrew Matter, Kelsey Matter, Charlie Franco, Bill Laprad, Thomas Burt, Bill Paulson, Genny Bolton, Sylvia Sullivan, Alicia Falcon, Anne Diamond, Susan Stewart, Dave Bianchi, Fred and Anne Lopez, Pat Rumpza, Cecilia Rios, Henry Delgado, John Kerr, Peter Bie, Dondra and Joe Woodruff and Valentina. Last, but certainly not least, thanks to Matt Edick, owner of the Mesa Fuel Depot, for the use of his freezer for our excess pulled pork. And for letting Tom and I use his pick up truck to haul the goods!

All in all, Fiesta was a blast! The food was good and the bands rocked. Hope you all can make it out to help next year...which incidentally is August 5th through 8th, 2015 (just in case you want to put it on your planning calendar).

VIVA LA FIESTA!!!

Taps...

Medal of Honor Recipient Jon Cavaiani, 70, a retired Army Sergeant Major and former POW, of complications from Leukemia, on July 29 in Stanford, CA. On June 4, 1971 Cavaiani was serving with a Special Forces reconnaissance unit on Hickory Hill, inside North Vietnam. When the outpost was attacked by a large force of NVA, Cavaiani "acted with complete disregard for his personal safety as he repeatedly exposed himself to heavy enemy fire," according to his MoH citation. He volunteered to stay on the ground and direct choppers into the location, allowing much of his platoon to escape before the remaining group was pinned down. Over the next 24 hours he continued to lead his men in repelling the NVA, but when it was obvious they would be overrun, he told his men to get out and then grabbed a machine gun and "stood up, completely exposing himself to the heavy enemy fire directed at him, and began fire in a sweeping motion." Most of his men escaped, but Cavaiani was severely wounded. He later recounted that he "ended up with about 120 shrapnel holes and a couple of bullet holes." He played dead when the NVA took the hill and

managed to hide out in the jungle for 10 days before he was captured. He spent 23 months as a POW, most of it in solitary confinement. He was released in March 1973. He was presented the MoH by President Gerald Ford on December 12, 1974. (Cavaiani was born in Ireland and came to the US in the early 50's. He had been classified 4F when he originally tried to join the Army in 1969, but later convinced the exam doctor to let him enlist!)

Robin Williams, 63, whose wild antics, spot on impressions and off-the-wall humor turned him into one of the most beloved and sought after actor/comedians of his day, took his own life on August 11 at his home in Tiburon, CA. Williams was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actor three times and won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his performance in "Good Will Hunting". He brought a sense of humanity to the Vietnam War when he starred in the 1987 film "Good Morning, Vietnam", loosely based on the experiences of Armed Forces Radio DJ Adrian Cronauer. TV viewers of the late 1970's were treated to Williams' manic sense of humor when he starred as Mork from the planet Ork in "Mork and Mindy"; his character having been introduced on an earlier episode of "Happy Days". He struggled with alcohol and drug addiction over the years and it was revealed by the family that Williams had been suffering from deep depression and recently received a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease.

PTSD Can Lead to Heart Disease
Tom Corwin | The Augusta Chronicle | August 11, 2014

Dr. Steven S. Coughlin, an adjunct professor of epidemiology at the Rollins School of Public Health and a former epidemiologist for the Department of Veterans Affairs, provided an overview of PTSD and the risk of heart disease. The effects of PTSD can have adverse effects on a number of systems that can affect the cardiovascular system, he said.

PTSD can release stress hormones, similar to the "fight or flight response" and much like acute stress, Coughlin said. Patients with PTSD tend to have higher blood pressure levels and heart rates, particularly in response to loud noises or disturbing images, he said.

It can also lead to an increase in cell signals that promote inflammation and an overreaction of the immune system and can increase the risk of atherosclerosis and heart disease, Coughlin said. Those with PTSD tend to have higher levels of bad cholesterol and lower levels of the good cholesterol that help protect against heart disease.

Some of the stress hormones also increase insensitivity to insulin and put people at greater risk of diabetes and metabolic syndrome, where diabetes, obesity and heart disease seem to interact to worsen health. That already affects about a quarter of the people older than 20 and about 45 percent of people older than 50, Coughlin said. A 2009 study of veterans in South Carolina found that among those with PTSD the severity of their PTSD was an "important indicator" of their risk for metabolic syndrome, he said.

About 10 percent of the U.S. population suffers from PTSD and many were not as a result of combat, but accidents or disasters or violence, Coughlin said. That could help explain why firefighters and police officers are also at higher risk of cardiovascular disease, said Dr. Neal Weintraub, the Kupperman Endowed Chair in Cardiovascular Science at GRU. "You've got to look beyond the veterans," he said.

Photo Gallery



Former Navy Commander Bill Stewart, with wife Joan on his right, on board the Chapter 218 Huey in the Spirit of '76 Independence Day Parade, July 4 in Santa Barbara.



Former Navy Lt. Steve Penner carries the US flag and leads the members of Chapter 218 in the Spirit of '76 Independence Day Parade, July 4, in Santa Barbara.

The Santa Barbara Chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America is a tax exempt, non-profit, community service organization. Our members are Vietnam era (you need not have served “in country”) Veterans and associates (individuals from all walks of life who may or may not have served in the military).

The Chapter meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Santa Barbara Elks Lodge, 150 N. Kellogg Ave., Goleta. The meeting starts at 5:45 pm and dinner is available immediately following (\$8.00 per person). Spouses, family members and veterans of all eras are always welcome.

Publisher/Editor: John Selfridge johnselfridge218@hotmail.com. Please let me know if you wish to receive this newsletter via e-mail in PDF form and check our website for updated information on events and the latest news.

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(Elected Every April)

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Vance Memorial Fund

The Chapter's Vance Committee distributes funds to qualified disabled American veterans.

Committee is appointed each April.

Dan Oroz

Madeline Moreaux

Gerry Roberson

Fred Golin

Mike Mauro

Don Matter

Pattie Murdy (alternate)

Wednesday, September 10 - Chapter Meeting - 5:45 pm
At the Santa Barbara Elks Lodge
PLEASE PLAN TO JOIN US!