

THE FORWARD OBSERVER

VVA Chapter 47 PO Box 4277, Riverside CA 92514-4277 <http://www.vva47.com>

Volume 18 - Issue 8 In Honor of Michael "Bat" Masterson Fall 2018

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

First I want to apologize for not have a Chapter newsletter out sooner. The last one was Spring of 2018. We try to get one out every three months, but sometimes things happen and we get behind.

As you can see by one of the articles in this newsletter, VVA Life Membership is now only \$50.00. Make sure to read the article. Get your friends to join.

Associate of Vietnam Veterans of America National Board passed a motion at their October board meeting to lower their Life Membership dues for VVA members to \$50.00. So if you are a VVA member you can now join AVVA for life for a mere \$50.00. Only VVA members can join for \$50.00. It would be great to see all our VVA members join AVVA. This way we show them we support them just as they have supported us over the years.

For those of you who missed the Chapter's POW/MIA Remembrance Day in September we had a very nice ceremony. Jim Valdez found a wonderful bugler, a high school student from San Bernardino High, who played taps very well. The young man was wonderful. Thank you James R Valdez, JR. for a wonderful program.

On December 15th Chapter members will be volunteering at Riverside National Cemetery for Wreaths Across America. We will be placing wreaths at certain grave sites of chapter members and family members interred at the cemetery. If you are not busy come out as they have a wonderful program before we place the wreaths.



For those who might not have heard we lost Chapter 47 Member Dr. Ed Ryan. Ed passed from liver cancer. He was a Silver Star recipient and will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

If you haven't been to a chapter meeting lately come on by we would love to see you at one. We meet at the VFW 8607 Mission Blvd., Jurupa Valley the 3rd Saturday of every month at 10:00 AM. Come by and say hi.

At the VVA National Board meeting in October the National Membership Committee submitted a motion to the BOD to have one type of paid membership in VVA. The motion passed.

The motion was for VVA to have one class of membership. That one class would be a Life Member. No more one year memberships and no more three year memberships. Everyone would be a Life Member. The price for the Life Membership will be \$50.00.

So as of October 20, 2018 there is only one class of membership in VVA, Life. Anyone who has paid the \$50.00 for a 3-year membership in the last 3 years will automatically be upgraded to a Life Member without any further payment.

All one year members will have to pay the \$50.00 Life Membership fee when their one-year membership expires. All VVA members will then be Life Members.

This will save VVA National money as they won't have to send out the two renewal notices they send out for all the one year and 3 year members.

So let's get out there and recruit new members. What other Veteran organization can you join for life for \$50.00? None that I know of, so let's recruit.

God Bless America
Steve

A TRIBUTE TO THE F.M.F. CORPSMAN

Thanks to Ben Cascio for passing this along...

For those of us who heard and used the term "Corpsman Up," it is a term that remains everlasting in both our hearts and our minds. The truth is that we ask and expect far too much from these young men and women who are called Corpsmen, and who like most young Marines were first exposed to the horrors of war in ways most will never forget. Those assigned to the Fleet Marine Forces Marines (FMF) lived the way we did and that of the units to which assigned, and they endured and participated in every hardship and disappointment, as well as the praise and glory awarded their units.

The truth is, many in Vietnam were 18 years old and upwards,

and were just as fearful of being hurt or killed as the rest were and like the rest failed to receive mail for extended periods of time. Like every other Marine in the ground combat units, Corpsmen dug their foxholes with other Marines, ate the same C-rations as the rest, felt the stings of ants, leeches, bees, and scorpions, and they also dug their own toilets like the rest of us and they also buried their cans, papers, etc., after cooking and eating their meals. They were Just as tired as the rest and at times just as afraid of the unknown as was anyone else. However, Corpsmen still had to check on the sanitation of our locations, as well as tending to the minor and major injuries and ailments suffered sooner or later by all. And those ailments and injuries ran the gamut from diarrhea to coughs and colds, and from Elephant grass cuts which usually festered into very large and ugly sores, to the usual heat related issues such as heatstroke, and on to more serious mental and physical issues to include VD and other issues of that nature.

Our Navy Corpsmen did all that while still carrying the gear needed to care for a platoon or company sized unit as well as carrying their own gear and weapons. And often times they were told to help out the locals with their illnesses, injuries, or wounds, and that in turn meant using up precious bandages and medications, which the Corpsman had carried in his pack and medical bags for his fellow Marines. That then caused the Corpsman to pray or ask help from somewhere that he would not run short of needed medications and supplies, and just in case and when the next firefight, or mine explosion, or enemy mortars or artillery might happen upon his unit.

To ask the above of a young 18-22 year old FMF Corpsman, is asking much more than many in the field ever realized until much later and after the fact. After all, that Corpsman is thought by many to be an "expert" on wounds, or how to handle other major injuries, in addition to which medication might be needed and requested to be used for everything from fleas or hair lice to trench foot or crotch rot or pink eye. While every Corpsman that our units had in Vietnam might not have been quite as astute, courageous, gifted, and the logically-minded individuals we make them all out to be, I would love to have just one more time to shake their hands and hug them all, and to thank them all for that which they did for so many over the years, and especially for those units I was honored to be a part of.

For you DOC, THANKS FOR YOUR SERVICE, BRAVERY AND CARING

R. LEE ERMAY

'FULL METAL JACKET' ACTOR, MARINE ICON R. LEE ERMAY DIES AT 74

By: Michelle Tan

R. Lee Ermeay, legendary Marine and one of the most memorable actors from the movie "Full Metal Jacket," died Sunday.

Ermeay passed away from complications of pneumonia, Bill Rogin, Ermeay's long-time manager, said in a statement on Twitter.

"It is with deep sadness that I regret to inform you all that R.

Lee Ermeay ("The Gunny") passed away this morning from complications of pneumonia. He will be greatly missed by all of us," Rogin wrote.

In a statement to Marine Corps Times, Rogin added that nobody was prepared for the "terrible loss" of Ermeay.

"He has meant so much to so many people. And it is extremely difficult to truly quantify all of the great things this man has selflessly done for, and on behalf of, our many men and women in uniform," Rogin said. "He has also contributed many iconic and indelible characters on film that will live on forever."

Ermeay "was a family man, and a kind and gentle soul. He was generous to everyone around him. And, he especially cared deeply for others in need."

Rogin asked Ermeay's fans to honor him with "hope and kindness," and by supporting the men and women in the military.

"That's what he wanted most of all," Rogin said.

Ermeay is best known for his pivotal role as Gunnery Sergeant Hartman in "Full Metal Jacket." He would go on to star in television shows and inspire Marines everywhere.

The role of Gunnery Sergeant Hartman earned Ermeay a Golden Globe nomination for best supporting actor and led to dozens more on-screen appearances and several off-screen ones, where he provided voices for characters in the "Toy Story" franchise, "The Simpsons" and other properties.

He also hosted Outdoor Channel's "GunnyTime with R. Lee Ermeay" and "Military Makeover," from the producers of Lifetime's "Designing Spaces."

He also wrote a book and established a million-strong Facebook following.

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|--|------------------------------|
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| Household Goods | 909-888-7786 |
| Donation Pick Up | clothingdonations.org |
| Vet Centers: | |
| Colton | 909-801-5762 |
| Corona | 951-734-0525 |
| County Department of | Veteran Services |
| Riverside | 951-955-6050 |
| San Bernardino | 909-387-5516 |
| Pettis VA Hospital | 909-825-7084 800-741-8387 |
| Chapter 47 meets on the 3rd Saturday of each month at the VFW 10267 in Jurupa Valley. The meetings begin at 10 a.m. Board meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month, also at the VFW at 10 a.m. Check our web site for further information directions/maps/etc. Meetings dates/times do change throughout the year, notices will be sent. Check our chapter web site often. | |
| Membership is open to all Vietnam Era veterans, regardless of the country where you were stationed (Feb 28, '61 to May 7, '75), race, religion, gender, ethnicity. AVVA membership is open to anyone with an interest in supporting the goals of VVA. | |
| The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Chapter, its Board of Directors, its membership, or VVA Inc. | |

Erme y, a former drill instructor, served from 1961 to 1972. He left the Marine Corps as a staff sergeant, and later received an honorary promotion to gunnery sergeant from then-Commandant Gen. James Jones in 2002.

CALIFORNIA ROAD TO HONOR MARINE ICON R. LEE ERMEY, PLAY ‘THE MARINES’ HYMN’

By: Shawn Snow



Actor R. Lee Ermey, portraying “Gunnery Sgt. Hartman,” yells at new Marine recruits in this scene from the 1987 movie “Full Metal Jacket” directed by Stanley Kubrick. (The Associated Press)

California plans to pay tribute to “Full Metal Jacket” actor and Marine icon R. Lee Ermey by naming a road after him.

A seven-mile stretch of road in Palmdale, California, known as Avenue N will be renamed R. Lee Ermey Avenue, in honor of the acclaimed actor and Marine veteran, according to a fundraising page associated with Ermey’s supporters.

Stars and Stripes reported that the stretch of road will also play the “The Marines’ Hymn” when driving over special grooves in the road.

California officials with Palmdale and Lancaster, Los Angeles County and California Department of Transportation approved the effort to rename the avenue but lack the funding to put the endeavor into action.

Supporters of Ermey have since sprung into action by launching a GoFundMe page to raise \$150,000 to pay for street signs, highway signs and memorial plaques, according to the fundraising page.

The stretch of road to be renamed was closest to Ermey’s home

of nearly 20 years, the Antelope Valley Press reported.

The legendary Marine passed away at the age of 74 in April due to complications of pneumonia.

He is best known for his role as the hard charging drill instructor Gunnery Sgt. Hartman in the 1987 hit movie “Full Metal Jacket.” The movie earned the former Marine a Golden Globe nomination for best supporting actor.

Ermey had left the Corps as a staff sergeant in 1972 after serving nearly 11 years of service. He picked up the rank of gunny as an honorary promotion in 2002 from then-Commandant Gen. James Jones.

The newly renamed road will be unveiled at a public ceremony during the Corps’ 243rd birthday on Nov. 10, the Antelope Valley Press reported.

TO KILL AN AMERICAN

By an Australian Dentist

You probably missed this in the rush of news, but there was actually a report that someone in Pakistan had published in a newspaper, an offer of a reward to anyone who killed an American, any American.

So an Australian dentist wrote an editorial the following day to let everyone know what an American is. So they would know when they found one. (Good one, mate!!!!)

‘An American is English, or French, or Italian, Irish, German, Spanish, Polish, Russian or Greek. An American may also be Canadian, Mexican, African, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Australian, Iranian, Asian, or Arab, or Pakistani or Afghan.

An American may also be a Comanche, Cherokee, Osage, Blackfoot, Navaho, Apache, Seminole or one of the many other tribes known as native Americans.

An American is Christian, or he could be Jewish, or Buddhist, or Muslim. In fact, there are more Muslims in America than in Afghanistan. The only difference is that in America they are free to worship as each of them chooses..

An American is also free to believe in no religion.. For that he will answer only to God, not to the government, or to armed thugs claiming to speak for the government and for God.

An American lives in the most prosperous land in the history of the world. The root of that prosperity can be found in the Declaration of Independence, which recognizes the God given right of each person to the pursuit of happiness.

An American is generous.. Americans have helped out just about every other nation in the world in their time of need, never asking a thing in return.

When Afghanistan was over-run by the Soviet army 20 years ago, Americans came with arms and supplies to enable the people

to win back their country!

As of the morning of September 11, Americans had given more than any other nation to the poor in Afghanistan..

The national symbol of America, The Statue of Liberty, welcomes your tired and your poor, the wretched refuse of your teeming shores, the homeless, tempest tossed. These in fact are the people who built America.

Some of them were working in the Twin Towers the morning of September 11, 2001 earning a better life for their families. It's been told that the World Trade Center victims were from at least 30 different countries, cultures, and first languages, including those that aided and abetted the terrorists.

So you can try to kill an American if you must.. Hitler did. So did General Tojo, and Stalin, and Mao Tse-Tung, and other blood-thirsty tyrants in the world.. But, in doing so you would just be killing yourself. Because Americans are not a particular people from a particular place. They are the embodiment of the human spirit of freedom. Everyone who holds to that spirit, everywhere, is an American.

AGENT ORANGE: THE FALLOUT

By Kris Baydalla-Galasso

The chemical warfare efforts of Operation Ranch Hand were active for just 10 years of this country's military history. Those 10 years of active efforts have had nearly 50 years of fallout, and the impact on future generations still remains unknown.

When the military began the chemical warfare airstrikes, the focus was on reducing ground cover utilized by the Viet Cong and Northern Vietnamese troops and destroying crops that would be used for sustenance. US Military, manufacturers and scientists were aware of the dangers that the dioxins posed to the humans and animals exposed, but there wasn't a pressing concern as the toxins were being used on the enemy. Science overlooked the impact on US military personnel and long term impact on the environment. Air Force researcher Dr. James Clary has been quoted on the subject. "When we initiated the herbicide program in the 1960s, we were aware of the potential for damage due to the dioxin contamination in the herbicide. However, because the material was to be used on the enemy, none of us were overly concerned. We never considered a scenario in which our own personnel would become contaminated with the herbicide."

As Veterans returned home, they began to report a variety of health issues. Initial reports were primarily skin issues, but the list grew to include type 2 diabetes, miscarriages, birth defects and more.

The VA continually updates its list of afflictions, conditions and diseases associated with Agent Orange exposure. This is the most up-to-date list of recognized conditions:

AL Amyloidosis
Chronic B-cell Leukemias

Chloracne
Diabetes Mellitus Type 2
Hodgkin's Disease
Ischemic Heart Disease
Multiple Myeloma
Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma
Parkinson's Disease
Peripheral Neuropathy, Early-onset
Porphyria Cutanea Tarda
Prostate Cancer
Respiratory Cancers
Soft Tissue Sarcomas

In addition to the number of illnesses reported by American Veterans and their families, the list of afflictions that have impacted the Vietnamese continues to grow. Most notable and heart-breaking are the images of children born with severe birth defects. While many assume the impacts ended after the war, in truth, children are still coming into this world with physical and mental handicaps as a result of their grandparents' exposure to Agent Orange in the 60s.

Globally, we need to be aware of the impact that Agent Orange had on our ecosystem. If genetic abnormalities in humans were caused by exposure and still continue to be prevalent, there is a high likelihood that the dioxin would be found in our food that originated in that area.

THE SETTLEMENT DETAILS YOU NEED TO KNOW

There have been a variety of settlements made to Agent Orange victims since the chemical warfare in Vietnam ceased over 40 years ago. While some settlements had immediate payouts, there may be funds still available, depending on your condition and infliction. The VA is providing assistance, benefits and care for Veterans who have health implications as a result of Agent Orange exposure.

Initially, the Agent Orange Settlement Fund was a result of a class action lawsuit brought against the manufacturers of the chemical agents used in the Vietnam War by the Veterans of the war and their families. This fund and lawsuit did not involve the VA or the government in any way.

Veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange may be eligible for a wide variety of VA benefits. These benefits may include disability benefits for diseases that have been linked to Agent Orange exposure. These diseases include:

AL Amyloidosis
Chronic B-cell Leukemias
Chloracne
Diabetes Mellitus Type 2
Hodgkin's Disease
Ischemic Heart Disease
Multiple Myeloma
Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma
Parkinson's Disease
Peripheral Neuropathy, Early-onset



The 2018 National POW/MIA Recognition Day poster is revealed during the Annual National League of Families meeting in Crystal City, Virginia. The poster was unveiled by Ann-Mills Griffiths, National League of POW/MIA Families, left, and Randall G. Schriver, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security. (photo by Sgt. Lauren Gramley)

Porphyria Cutanea Tarda
 Prostate Cancer
 Respiratory Cancers
 Soft Tissue Sarcomas

Additionally, survivors of exposed Veterans and dependents may also be eligible for benefits. Fortunately for Veterans, there is no need to prove Agent Orange exposure. Agent Orange exposure is presumed if a Veteran was in Vietnam from January 9, 1962 until May 7, 1975. This includes both time on land and time aboard a ship that operated in the Vietnam waterways. Also covered by this presumption are veterans who were in or near the Korean demilitarized zone from April 1, 1968 to August 31, 1971.

Veterans can apply in person at their local office or online: <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage>. If you need any additional information about your possible disability benefits, please visit the VA's site: https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/claims-postservice-agent_orange.asp.

FACTS TO KNOW

By Kris Baydalla-Galasso

Operation Ranch Hand was the codename for the US program that ordered over 20 million gallons of herbicide to be spread over Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia during a ten-year span of the Vietnam War. Agent Orange was the most commonly used herbicide. Intended to be the primary agent in the destruction of the forest cover in these countries, it was an extremely powerful herbicide that not only caused the desired deforestation but also has since been known to cause a multitude of devastating conditions for the local people and returning US Soldiers.

Operation Ranch Hand was aggressive chemical warfare designed to reduce food supplies for strategic cover being used by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops. The over 20 million gallons were spread across nearly 4.5 million acres. While seemingly a strategic win at the time, the fallout would prove to be a blemish on the face of American warfare history.

Operation Ranch Hand utilized six different herbicides. Produced by well-known American manufacturing companies, such as Monsanto and Dow Chemical, the herbicides were marked by colors on their packaging drums and subsequently referred to as those colors – Agent Orange, Agent Pink, Agent Green, Agent Blue, Agent White and Agent Purple. Agent Orange was the most used, most potent and most altered – with four different variations, including Super Orange. Agent Orange and its variations account for almost two-thirds of the herbicide use during the Vietnam War.

Agent Orange's active ingredients caused plants to lose their leaves. TCDD, a type of dioxin, was not an intentional ingredient but instead a byproduct of the manufacturing process. The TCDD found in Agent Orange is the most dangerous and deadly of all dioxins.

It has been nearly 50 years since the US Government stopped using Agent Orange and other herbicides in chemical warfare. Despite the time that has passed, many of those exposed – both Vietnamese and American – still face the physical repercussions and fallout.

TOXIC EXPOSURE PROGRAM

Nadine Owen, Nancy S. Switzer AVVA National Co- chairs

In 2002, the VA changed its rules, arbitrarily terminating benefits to the 534,300-plus Blue Water U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, and FMF Marine veterans serving in the waters of Southeast Asia, thereby limiting the scope of the Agent Orange Act of 1991 to those veterans who could provide proof of "boots on the ground" in Vietnam.

Suddenly, offshore veterans stopped receiving VA health care and disability compensation.

The Blue Water Navy Bill/Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017, when signed into law, would right this wrong and partially restore coverage to those aggrieved veterans who suffer from illnesses considered presumptive to exposure to Agent Orange and other toxic herbicides. VA Cites slow-rolled Agent Orange report to oppose Spina Bifida bill.

Approximately Two years ago, the VA received latest in a series of scientific literature from the nation Academy of Medicine on Agent-Orange associated ailments. This raised the possibility that the VA might add as many as four new conditions, bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, Parkinson-like tremors and perhaps even hypertension and would add these to a list of 14 illnesses it presumes have been caused by exposure to herbicides.



Alice and Jess Gomez at the Leadership Conference in Palm Springs



Elayne Mackey meets Wayne Newton at the Leadership Conference

The VA promised to review the results and would act on the Academy report's findings by July 2016. On August 1st, during a hearing of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee dominated by discuss of the House-passed Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act A hearing of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee was dominated by discussion of the house-passed Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act (HR 299). The VA Undersecretary for Benefits, Paul R. Lawrence and VA's chief consultant on post-deployment health, Dr.

Ralph Erickson, referred to the latest Academy report on Agent Orange.

They did so not to propose that a disease be added to VA's list of conditions presumed caused by Agent Orange.

Now we face the open hostility of the VA Secretary, who has declared no Agent Orange benefits for Blue Water Navy veterans, despite mountains of evidence suggesting there is a direct correlation between service in the waters off of Vietnam and any number of diseases already linked to Agent Orange exposure.

Many of our Blue Water Navy veterans will not survive this man's tenure in office. It is unconscionable that an individual who has expressed open hostility to veterans, and lied to a member of the Senate about his position was even nominated, much less confirmed as Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

We should expect better from an administration that alleges to support veterans.

ROUNDUP: If you or a loved one has been struggling with a recent cancer diagnosis, it is important to be aware of the fact that hundreds of lawsuits have been filed against Monsanto based on the assertion that Roundup use causes cancer.

Roundup, a household name among week cleaners, has been commonly used by employees who work in the lawn care and landscaping industry. The weed killer has been used for decades and is widely available in well over 100 countries.

Recently, evidence has been presented in hundreds of lawsuits that Roundup contains a cancer-causing active ingredient called glyphosate.

What is Glyphosate? Glyphosate is a systemic herbicide that is instrumental in the killing of weeds. The chemical is particularly useful in the killing of annual weeds, a discovery that was made in 1970 when Monsanto chemist John Franz discovered the chemical's herbicide potential in 1970.

In recent years' scientific evidence has emerged that led to a debate over whether roundup use causes cancer because of the glyphosate herbicide.

If you are using this product dispose of it immediately. Please contact your town you live in to find the safest way to dispose of it

VETERAN SURVEY

Veterans Residing in Riverside County, please take a moment to complete the Riverside County Veterans Needs Sur-

vey. Thank you.

Please assist in circulating the Riverside County Veterans Needs Survey link: <https://riversideveteranhealth.org> to veterans you encounter or consider posting the link on your websites. In an effort to help identify veterans unmet needs in Riverside County, we are asking veterans that reside in Riverside County to take 5 to 10 minutes to complete this survey. If you are a veteran please take a moment to go to the website link and complete the veterans needs survey and help circulate this survey link to reach as many veterans residing in Riverside County as possible.

Thank you for your support in circulating this message. To all veterans receiving this message, thank you for your service to our country and God bless.

Grant Gautsche, Director
Riverside County Department of Veterans' Services
4360 Orange Street, Riverside, CA 92501
Ph: (951) 955-3041 Fx: (951) 955-3063
Website: <http://veteranservices.co.riverside.ca.us>

VETEXT

VA Loma Linda's Innovations Program team developed and successfully piloted VEText. VEText reminds Veterans of upcoming VA appointments and allows them to easily cancel appointments via a text message on devices they already use every day. All Veterans with a cellphone number listed in their health record are automatically enrolled. When a Veteran cancels an appointment using VEText, the appointment is automatically canceled. The appointment is then available for other Veterans in need of care, decreasing wait times. VA has already deployed VEText to 133 other VA sites across the country.

What do Veterans need to do to get started with VEText?

- Update their phone numbers during check-in, or use the self-service kiosks located throughout VA facilities.
- No need to opt-in; text appointment reminders will occur automatically.
- Veterans may STOP or opt-out of the texts by following the instructions within the texts.
- No cellphone? No problem. You will still receive your other reminders.
- VEText does not show personal information—just a simple reminder.

*This Is Your Uncle, You Never Met
He Was A Soldier, A Vietnam Vet
He Was One Of The Few, The Proud, The Brave
My Mother Tells Me, As We Stand By His Grave
I Asked Your Why, Why He Died
She Looked At Me, With A Tear In Her Eye
He Died For You, He Died For Me
He Died So Others, Could Be Free*

*We Stand In Silence, For A While
Then My Mother Says, With A Smile
The Last Thing, I Heard Him Say
Was, "Peace" As He Got On A Plane
That Took Him Far Away
This Is Your Uncle You Never Met*

by Cathy "Cook" Hamilton



This Veterans Day weekend marks the 25th anniversary of the dedication of the Vietnam Women's Memorial on the National Mall. To commemorate this milestone, a weekend of poignant events will honor the service and sacrifice of the 265,000 women veterans—military and civilian—who served during Vietnam.



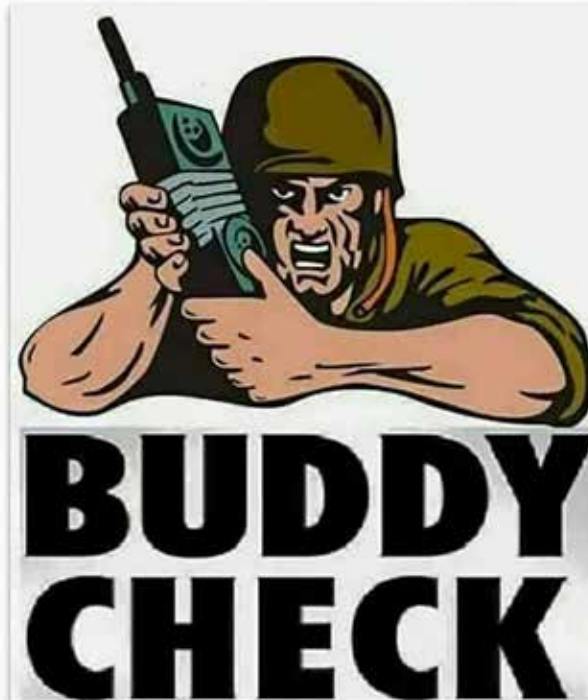
NOTE::
November: bring unwrapped toys for donation to Cal Fire 16
December: General Meeting there will be a continental break-
 fast, door prizes and more. Everyone to bring their memories
 of Christmas in Vietnam



VVA Chapter 47
 PO Box 4277
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CONTACT A VETERAN YOU
 KNOW AND ASK HOW THEY'RE
 DOING...



At least 22 veterans die by their own hands each day. Even ONE a day is one too many!