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NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2012

All veterans are reminded that the fastest way to inquire and secure the benefits you have earned is by visiting your local County Veterans Service Office. A listing of these offices is available at www.cacvso.org or at www.calvet.ca.gov/resources/database.aspx.



Memorial Day

VENTURA HOME RESIDENTS CELEBRATE MEMORIAL DAY

By Brenda Manke

Residents and staff of the Veterans Home of California, Ventura celebrated the memories of fallen heroes as they traveled to and attended a Memorial Day Service at Ivy Lawn Memorial Park. There were over 1,000 attendees at the event. Assemblyman Jeff Correll was the keynote speaker, having recently returned from deployment. White doves flew over the crowd as members of over 50 military and veteran groups lay wreaths on the graves of the fallen. A flyover by Navyon—a four-man retired flyer group—ended the ceremony.

The residents then travel back to the Veterans Home and enjoyed a chicken barbecue lunch. Afterward, approximately 125 visitors joined the residents and staff for the Home's memorial tribute, where the guest speaker was Colonel Jim Norris, a U.S. Army Reservist who retired this year after 30 years of commissioned service. To the delight of everyone, the ceremony was live-streamed to Colonel Norris's son's base in Afghanistan. This was a surprise for Colonel Norris and his son's base arranged by the Home's Chaplain, Dan Smith.

The ceremony was organized, in part, by several residents. Bill Florio, was the main organizer. Marvin Hirsch sang The National Anthem, Jim Webster read a poem paying tribute to his fallen comrades, and Robert

Paulson sang "God Bless America." It was a pleasure to also have CalVet employee, Betty Silvernail and her family in the audience. Betty was visiting family in Ventura and took the time to tour the Home, meet several residents and staff and attend the ceremony. What a great day to be an American!

concert at the Veterans Home. He even took the time to dance with Ms. Cohen, visit personally with residents and pose for photographs. Mr. Voight expressed his delight with his first visit to the Home saying, "Everyone is so happy here!" CalVet thanks Jon Voight for his memorable visit and for his support of our military and Veterans.

WEST LOS ANGELES VETERANS HOME HONORS FALLEN HEROES ON MEMORIAL DAY

By Jeanne Bonfilio

West Los Angeles Veterans Home staff and residents honored our Nation's fallen heroes on Memorial Day by attending a moving ceremony at the Los Angeles National Cemetery, where actor and veterans advocate Jon Voight served as Master of Ceremonies. Veterans Home Director Louis Koff, Assistant Director Jane Bergman, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Director of the USDVA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System Donna Beiter were also on hand, just to name a few, to remember the brave men and women who lost their lives while serving our Country.

West Los Angeles Veterans Home Volunteer, 102-year-old Bea Cohen, was asked to be a special guest and speaker by Mr. Voight and received two standing ovations. After the ceremony, Mr. Voight graciously gave his time and joined West Los Angeles Veterans Home residents at a barbecued chicken lunch and

MEMORIAL DAY AT THE LANCASTER HOME

By Lawrence Hawkins

The William J. "Pete" Knight Veterans Home of Lancaster was honored to participate in the Veterans Club of Friendly Valley Memorial Day Parade in Santa Clarita. Among the participants was the Honor Guard from Edwards Air Force Base (EAFB), the Golden Valley High School Marching Band, and the local Sheriffs and Fire Department. The parade was followed by a memorial service which included two choirs, the EAFB Honor Guard, and prayers for those who have died in service to our country. Several of our veterans shed tears when "Taps" was played. The event was covered by SCVT and The Signal.

On Saturday, the Lancaster VFW provided a Memorial Day Tri-Tip BBQ to all of the residents of our home. In the afternoon residents attended the Atomics Car Show at the Palmdale Moose Lodge, which was held as a benefit for our Veterans Home.

MEMORIAL DAY TRADITIONS AT YOUNTVILLE

By Jody Price

Memorial Day at the Veterans Home at Yountville is not only a ceremony to honor our deceased Soldiers, it is also a time to clean the cemetery, post the Colors, decorate the cemetery and participate at the traditional watch fire.

On Saturday, May 19, 2012, 80 volunteers brought rakes, gloves and hats for the annual cemetery cleanup. Volunteers included members of Kiwanis, and Kiwanis Key Clubs and numerous individuals who faithfully "visit" the gravesites each year.

Following the cleanup came posting of the Colors. That took place the Saturday before Memorial Day. This year, 75 Boy Scouts from local Scout troops and Cub Scouts from local packs participated. They prepared and placed an American flag next to each one of the 5,570 headstones to honor the deceased veterans for Memorial Day.

Once the flags were in place, the community came together to decorate the cemetery with beautiful flowers. Some of the flowers were donated by local florists. Others were brought by the 25 volunteers that came to decorate the cemetery.

With the decorating completed and the sun going down, the watch fire began. The watch fire tradition can be traced back to medieval times when the fires were lit to guide

the soldiers home from battle; the U.S. tradition began when George Washington built the fires to signal the cease-fire that ended the Revolutionary War. Musical and educational entertainment was enjoyed by all.

And finally, it was time to honor our military, both past and present, during our Memorial Day ceremony. Dignitaries, staff, Home members and the community came together to remember, honor and pay tribute to our soldiers.

God Bless America.

A PLEASANT MEMORIAL DAY FOR CHULA VISTA RESIDENTS

By Neal Asper

The Veterans Home in Chula Vista observed Memorial Day with beautiful weather and a barbecue for residents and guests with country music by 'Picken Time'. Visitors stopped by to express their gratitude for the service to our veteran population.

Residents were reminded that Memorial Day was originally called "Decoration Day," which began after the end of the civil war and started the tradition of placing American flags on the graves of veterans.

Staff transported residents to the Memorial Day ceremony at the Ft. Roscrans National Cemetery located in Point Loma and overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

EMOTIONAL MEMORIAL DAY AT BARSTOW HOME

By Maria King

As soon as we arrived at the Barstow cemetery, people of all ages welcomed our residents with a salute or a handshake and a "Thank you for our freedom." It was very emotional not only for our residents but for me as well. It was all I could do is hold back my tears. General Ferrell from Ft. Irwin acknowledged all our fallen heroes and all those that have lost a loved one in service to our country. Mayor Joe Gomez continued by saying, "A grateful nation shares your loss and is forever in debt to all men and women who continue to serve and ensure our safety." Mayor Gomez offered a special thank you to our heroes from the Veterans Home of California, Barstow.



Ventura Veterans Home resident and Korean War veteran Robert Terry presented with Certificate of Appreciation by U.S. Army Captain Tony B. Fears, Department of Defense 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee.



Korean War History

The Korean War was the first test of the United Nations' resolve to stand against tyranny in all its forms. Twenty-one nations banded together with the United States and South Korea in a remarkable display of solidarity to turn back naked aggression and stem the tide of communism. The Armistice signed in 1953 that remains in effect today reminds us that we must remain vigilant against the forces of tyranny and oppression.

The Korean War also saw the advent of aeronautical, medical and societal change: Helicopters were introduced to transport casualties to field hospitals; jets became the new "standard" for aircraft; leading-edge radio technology allowed better coordination of troop movements; and Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals (MASH) units placed experienced medical personnel closer to the front, improving a wounded Soldier's chance for survival. Perhaps the most lasting impact of the Korean War

60th Anniversary of the Korean War

On June 25, 2012, the nation will recognize the 60th anniversary of the Korean War. The Department of Defense 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee (Committee), authorized in the 2011 Defense Authorization Bill, is dedicated to thanking and honoring all the veterans of the Korean War, their families and especially those who lost loved ones in that war. Over a period of three years, the Committee is honoring the service and sacrifice of Korean War veterans, commemorating the key events of the war, and educating Americans of all ages about the historical significance of the Korean War.

Earlier this year, the Committee traveled from the Pentagon to visit California Veterans Homes in Barstow,

Lancaster, West Los Angeles, Chula Vista and Ventura. At the events, Executive Director of the Committee, Colonel David J. Clark, paid tribute to Korean War veterans who served nearly sixty years ago with official Certificates of Appreciation signed by the Secretary of Defense.

The gatherings were attended by nearly 160 Korean War veterans along with their families and friends. The events provided an opportunity for the Committee to thank and honor Veterans and the families of veterans of the Korean War for their sacrifices and contributions on behalf of the United States. The Committee is scheduled to visit the California Veterans Home in Yountville on June 21, 2012.

KOREAN, page 5 >>

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE...

<< KOREAN

was the change that was manifested to American society. In 1948, President Harry S. Truman had signed Executive Order 9981, securing the full integration of America's Armed Services. Thus, America went to war in Korea for the first time in her history with a military that reflected her diversity.

We must never forget the selfless sacrifices of the Veterans who fought in Korea to ensure the freedom and prosperity we enjoy today. The Veterans who shivered in the trenches, tracked through knee-deep mud, flew combat missions over rugged mountainous terrain, and stood watch over hostile seas set aside their own comfort, safety and aspirations to answer the call to arms at a time when our nation was still exhausted from the horrors of World War II. These patriots halted the tide of communism that threatened to sweep over the Korean peninsula. Today the Republic of Korea stands as a modern, prosperous, vibrant democracy because of their courage and selfless sacrifice.

Read more at <http://koreanwar.defense.gov/history.html>.

Courtesy Department of Defense

Greetings. It is hard to believe that 2012 is already half over! Time flies when one is absorbed in working on behalf of veterans. This is the month when so many veterans service organizations hold their California State Conventions. It's a busy time for them and for CalVet as we make every effort to attend those very important gatherings. I wish great success to all veterans service organizations during these conventions.

Many veterans, especially those returning home from the current conflicts, seem to think that veterans service organizations, like The American Legion, U.S. Veterans of Foreign Wars and AMVETS, are only for older folks. Many associate these organizations with their fathers and grandfathers. But I want to encourage young veterans, both men and women, to join the local chapters and posts of these veterans groups or one of the many others that are out there. Membership is valuable in that you become part of a group that lobbies on behalf of veterans and provides guidance and support as you and other veterans go through the often long and sometimes frustrating process of applying for the benefits and

services you have earned through your military service. Finally, as a member of a veterans service organization, you are among those who understand your military experiences and offer support without judgment. Look for a list of veterans service organizations at the end of this newsletter (pg 24).

June 25, 2012, marks the 60th anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War—the first test of the United Nations' resolve to stand against tyranny in all its forms. CalVet salutes all Korean War veterans, especially those living in the Veterans Homes of California. Thank you for your service and sacrifice to our country!

Finally, on the occasion of the United States Army's 237th birthday on June 14, I wish to thank all soldiers and their families and veterans for making this, the oldest branch of our armed forces, the "Strength of our Nation." Happy Birthday!

Until next time, keep working on behalf of veterans and be good to yourselves and your families.

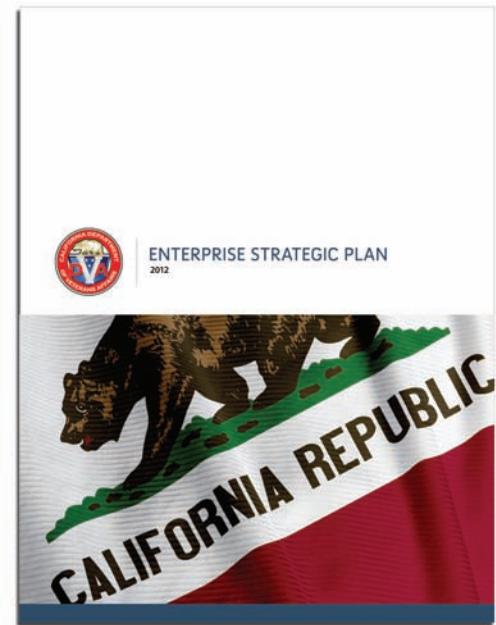


CalVet Strategic Plan Released

CalVet has released its updated 2012 Enterprise Strategic Plan, which focuses on fiscal and operational efficiency, innovation, and public/private stakeholder partnerships. The plan paves the way for CalVet to continue delivering accessible and superior services to California veterans.

In developing the plan, the department sought input from community partners, including veteran services organizations and county veterans service offices. The plan focuses on delivering services in innovative ways that meet and exceed the expectations of California veterans and their families.

To view or download a copy of CalVet's 2012 Enterprise Strategic Plan, go to www.calvet.ca.gov/Files/AboutUs/StrategicPlan.pdf.



Federal Grant Funds Available for Veteran Job Training

The U.S. Department of Labor has announced the availability of approximately \$12 million in grants through the Veterans' Workforce Investment Program to provide job training and skills development services that will help approximately 6,000 veterans succeed in civilian careers.

Through funds provided by this program, veterans will receive skills assessments, individual job counseling, labor market information, classroom or on-the-job training, skills upgrades, placement assistance and crucial follow-up services. Veterans also may be eligible for

services through other Workforce Investment Act programs for economically disadvantaged or dislocated workers.

The department will award at least 10 grants in 10 states on a competitive basis to state and local workforce investment boards, local public agencies and nonprofit — including faith-based and community — organizations. Grantees must be familiar with the areas and populations to be served, and have demonstrated that they can administer effective programs.

More information about the Department of Labor's unemployment and re-employment programs for veterans can be found at <http://www.dol.gov/vets/>.

The solicitation for grant applications is available at <http://www.grants.gov>. It also may be viewed at <http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/vwip/main.htm>.

Honor Flights for Veterans

Most veterans have never seen the memorials in our nation's capital built to honor their service and sacrifices to our country. Honor Flight Network is working to change that. The nonprofit organization offers America's veterans free flights to Washington D.C. to visit the memorials erected in their honor. The philosophy of the Honor Flight Network is simple: Since America felt it was important to build a memorial to the service and sacrifice of her veterans, it's equally important that they actually get to visit and experience THEIR memorial.

Flights to Washington D.C. originate from regional hubs in each state and are offered to the veterans at no charge. There are five regional hubs in California which are served by major airports within the state.

<< FLIGHTS

All men and women who served in the U.S. military—either stateside or overseas—are eligible to apply for this service. Top priority is given to America's most senior heroes—survivors of World War II—and any veteran with a terminal illness who wishes to visit their memorial. The program will then offer the service to Korean War, Vietnam War and all other veterans who served, on a chronological basis.

Funding for the program comes primarily from individuals across the country that recognize the great accomplishments and sacrifices of veterans and want them to see their memorial before it's too late. According to recent statistics, the nation is losing World War II veterans at a rate of approximately 900 per day. Other significant contributions come from fraternal organizations like local American Legion, VFW, AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, and Military Order of the Purple Heart posts and chapters, as well as from various corporations on a local level.

If you know of a World War II or terminally ill veteran who would like to visit their memorial in Washington, D.C., visit www.honorflight.org or call (937) 521-2400 for more information. If you would like to make a donation to support this worthy effort, you can do that on the site as well.



National Women's Trauma Recovery Program

In 1992, the Department of Veterans Affairs opened the National Women's Trauma Recovery Program (WTRP) as part of the National Center for PTSD at Menlo Park, CA. The WTRP, designed to treat Women Veterans, active duty service members, National Guard, and Reservists with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), is the first residential program of its kind and is open to women across the country. Many of the women who are referred to the program have experienced traumas that include but are not limited to military sexual trauma (MST), combat trauma, and training accidents.

The WTRP is an intensive 60-day residential program with a strong emphasis on enhancing interpersonal functioning through psycho-education and skill building classes. Classes focus on the development of coping skills such as emotion regulation, relapse prevention, anxiety management, and effective communication. Residents practice these skills with one another and out in the community on weekend

passes. They work together to problem-solve, learn effective coping strategies to better manage their symptoms, and utilize each other for support. Community members have opportunities to make observations and provide each other with feedback that can assist residents in making important changes and improving their quality of life.

Many women arrive to the program carrying heavy emotional burdens and find that sharing these burdens with their peers aids in the healing and recovery process. Many leave the program more self-assured and ready to connect to society and loved ones. Their stories are real and often painful. In an effort to reach other women Veterans who need help, they've shared their stories with the world. Click on the photos to read their stories and learn how the program has changed their lives.

For more information about the WTRP, including eligibility, curriculum, and application, go to www.womenvetsptsd.va.gov.



Remembering Bataan

By Michael Coffey

In April, I accompanied Robert Burroughs, Director of the Northern California Veterans Museum and Heritage Center, as he filmed a documentary of events commemorating the Battle of Bataan and the Death March 70 years ago. We were privileged to be invited guests of the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society which was holding its 28th reunion at Fort Stotsenburg, Pampanga Province, Philippines. Between 1900 and the outbreak of World War II, this was the U.S. Army's principal cavalry post in the Philippine Islands, and eventually included the Army Air Forces Clark Field.

The Philippine Scouts were professional military soldiers, commanded by American officers. At the outbreak of World War II, they were generally considered to be the best-trained and possibly best-prepared U.S. Army division. They are remembered as fighting America's first battle of WWII. Hand-in-hand, fighting alongside regular U.S. troops, their heroism, devotion and sacrifice in the first few months of the war did much to delay enemy advances in the Pacific. As testament to their valor, the first three Army Medals of Honor in WWII were awarded to Philippine Scouts, including Sergeant Jose Calugas, whose son, Joe Calugas, Jr. (USA ret.), coordinated our visit.

Ninety-seven-year-old Captain Eulalio Arzaga (USA ret.) from Killeen, Texas was in attendance. As a trooper in the 26th Cavalry of the Philippine Scouts, he was sent on a mission to confirm the Japanese landings at Lingayen, and he has quite a story about his retreat back through enemy lines. The 26th Cavalry is also known as the unit that conducted the last wartime horse

charge in U.S. history, at Morong, during the Battle of Bataan. Captain Arzaga was presented with the National POW/MIA Memorial Medal during the reunion, and it was noted that the medal contains the seal of the State of California, as the Memorial is located in Riverside.

That same week, thanks to the efforts of his great-granddaughters and with the assistance of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9892, Bauang, Corporal Jose Nispersos, the first Asian and first Filipino to be awarded the Medal of Honor, was provided a dignified and honorable reburial at Lingsat Cemetery, San Fernando LaUnion. His Citation noted that he was awarded the medal for action against the enemy, at Lapurap, Basilan Island, on 24 September 1911. During the services, Cpl. Nispersos was moved from a neglected and obscure gravesite to a new location with a monument befitting his hero status.

Highlights of the reunion also included Philippine Scouts Re-enactors simulating a skirmish with the Japanese on the old Ft. Stotsenburg parade grounds; the screening of "Forgotten Soldiers", a documentary about the Philippines Scouts; our attendance at ceremonies at the Capas National Shrine, Mt. Samat Shrine, Cabanatuan POW Camp, and Clark Veterans Cemetery; as well as visits to Manila American Cemetery and Memorial; and Corregidor Island.

<< BATAAN

Capas is best known as the site of Camp O'Donnell, one of the two major POW camps for survivors of the Bataan Death March. It is estimated that between 8,000 and 12,000 prisoners of war died during the 90-mile march. Once at Camp O'Donnell, 300-400 Filipino soldiers died a day until they were paroled by the Japanese 18 months later. Ultimately, 26,000 of the approximately 50,000 Filipinos held in captivity at O'Donnell perished there.

From Capas, the American POWs were moved to Cabanatuan POW Camp. While the most able-bodied among these were eventually moved to provide work and labor details in other parts of the Asia and Japan, of those who remained, only 522 POWs were rescued during the Great Raid. The Memorial Walls at Cabanatuan are inscribed with the names of the 2,656 Americans who died while captives of the Japanese. We spent the entire day at Capas and Cabanatuan with Larry Adkison, Pacific Regional Director for the American Battle Monuments Commission and the Director of the Manila American Cemetery.

April 9, 2012, was the 70th Anniversary of the surrender of Bataan by U.S. and Philippine Forces. This is Bataan Day, a Philippine National Holiday known as Araw ng Kagitingan (Day of Valor). At the Mount Samat Shrine overlooking the battlegrounds and Death March route, Philippine President Benigno S. Aquino III, U.S. Embassy Deputy

Chief of Mission Leslie Bassett, and Japanese Ambassador Toshina Urabe spoke in remembrance of events that transpired near this site. Interestingly, Ms. Bassett received her undergraduate degree in international relations from the University of California at Davis. She related to me that her roommate at U.C. Davis was from Redding. During her remarks to those in attendance and in front of a nationwide TV audience, she mentioned veterans visiting from Redding, California, as well as from other parts of the U.S.

In Manila we met with Army Colonel Matthew Greco, Military Attaché at the U.S. Embassy, and with USAF Liaison Chief Master Sergeant Gary Dube. We were provided a personal tour of the Embassy Chancery, Military Section, and grounds. We also met with Mr. Nick Pamperin, Assistant Director of U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at the US Embassy. During our discussions, he described the why the Manila Claims Section has a remarkable average of 88 days resolution of veteran claims. In fact, he told us that it is not unusual for a veteran to travel thousands of miles to file their claim in Manila.

Our visit included two days of walking the roads, trails, and jungles of Corregidor Island. It is still amazing to see the remnants of the great guns and harbor defenses of Manila Bay and to imagine that these relics and ruins still represent the incredible courage of the islands defenders against insurmountable odds.

Back in Angeles we also stood with our brothers in arms from the U.S., Australia and New Zealand as we commemorated ANZAC Day at Clark Veterans Cemetery.

However, no journey to the Philippines on mission such as ours would be complete without visiting and remembering the fallen. At Clark Veterans Cemetery there are interred over 8,600 American Veterans, Philippine Scouts, and their dependents. Veterans buried here range from the American Civil War to Iraq and Afghanistan.

At the American Cemetery in Manila we paid homage to those who never came home. Seventeen thousand ninety seven who gave their lives in the defense of freedom rest in honor there. Of these, 16,632 are Americans and 570 are Philippine Scouts of the U.S. Army. That number includes 3,641 who are "Known Only to God". The cemetery is also made up of Hemicycles -- and engraved on the walls are the names of 36,286 Americans and Philippine Scouts still Missing in Action in the Pacific. Of the total number of casualties memorialized at this, the largest of overseas American Cemetery, 4,356 are from California.

We are extremely grateful to the Angeles Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2485 for their hospitality, guidance and assistance during our trip.

Flags for the Fallen

The Northern California Veterans Cemetery, Northern California Veterans Museum and local Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts have joined together to sponsor a Flags For The Fallen Project. The goal of the project is to provide the flags for gravesites at a former military cemetery in the Philippines.

The Clark Veterans Cemetery was established in 1948 as an American Military Base Cemetery, when the remains from four pre-World War II American Military Cemeteries were moved there. This cemetery is the final resting place for veterans KIA who served in conflicts ranging from the Civil War to the present engagements in the Middle East. Over 17,000 KIA from WWII are placed at the American Cemetery and Memorial, which is maintained and funded by the American Battle Monuments Commission.

However, when the Mt. Pinatubo volcanic eruptions damaged Clark Air Force base in 1991, the base was



abandoned and no provision was made for the perpetual maintenance of the cemetery. As a result, neither the U.S. nor the Philippine Government takes any responsibility for the cemetery. Since 1994, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2485 has singlehandedly administered and maintained the cemetery in a state of "arrested decay" solely through their own voluntary efforts, time, and donations. No federal money or support has gone into the safekeeping and maintenance of this sacred and hallowed ground.

California school children have been among the first to respond. As a Memorial Day 2012 student project, the Ono-Igo School near the cemetery, Grant School in Redding,

and Rocklin Elementary School in Rocklin are raising funds to purchase flags. Students are donating 50 cents each for a flag. During the week of May 23, almost 800 students held these flags in their hands, and then they boxed and shipped them to VFW Post 2485 for placement on gravesites on appropriate holidays. It is hoped that this exquisite example of citizenship and remembrance will dispel the notion that this is the "Cemetery that America Forgot".

The Clark Veterans Cemetery Restoration Association encourages anyone interested in learning more or assisting in the effort to restore and maintain the Clark Veterans Cemetery to visit their website at www.cvcra.org.



VETERANS!

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CALVET
HOME LOANS

For more information contact CalVet at www.calvet.ca.gov/calvetloans or call (866) 653-2510

New USDVA Mental Health Services for Veterans

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs recently announced that it has expanded its mental health services. Veterans will now have access to marriage and family therapists and licensed professional mental health counselors.

The two fields will be included in the hiring of an additional 1,900 mental health staff nationwide recently announced by USDVA. The new

professionals will provide mental health diagnostic and psychosocial treatment services for veterans and their families in coordination with existing mental health professionals at USDVA's medical centers, community-based outpatient clinics, and Vet Centers.

For more information about mental health care that VA provides, visit www.mentalhealth.va.gov.

USDVA BRIEFS

JOINT VA/DOL PROGRAM LAUNCHES TO RETRAIN 99,000 UNEMPLOYED VETS

Starting May 15, unemployed Veterans between the ages of 35 and 60 can now apply for new benefits to cover education costs for up to one year through a joint VA and Department of Labor (DOL) program that focuses on retraining 99,000 Veterans for high-demand jobs. <http://1.usa.gov/MkoL4C>

VA PUBLISHES DRAFT ON SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

At the direction of the President, VA and other federal agencies have drafted policies to foster a culture of transparency, integrity, and ethical behavior and to protect researchers from inappropriate influence in the development and application of scientific and technological findings. <http://1.usa.gov/LFb6Sd>

WOMEN VETS TASK FORCE DRAFT PLAN RELEASED

The Department of Veterans Affairs

is releasing for public comment a draft of its strategic report to address key issues facing women Veterans. The plan outlines steps for improvements to care and services for women Veterans that are sustainable, accountable and a part of the department's culture and operations. <http://1.usa.gov/LS70a2>

VA PUBLISHES DRAFT STRATEGY PLAN FOR WOMEN VETS

VA's Women Veterans Task Force has developed a comprehensive action plan to focus on resolving critical issues facing women Veterans.

<http://bit.ly/KnWxVU>

VA, AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION FIGHT HEART DISEASE IN WOMEN VETS

The Department of Veterans Affairs and the American Heart Association have entered into a formal agreement to raise awareness of heart disease and strokes among women Veterans and Servicemembers, and wives of Veterans and military members. <http://1.usa.gov/JLT1A2>

Post-Traumatic Stress “Injury”?

The U.S. Army and some psychiatrists want to change the name “post traumatic stress disorder” (PTSD) to post “traumatic stress injury.” The change, they say, will reduce the stigma that often prevents affected troops from seeking treatment.

The timing of this change is important because the American Psychiatric Association is updating its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders for the first time in a dozen years.

The suggested name change raises questions about the causes of PTSD, the best way to treat the condition and obstacles that prevent troops from getting help. There are also concerns about the financial implications for health insurers and federal disability claims.

Although adopted by highest-level Department of Defense officials, previous attempts to simply drop the word “disorder” never caught on with the medical community because of concerns that insurers and funders would not be willing to pay for a condition that wasn’t specifically labeled a disease, disorder or injury.

Fiduciaries Manage the Finances of Those Who Cannot

Many individuals receiving monthly compensation and pension benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) have mental impairments that prevent them from managing their finances. USDVA's Fiduciary Program selects and oversees third parties, called fiduciaries, to help manage and protect veterans' funds.

USDVA's Fiduciary Program has policies in place that are intended to ensure that qualified fiduciaries are selected and regularly monitored; however, insufficient staff compliance with some policies and weaknesses in others have reportedly hindered USDVA's ability to safeguard veterans' benefits. In a report issued by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) in 2010, the agency cited significant problems with the USDVA's program.

To ensure that maximum efforts are made to safeguard beneficiary assets, GAO recommended USDVA make certain policies regarding file documentation, follow-up with fiduciaries for late financial reports, and bond acquisition are understood and carried out by staff. GAO also suggested standardizing training for staff, clarifying certain policies, and improving management review and oversight.

In California, fiduciaries are licensed and regulated by the Professional Fiduciaries Bureau which is part of the California Department of Consumer Affairs. The Bureau was created by legislation passed in 2007 to regulate non-family member professional fiduciaries, including conservators, guardians, trustees, and agents under durable power of attorney as defined by the Professional Fiduciaries Act.

Professional fiduciaries provide critical services to seniors, disabled persons, and children. They manage matters for clients including daily care, housing and medical needs, and also offer financial management services ranging from basic bill paying to estate and investment management. Requirements for licensing include passing an examination and completing thirty (30) hours of approved education courses, and earning fifteen hours of continuing education credit each year for renewal. Licensees must comply with reporting requirements and must abide by the Professional Fiduciaries Code of Ethics so that client matters are handled responsibly and without conflict.

If you suspect or are aware of misconduct or wrongdoing by a California-licensed professional fiduciary, file a complaint with the Professional Fiduciaries Bureau at www.fiduciary.ca.gov/consumers/file_complaint.shtml.

Free Online Counseling for Veteran Families

To thank veterans for their service, USC Telehealth™ is offering 12 (or more) counseling sessions at no cost. USC Telehealth™ is an online counseling and therapy clinic through the University of Southern California that uses the latest video technologies to provide military personnel, veterans, and their immediate families confidential access to services from their home or other private location.

Users need a relatively new computer/laptop, webcam, and high-speed Internet. Among the services provided are career counseling (work and school); family counseling; couples therapy; counseling for kids and teens with behavioral issues, readjustment to civilian life, recovery from loss, injury, or illness, help with stress, depression, anxiety, and more.

Services can be initiated by an adult family member as well as the service member or veteran. Spaces are limited and signups are first-come, first-served by calling (866) 740-6502. For more information, visit www.usctelehealth.com.



Services Available to Vets Don't Stop at the USDVA

Veterans by the thousands are separating from military service and returning to California with its double-digit unemployment rate and a job market so tight you can almost hear it squeak.

While the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the California Department of Veterans Affairs offer honorably discharged veterans an impressive array of employment, housing, education, health and other benefits, there are a variety of other organizations that offer programs that can help low income families,

including veteran families, survive a downturned economy.

The California Department of Community Services & Development, part of the California Health and Human Services Agency, manages a number of federal programs that help lower-income families achieve and maintain self-sufficiency. The programs can help pay utility and heating bills, lower energy bills, offer low-cost insurance for families with children, provide homeowner assistance and renter assistance and more.

Other organizations offer programs that can provide aid to homeowners facing foreclosure, debt reduction and credit counseling, legal assistance, child care assistance, and emergency food and clothing.

For a comprehensive list of California assistance programs, visit www.needhelppayingbills.com/html/california_assistance_programs.html.

For a list of program that may be able to help you pay your bills, visit www.needhelppayingbills.com/index.html.

Always on the go?

CALVET

Get connected to your benefits!

CalVet mobile app now available for iPhone and Android devices.

www.calvet.ca.gov

Kings County Veteran Outreach

By Joe Wright

In an effort to help veterans and their dependents connect with the state and federal veterans benefits they may be eligible for, the Kings County Veteran Service Office (CVSO) is now offering home visits to those who cannot travel to the CVSO office. Whether in the office or during home visits, CVSOs can:

- help veterans complete the appropriate paperwork and file claims for benefits;
- work with family members who are trying to assist a veteran or dependent obtain benefits;
- arrange transportation to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical appointments.

The Kings CVSO also does speaking engagements to provide information and answer questions about both state and federal veteran's benefits. The CVSO will speak to community service organizations, NAS Lemoore commands, groups of veterans, or any group that has an interest in veteran's benefits. Talks normally last about 30 minutes but can be tailored to fit the group's needs.

To inquire about a CVSO home visit or to set up a speaking engagement, contact Joe Wright, Kings County Veteran Service Officer at (559) 582-3211 ext. 2669 or joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us.



USDVA Seeks Public Comment on Woman Veteran Strategies

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) is releasing for public comment a draft of its strategic report to address key issues facing women veterans. The plan outlines steps for improvements to care and services for women veterans that are sustainable, accountable and a part of the department's culture and operations.

U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki formed a task force to develop an action plan to address women veterans' issues. Since then, the group has conducted a broad survey of department experts to identify those issues and organize them by priority. The draft report is an interim step prior to USDVA finalizing its overall plan.

The report comes at an important juncture in USDVA's history that demands a review of the quality, quantity, and types of services and programs it provides to women veterans. The number of women veterans using USDVA has increased 83 percent in the past decade, from about 160,000 to over 292,000 between fiscal years 2000 and 2009, compared with a 50 percent increase in men.

Women are now the fastest growing cohort within the veteran community. In 2011, about 1.8 million or 8 percent of the 22.2 million veterans were women. The male veteran population is projected to decrease from 20.2 million men in 2010 to 16.7 million by 2020. In contrast, the number of women veterans will increase from 1.8 million in 2011 to 2 million in 2020, at which time women will make up 10.7 percent of the total veteran population.

USDVA is training providers in basic and advanced topics in women's health through mini-residencies, and over 1,200 providers have currently received



Lowe's Helps CalVet Reach and Assist Veteran Employees

In an effort to reach and assist more veterans, CalVet has been working through California employers to educate veteran and veteran family employees about the department's programs and services and to get them connected to the benefits they've earned through military service.

Without a marketing or advertising budget, these partnerships are critical to CalVet's ability to assist veterans as they expand the department's outreach efforts exponentially. Nearly 100 large, private-sector companies are currently working with CalVet. These companies represent the energy, defense, technology, telecommunications, health care, pharmaceutical, finance, entertainment, media, transportation, engineering, manufacturing, and retail and diversified services industries.

Lowe's is one of CalVet's employer partners, and the company has stepped up to the plate big time! Through Human Resources Director Ryan J. Ward, the company has:

- sent CalVet brochures and California Veteran Resource Books to the human resources managers for all 110 California stores and encouraged the managers to offer CalVet as a resource to veteran and veteran family employees;
- sent CalVet information to 18,000 e-mail-enabled store associates;
- published veteran information and resource links provided by CalVet on its internal "Connections" site which is accessible to all of the 250,000+ employees that work with Lowe's from all over the world;
- offered to consider repair and refurbishment projects at CalVet's six Veterans Homes of California;

<< WOMEN

training. Comprehensive women's health care can be provided within three different models of care, including comprehensive women's clinics; separate, but shared, space women's clinics; or integrated primary care clinics. All of these clinic models ensure that women receive all of their primary health care (prevention, medical, and routine gynecologic care) by a single primary care provider. A network of medical directors and program managers who coordinate care for women veterans now encompasses all 153 medical centers in the USDVA Health Care System.

The public notice and instructions for how to submit comments will be posted at www.regulations.gov. The draft written report will be open for comment for 30 days, and responders will have a number of options to provide both electronic and written feedback. Readers will also be able to participate in a public discussion board on the Internet at <http://vawomenvetstratplan.uservoice.com/forums/159415-general>.

To view the report without making recommendations, please visit USDVA's website at http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/Draft_2012_Women-Veterans_StrategicPlan.pdf.

Courtesy USDVA

Vocational Rehab Benefits Includes New Program

by Ted Puntillo

Jobs are on everybody's minds these days. For veterans dealing with service-connected disabilities, there are challenges and opportunities.

One such opportunity is the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program, which assists veterans with service-connected disabilities to prepare for, find and keep suitable jobs. You may hear it referred to as the Chapter 31 program, and it was authorized by Congress under Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 31.

For veterans with service-connected disabilities so severe that they cannot immediately consider work, Vocational Rehabilitation offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible. Services offered include:

- Comprehensive rehabilitation evaluation to determine abilities, skills and interests for employment;
- Vocational counseling and rehabilitation planning for employment services;
- Employment services such as job-training, job-seeking skills, resume development and other work-readiness assistance;



- Assistance finding and keeping a job, including the use of special employer incentives and job accommodations;
- On-the-job training, apprenticeships and non-paid work experiences;
- Post-secondary training at a college, vocational, technical or business school;
- Supportive rehabilitation services, including case management, counseling and medical referrals;
- Independent living services for veterans unable to work due to the severity of their disabilities.

Active-duty service members are eligible for the program if they expect to receive an honorable discharge upon separation from active duty, obtain a memorandum rating of 20 percent or more from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) and apply for vocational rehabilitation and employment services. Veterans are eligible if they have received, or will receive a discharge that is other than dishonorable and have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10 percent and apply for vocational rehabilitation and employment services.

The basic period of eligibility in which services may be used is 12 years from

EMPLOYMENT, page 17 >>

<< EMPLOYMENT

the date of separation from active military service, or the date the veteran was first notified by USDVA of a service-connected disability rating.

The basic period of eligibility may be extended if a vocational rehabilitation counselor determines that a veteran has a serious employment handicap. Veterans may apply for this benefit at their County Veterans Service Office.

A brand new benefit to help certain veterans who are not in other programs get training and find employment is The Vow to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 that was recently passed by Congress to provide assistance for unemployed veterans. If you are an unemployed veteran between the ages of 35 and 60 you might qualify.

The Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) was part of the recently passed legislation. The program is a USDVA and Department of Labor joint effort to provide training to veterans unable to find work. VRAP will provide 12 months of training assistance equal to the monthly full-time payment rate under the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty program (currently paying \$1,473 per month). Participants must be enrolled in a program approved for USDVA benefits that is offered by a community college or technical school. The program must lead to an associate degree or non-college degree or certificate.

To qualify, a veteran must:

- Be at least 35 but not more than 60 years old;
- Be unemployed on the day of application;
- Have an other-than-honorable discharge;
- Not be eligible for any other USDVA education program (e.g., the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Assistance);
- Not be in receipt of USDVA compensation due to unemployability and not be enrolled in a federal or state job training program;
- Pursue a program that leads to employment in a high-demand occupation.

Nationally, the program is limited to 45,000 participants between July 1, 2012, and September 30, 2012, and an additional 54,000 participants from October 1, 2012, through March 31, 2014.

The Labor Department will provide employment assistance to every veteran who participates upon completion of their program. Applications will be accepted soon and veterans should check the VOW website to be notified about when and how to apply. http://gibill.va.gov/benefits/other_programs/vrap_email_signup.html.

Ted Puntillo is director of Veteran Services for Solano County. Reach him at (707) 784-6590 or

tepuntillo@SolanoCounty.com.

The Solano County Veteran Services Office, 675 Texas St. in Fairfield, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.

<< LOWES

- offered to consider repair and refurbishment of homes owned by California veterans who have existing CalVet loans;

Lowe's has also established a 10% military discount to support active military, retired veterans, and recipients of U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits. The discount extends to their immediate family members as well.

The company is also making efforts to recruit and hire veterans. A link to Lowe's careers/jobs page is posted on the Employment page of the CalVet website at www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Employment.aspx.

For information about how your company can work with CalVet to reach and assist veteran and veteran family employees, contact Carolyn Ballou at carolyn.ballou@calvet.ca.gov or (916) 653-1355.

The West Los Angeles Veterans Home is Currently Accepting Applications for Residency in the Assisted Living Level of Care

The Veterans Home of California—West Los Angeles is a 396-bed, long-term care facility located adjacent to the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System in West Los Angeles.

Although two levels of care are offered, immediate space is primarily available in the Assisted Living Unit.

The Veterans Home provides California veterans with a living environment that protects their dignity and contributes to their feeling of self-reliance and self-worth.

The Veterans Home of California—West Los Angeles offers two levels of care that provide continuity in the lives of residents in a homelike atmosphere of dignity and respect.

Assisted Living: Residents at this level of care require minimal assistance and supervision with some activities of daily living. Services may include care by licensed nurses.

Skilled Nursing Care: Residents at this level of care are provided 24-hour services of licensed nurses and certified nursing assistants. Skilled nursing residents have greater access to rehabilitation therapies, nursing care, pharmacy management, structured activities and clinical dietary services. A memory care program within this level of care provides a supervised environment for veterans with symptoms of confusion, memory loss, difficulty making decisions, solving problems or participating in conversations. These levels of care will be available in 2012.



Amenities include:

- Room and board – three meals plus snacks
- Medical care and medications
- Optical care, dental care and podiatry services
- Transportation services to all medical appointments and off-campus activities
- Additional services include a beauty/barber shop, multi-purpose room and limited banking services
- Opportunities for worship for all denominations through the Chaplaincy Program
- A modern fitness room and exercise classes
- Library and cable television
- Restorative Therapy Center
- Housekeeping and laundry services
- Caring and compassionate staff, and
- Variety of community outings and an enhanced activity program

The Veterans Home of California—West Los Angeles enjoys the strong support from the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, the local community as well as camaraderie from the neighboring Los Angeles Air Force Base and many local Veterans organizations. Veterans Homes of California are also located in Chula Vista, Lancaster, Ventura, Barstow and Yountville.

For admission information, contact:

Veterans Home of California—West Los Angeles
11500 Nimitz Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90049
(424) 832-8202
(424) 832-8203
Toll Free: (877) 605-1332
www.calvet.ca.gov

Vets Home Boosters Back Knight Fighter Jet

by Dennis Anderson
Antelope Valley Press

More than 80 veterans and their supporters, fans of military aircraft and community members gathered at the William J. "Pete" Knight Veterans Home to enjoy a barbecue and raise funds for the facility's newest acquisition, a Vietnam War-vintage fighter jet of the kind that was flown in combat by the namesake of the veterans facility.

An F-100 Super Sabre fighter jet, donated to the veterans home by the board of directors of the East Kern Airport District after years of being mothballed at the Mojave Air and Space Port, is being given a facelift.

The facelift includes a camouflage paint job to resemble the F-100 Super Sabre flown by the late Pete Knight, an Air Force test pilot and Vietnam veteran who served as Palmdale mayor, assemblyman and state senator and for whom the facility is named. Knight flew 253 missions over Vietnam in F-100s during his Air Force career.

Members of the Rotary Club of Lancaster served hamburgers and hot dogs to members of the public to raise funds for the project. Representatives from area veterans organizations crowded in, including



the Patriot Guard, American Legion Riders, members of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

"This has turned out really well," Assemblyman Steve Knight said.

More than 50 retired military veterans and some of their spouses reside in the assisted living facility, which provides residential care and an independent lifestyle for veterans.

The home is taking residency applications now.

Knight attended, and so did Pete Knight, his brother, sons of the Vietnam combat flier.

Area aerospace enthusiasts have already begun restoration work on the plane with financial assistance from the United States Air Power Museum in Fresno, under the direction of William Dietzel, the museum's CEO and a retired Air Force chief master sergeant.

Supporters of the project will be able to purchase commemorative brick pavers—at a cost of \$50 to \$500 per paver—to be placed around the jet fighter.

The museum essentially has acted as a middleman in the transfer, raising money and completing the restoration before turning it over to the Department of Veterans Affairs for display.

Restoration is expected to take about two months. Veterans estimated about \$40,000 will need to be raised to complete the project.

According to the Fresno museum's letter of request for the transfer, the F-100 is no longer carried on Air Force records. Airport CEO Stu Witt said his staff, together with BAE Flight Systems, researched the records and were satisfied the airplane had been gifted to the East Kern Airport District in 1973 by Flight Systems Inc., now BAE.

The paint work that is planned for the fighter jet is to put Knight's squadron markings on it, as well as his name, and the colors applied to the aircraft when F-100s were a mainstay of air-ground attack in the Vietnam War.

During a POW/MIA recognition day in 2002, the late state Sen. Knight

USDVA Eliminates Copayment to Increase Patient Access to Skilled Home Healthcare

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) stopped charging veterans a copayment when they receive care in their homes from USDVA health professionals using telehealth video conferencing. Eliminating the copayment for this service removes an unnecessary financial burden for veterans.

This change primarily benefits veterans with limited mobility, such as spinal cord injury patients. Whenever medically appropriate, USDVA will make the home the preferred place of care for veterans

to ensure timely and convenient access to USDVA services.

Data have shown that expanded use of technology in the home enables patients with chronic health conditions, such as diabetes, chronic heart failure and hypertension, to live independently, actively engage in managing their health, and prevents avoidable hospitalization of patients who otherwise may need long-term institutional care.

Home telehealth does not replace the need for nursing home care or for traditional non-institutional care programs. However, it enhances the ability for many veterans to better understand and manage chronic diseases. This partnership with their care team helps delay the need for institutionalization and enables them to maintain independence for an extended period of time, thus improving their overall quality of life.

For more information about telehealth visit www.telehealth.va.gov.

<< JET

recalled what was the greatest fear of combat pilots during the Vietnam War. "We weren't afraid of being killed," he said. "What we were afraid of was being shot down and sent to the 'Hanoi Hilton.'"

The Hanoi Hilton was the infamous prison camp in the capital of North Vietnam where most POWs shot down were taken and held when they survived.

"The sweetest sound coming off the coast of Vietnam was to hear the words "feet wet," because it meant we wouldn't be shot down and have to go to the Hanoi Hilton," the late senator said.

*Gerry Price, Antelope Valley Press, contributed to this story.
www.avpress.com*

Gulf War Vets Sought for Health Research

If you served in the Persian Gulf War conflict and live in Southern California, this health research study might interest you.

Gulf War Illness researcher Beatrice A. Golomb, M.D., Ph.D. is conducting a research study to examine the effects of exposures on the health of Gulf

War veterans from the 1990-1991 conflict.

Participation in this study involves:

- One clinic visit at the University of California, San Diego;
- Blood draw and urine sample;

- Questionnaires about your health; and
- Monetary compensation for your time.

For more information, contact jbritchie@ucsd.edu or call (858) 558-4950 ext. 203.



Special Operations Association Memorial Program

On Armed Forces Day, May 19, 2012, the Special Operations Association (SOA) conducted a Memorial Program at the Northern California Veterans Cemetery. The program honored all members of the military special operations community of the United States and allied nations. This group consists of veterans from conflicts ranging from World War II to Afghanistan, and particularly recognizes service on missions deep inside hostile territory in a combat capacity. The ceremony included the placement of the Wreath, followed by the laying of carnations at its base in memory of the 55 men of the Military Assistance Command still listed as Missing in Action in Southeast Asia.

The SOA, established in December 1977, is a veteran's fraternal organization of past and present American and Allied military special operations in a combat environment. The group includes veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Panama, Grenada, the Balkans, Somalia as well as those from our most recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The SOA works to:

- unite fraternally all veterans who have or are now conducting or supporting classified "Special Operations" deep in hostile enemy territory or have been assigned to military units which conducted such operations; and,
- perpetuate the Special Operations "esprit de corps"; and,
- commemorate fittingly the memory of those who have given their lives in defense of the Free World and to those who served in Special Operations units and are still unaccounted for as POW/MIA through the management of the SOA George C. Morton Memorial Scholarship Grant Fund.

SOA membership is limited to Free World forces who supported or personally participated in missions deep inside hostile territory in a combat capacity. For more information, visit www.specialoperations.org.



The annual CalVet
Women's Conference
will be held on

**THURSDAY
OCTOBER 4, 2012**

at the
Double Tree Hotel
in Sacramento

CONTACT

womenveterans@calvet.ca.gov
or (916) 653-2327



The Barstow Veterans Home is Currently Accepting Applications for Residency in the Independent Living (Domiciliary), and Intermediate Nursing Levels of Care

The Veterans Home of California—Barstow is a 400-bed, long-term care facility located on 22 acres with a panoramic view of the Mojave River Valley. The high desert atmosphere offers a climate that is healthful, quiet and safe with very low air pollution. The Veterans Home provides California veterans with a living environment that protects their dignity and contributes to their feeling of self-reliance and self-worth. It offers three levels of care that provide continuity in the lives of residents in an atmosphere of dignity and respect.

1. Domiciliary Care (Independent living) for veterans who are self-sufficient and do not require assistance with activities of daily living. Non-nursing staff provides minimal supervision. Residents at this level of care have access to other levels of care and medical services.
2. Intermediate Nursing Care for veterans requiring some nursing assistance to perform activities of daily living. Licensed nursing staff assist veterans with medications and treatments.
3. Skilled Nursing Care for veterans who require a higher level of nursing care and require assistance with many activities of daily living.

Although this Veterans Home offers three levels of care, space is primarily available in the Independent Living (Domiciliary), and Intermediate Nursing levels of care.

Amenities include:

- Room and board – three meals plus snacks
- Medical care and medications
- Optical care, dental care and podiatry services
- Transportation services to all medical appointments

and off-campus activities

- Additional professional services include a beauty/barber shop, multi-purpose room and limited banking services
- Opportunities for worship for all denominations through the Chaplaincy Program
- A modern fitness center and exercise classes
- Library, cable television, and wireless Internet
- Housekeeping and laundry services
- Caring and compassionate staff, and
- Variety of community outings and an enhanced activity program

The Veterans Home of California—Barstow enjoys the strong support from the local community as well as camaraderie from the neighboring Marine Corps Logistics Base and the National Training Center at Fort Irwin.

Veterans Homes of California are also located in Chula Vista, Lancaster, Ventura, West Los Angeles, and Yountville. Veterans Homes are currently under construction in Fresno and Redding. Veterans considering assisted living are encouraged to apply to any of the Veterans Homes of California. Spouses are also eligible to apply with the veteran.

For admission information, contact:

Veterans Home of California—Barstow
100 E. Veterans Parkway
Barstow, CA 92311
(800) 746-0606, ext. 1

LEGISLATION

The following bills will be heard at the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs Hearing on Tuesday, 12 June.

AB 1739 (ALLEN): This bill would allow the Administrator of the Veterans Homes of California (VHC) to enter into an agreement with an Allied Council that authorizes that the Council may operate facilities and activities at the home. This bill would require that the agreement be in the form and manner as specified by the Administrator.

AB 1806 (COOK): This bill requires a coroner's office or a cemetery corporation or association to make all necessary inquiries to determine whether an unclaimed body is that of a veteran or the dependent of a veteran. This bill also requires that specified information be reported to the Cemetery and Funeral Bureau and requires the bureau to maintain a list of unclaimed remains and make that list available to veterans' remains organizations.

AB 1823 (YAMADA): This bill relates to resident members in the Veterans Homes of California and requires the quarterly statement or accounting of all charges to include information relating to payment of any outstanding charges at the time of the veteran's death, including the use of a deceased veteran's personal property or money for payment of outstanding charges, and the terms and conditions upon which fees and charges can be changed.

AB 1842 (MONNING): This bill would authorize the California Department Veterans Affairs (CalVet) to enter into a financial agreement with unspecified entities to receive cash advances in the Central Coast State Veterans Cemetery Endowment Fund as long as there would be no encumbrances on the State and the Department of Finance reviews the agreement before it is executed. Additionally, once the State receives moneys from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' State Veterans Cemetery Grant Program to pay for the construction of the cemetery, the Endowment Fund would first reimburse the entities that provided the cash advance to the fund before any other work would begin. It is the intent of the author that by providing an advance to the Endowment Fund the cemetery project will move forward.

AB 2133 (BLUMENFIELD): This bill would require the California Community Colleges (CCC) and the California State University (CSU), and would request the University of California (UC), to grant priority registration for enrollment for student veterans within 15 years of discharge.

AB 2198 (NIELSEN): This bill extends a reporting date in existing law that requires the department to annually determine the amount of new or increased monetary benefits paid to veterans by the federal government attributable to the assistance of county veterans service officers to prepare and transmit its determination to the Department

of Finance and the Legislature. This bill also expands the reporting requirements of the department.

AB 2475 (ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS): This bill amends existing law that prohibits any sale, foreclosure or seizure of real or personal property subject to a mortgage, or the security, for nonpayment by the service member owner. Court orders and party agreements are exceptions to this provision and it establishes that a violation of this provision is a misdemeanor. This bill also extends the prohibition from 3 months to 9 months after the military service period.

AB 2548 (MITCHELL): This bill amends law that provides that the California Veterans Board consists of 7 members appointed by the Governor subject to Senate confirmation and requires one of those members to be a woman veteran who has served overseas in a combat theater. This bill passed out of Appropriations and is on Assembly second reading.

AB 2611 (BUTLER): This bill would allow superior courts to develop and implement veterans courts programs in California to allow eligible veterans of the United States Military to have the opportunity to go through alternative treatment programs and rehabilitate in a non-prison setting.

Veterans Service Organizations

American Ex-Prisoners of War
www.axpow.org/default.htm

American GI Forum www.agif.org

CA AMVETS www.calamvets.org

CA American Disabled Veterans
www.davmembersportal.org/ca/default.aspx

CA Jewish War Veterans
www.jwv-ca.org

CA Marine Corps League
www.mcleague.com/mdp/userpages/DEPARTMENT_OF_CALIFORNIA.php

CA Military Order of the Purple Heart
www.calpurpleheart.org

CA Veterans of Foreign Wars
www.vfwca.org

CA The American Legion
www.calegion.org

CA Vietnam Veterans of America
www.vvacalsc.com

CA Military Officers Association of America
www.calmoaa.org

FOLLOW US!



UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 7-9

80th Annual Marine Corps League Convention and Growl
Grand Vista Hotel, Simi Valley
Contact: Glenn Fiery (818) 342-9944

JUNE 8-10

The Soldiers Project Annual Conference
USC Davidson Conference Center,
Los Angeles
www.thesoldiersproject.org

JUNE 12

Disabled Veterans Business Alliance Meeting
Lions Gate Hotel, Sacramento
Contact: (916) 446-3510

JUNE 19-20

Monterey County Homeless Veterans Stand Down
Salinas Rodeo Grounds
Contact: Marlene (831) 883-3857

JUNE 27

5th Annual Veteran of the Year Luncheon
Sacramento Convention Center
California State Assembly
Contact: Pete Conaty
pconaty@sbcglobal.net

JUNE 27

San Francisco Veterans Town Hall/Collaborative
War Memorial Building, San Francisco
Contact:
Maryellen_salzano@yahoo.com

Note: To view full calendar, visit www.calvet.ca.gov/Files/Events_Calendar.pdf

CalVet News

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