



LINCOLN HILLS VETERANS GROUP

BULLETIN

April 2009

Lest We Forget

VOLUME 9, No. 4

President's Corner

Your Story Should be Heard

I have had the honor of interviewing a number of U.S. military veterans of all services over the past six years, first as a volunteer for Sacramento County's Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and more recently for our own veterans group. Our program is the "Veterans History Project" which is part of the Library of Congress' American Folklife Project. It is the goal of VHP to electronically preserve the stories of American military veterans of all wars for future historical reference.

Bob Stackhouse and I, in concert with the Lincoln Public Library, have interviewed a number of local vets using the facilities in the new library on Twelve Bridges. The program is entirely without cost to the vet, who receives a duplicate copy of the interview. The original digital file goes to the Library of



Congress and is available for all who are interested.

Bob and I have interviewed a great variety of individuals, ranging from

front-line combat infantrymen to military band musicians. Without exception, their stories were riveting and showed the great dedication and patriotism common in this great country.

Earlier this year, Bob and I interviewed Steve Judd, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran. Steve had participated in the landing at Tarawa and other islands during World War II. Steve was recovering from a stroke and, in his own words, "didn't get out much." But he walked smartly into our little studio and related his experiences as a young combat Marine.

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Next Meeting

KC-10 Pilot to Speak April 16

First Lt. Pete Surette, an Air Force KC-10 *Extender* pilot, will be the featured speaker at the April 16 joint meeting of the Veterans and Aviation Groups at 1 p.m. in the Kilaga Springs Presentation Hall.

He will review the highlights of his Air Force career and discuss the current mission of Travis AFB and the 6th Air Refueling Squadron (6 ARS).



Lt. Surette is a prior-enlisted F-16 crew chief who completed deployments to Iraq, Kuwait and Turkey, and served a one-year remote tour at Osan Air Base, Korea.

He subsequently earned a bachelor's degree from Embry Riddle University, was selected for Officers Training School and earned his commission. Following OTS, he completed pilot training and was assigned to Travis AFB as a KC-10 pilot. He has since completed two more deployments to the United Arab Emirates.



(U.S. Air Force photo)

◀ **The KC-10 Extender is an Air Mobility Command advanced tanker and cargo aircraft designed to provide global reach for U.S. forces.**

The 6 ARS is tasked with ensuring global reach for America by generating 24-hour-a-day strategic airlift and aerial-refueling sorties supporting U.S. and allied forces during contingency operations.

Visit the Veterans Group Website at www.lhvets.org

Lincoln Hills Veterans Group 2009 Officers and Directors

<i>President:</i>	Doug Cooper	408-7173
<i>Vice Pres.:</i>	Steve Witmer	408-2455
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	Lorraine Bivalec	408-7004
<i>Chaplain:</i>	Alan Hearl	543-4860
<i>Public Relations:</i>	Steve Witmer	408-2455

Meetings

The board of directors meets the Wednesday before the third Thursday of the month at 9:00 a.m. General membership meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 1:00 p.m., normally in the Kilaga Springs Lodge Presentation Hall.

Membership

The purpose of the Veterans Group is to bring together resident veterans who have served honorably in any uniformed service of the United States or its allies during war or peace. Surviving spouses of veterans are also invited to join. Dues are \$10 a year. Life membership is \$100. For further information, please contact Jon Hodson at 543-4687 or any of the board members or committee chairs listed above.

Bulletin Contributions

Contributions to the monthly *Bulletin* are appreciated. Photos and memorabilia will be scanned and returned. Please send material for consideration to:

Steve Witmer, Editor
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Lincoln, CA 95648
switmer@starstream.net

President's Corner, continued from page 1

Steve passed away in February and Bob had the honor of presenting a copy of Steve's interview to the family. Bob loaded the disc into the player so that the family, including numerous grandchildren, could catch this glimpse of their Grandpa and probably learn things they never could have imagined. Our condolences go to the Judd family and to Steve, a hearty "Semper Fi."



To the rest of our veterans, remember that your story is important. Only one out of ten

military members ever saw combat, but the wars we fought could not have been won without the support of the guys and gals behind the lines. In addition, those of us who served during periods of relative peace performed great service as "those who have stood the watch."

If you would like to tell your story, please contact either Bob Stackhouse (645-5581) or me (408-7173) and we will make the arrangements for this very important effort.

- Doug Cooper

Treasurer's Report

As of February 28, the group had \$4,801.19 in its checking/savings account and \$3,426.02 in a CD.

Membership Report

As of February 18, the group's membership stood at 314, including 47 life members.

Calendar of Events

April

- 15 Directors Meeting
- 16 General Membership Meeting

May

- 16 **Armed Forces Day***
- 20 Directors Meeting
- 21 General Membership Meeting
- 25 **Memorial Day***

June

- 14 **Flag Day***
- 17 Directors Meeting
- 18 General Membership Meeting

* National Holiday. Proudly fly the American flag.

Visit the Veterans Group Website at www.lhvets.org

Flags and Flagpoles: Resident Options Explained

In addition to serving its members, the Veterans Group supports the SCLH community at large by selling U.S. Flags to residents. Typically, they're sold in Orchard Creek Lodge on the 15th of each month and at our monthly meetings in Kilaga Springs on the third Thursday of most months at 1 p.m.

Our nylon flags have heavy stitching and embroidered stars. They are excellent all-around flags that dry quickly and fly proudly with a slight breeze. Polyester flags generally are heavier, handle the wind better, but are more expensive. They also are available with heavy stitching and embroidered stars.



Inexpensive all-cotton and printed cotton/polyester flags are best suited for indoor or infrequent outdoor use in good weather. Our flags are intended to replace your residential flags on an "as needed" basis. At \$20, Veterans Group flags are minimally a fundraiser after California sales taxes are paid. Wear-out depends on how often you fly your flag. Please remember that flags flown after sundown should be spotlighted with a dedicated light and inclement weather requires an all-weather flag.

One subject that comes up often is flagpoles. The bracket or mount and flagpoles that came with our homes are marginal at best and are prone to fail. Consider the need to replace your bracket and pole as a likely expense if you fly your U.S. Flag regularly.

Most flags in SCLH are 3' x 5' which is a popular size. Mounting to your home involves the bracket and the removable pole itself. A better flagpole (and bracket) size than the original is a 1" diameter aluminum pole. Because most poles are stationary, flags tend to get fouled in the wind. At least two popular designs are available that allow the flag to rotate around the pole to minimize tangling.

One design is where the pole rotates on a bearing within the bracket itself and the other uses a clear plastic sleeve that has the flag attached and the whole assembly rotates around the pole in the wind. Neither type is available locally, although they may be procured via the Internet. The bearing type matches the flagpole with its adapter to the house-mounted bracket. The adapter and its bearing

protector are prone to falling apart when the flagpole is removed, but it works well and requires little maintenance other than an occasional oiling. The plastic sleeve type uses plastic cable ties to fix the flag to the sleeve and is prone to cracking and breaking, often before the flag wears out. Using two cable ties per grommet prevents serious problems, however. Remember to use new cable ties.

A final, less popular type is a fixed pole with a special sleeve-style banner flag that is free to rotate around the pole. These banner flags are somewhat effective in combating tangling, are more expensive but are available locally. The Veterans Group only sells 3' x 5' nylon flags with brass grommets that allow for fastening to the pole or plastic sleeve, and not the banner type.

Fixed brackets or mounts come in a variety of styles and materials. It's best to avoid plastic brackets and go with metal. Most metal brackets have adjustable pitch that is not necessary, but they are inexpensive (\$7-\$11) and available at Home Depot and Lowe's. My favorite is a solid brass, fixed-pitch bracket for a 1" flagpole for \$17 at Ace Hardware.

One-inch fixed poles, both metal and fiberglass are available locally and are lower maintenance than wood. Five feet in length is marginal, 6 feet satisfactory and 7 feet is preferred. These non-fouling brackets and poles can be procured at several Internet locations to include:

www.sportys.com
www.gettysburgflag.com
www.improvementscatalog.com
www.brookstone.com

Brookstone currently has the bearing type bracket with 6' white aluminum pole on sale for \$40 – flag not included.

Brackets should be installed on a rigid surface, either where the builder installed yours or in another spot with a sturdy foundation. Never attempt to install into trim pieces that are on many of our homes. They are merely stucco over Styrofoam and won't hold much of anything. If assistance with installation is needed, call Neighbors InDeed at 223-2763 for help. If they can't accommodate you, they will recommend a handyman who can replace your flagpole bracket.

As a reminder, old, worn-out flags can be taken to the copier room adjacent to the membership desk in Orchard Creek Lodge. There is a cardboard box where the flags can be deposited. We will collect them for proper disposal with the American Legion.

- Vern Luke

In Memoriam



Steve Judd

Veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps

Robert Kratz

Veteran of the U.S. Army

Joe Mondzak

Veteran of the U.S. Army

The Veterans Group extends its sincerest condolences to Steve's wife Phyllis, Robert's wife Lois, Joe's wife Jan and all of their family and friends.

Beale Recreational Amenities available to Area Military Retirees

Military retirees are invited to use the recreational equipment and facilities at Beale AFB, according to Lt. Col. Joe Slavick, commander of the 9th Force Support Squadron.

Whether a retiree is a seasoned pilot or just curious about aviation, the Aero Club provides valuable benefits. The club offers a full spectrum of classes covering all levels of flight training and has a fleet of professionally maintained aircraft for rent at about half the cost of a private club.



expansive paintball play area, along with a club house and snack bar.

Retirees interested in further information should contact Beale's community service flight chief, Mark Johnson, at 530-634-2412.

Lest We Forget

April 1986 – Terrorist Bomb Provokes Air Strike on Libya

On April 5, 1986, a bomb exploded at a popular discotheque frequented by American military personnel in West Berlin, killing two U.S. soldiers and a Turkish woman. U.S. intelligence "irrefutably" attributed the attack to Muammar al-Qaddafi, Libya's head of state.

On April 15, U.S. Air Force and Navy warplanes, on orders from President Ronald Reagan, launched a series of military air strikes against ground targets inside Libya. The operation was under Navy command and involved both F-111F strike aircraft from Lakenheath, England, and A-6Es from the USS *America* and *Coral Sea*. The strike was supported by radar and communications jamming by Air Force EF-111As and defense suppression by Navy A-7Es and F-18As.



The Air Force portion of the attack was seriously complicated by the refusal of France, Spain and Italy to allow its UK-based aircraft to overfly their territory, forcing the F-111s to fly around Spain and though the Strait of Gibraltar.



This increased the distance covered from 1,300 nm to over 2,800 nm and the mission duration from 6-7 hours to 13-14 hours.

The raid was designed to hit directly at the heart of Qaddafi's ability to export terrorism. Thirty-seven people on the ground were killed.

From a military perspective, the strike on Libya was significant in several respects. It provided the first application inside a hostile air defense zone of a number of new weapon systems, including the digital F-111F with its Pave Tack targeting system, the EF-111A tactical jamming system, the F-18A aircraft and the High-speed Anti-Radiation Missile (HARM).

One F-111 was destroyed by a Libyan surface-to-air missile; pilot Capt. Fernando Ribas-Dominicci and weapons system officer Capt. Paul Lorence were killed.

- Multiple sources

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