



LINCOLN HILLS VETERANS GROUP

BULLETIN

January 2010

Lest We Forget

VOLUME 10 No. 1

President's Corner

Let's Build on our Successes

As your new president, I am pleased to wish each and every one of you a happy and prosperous 2010!

I have served as your membership chairman for the last couple of years and have thoroughly enjoyed the experience; and I am looking forward, with some trepidation, to serving as your president during 2010. As I look back at past presidents, I realize what an august company I am joining. I am pleased to say that Larry Wilson has volunteered to return as your membership chair. Larry filled this role for many years, and has graciously agreed to do so again.



2010
Board
of
Directors

The group's board of directors for 2010 includes (top row, l to r) Jon Hodson, president; Steve Witmer, vice president; Rich Williams, treasurer; Vern Luke, secretary; (bottom row, l to r) Bob Dale; Vic Ioppolo and Lorraine Bivalec.

As I look back on 2009, it was a year filled with exciting events. We had our Spring Social in the ballroom in March, and in June we celebrated Flag Day with a catered barbecue at the Sports Pavilion with music provided by the Jay Paulus Band. In August, we celebrated the summer with an Ice Cream Social, when we were entertained by banjo

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Next Meeting

Saipan-based B-29 Pilot to Speak at January 21 Meeting

Phil Webster, a B-29 pilot who flew missions against Japan from Saipan during World War II, will be the featured speaker at the January 21 meeting of the Lincoln Hills Veterans Group at 1 p.m. in the Kilaga Springs Presentation Hall.



Following the capture of the Marianas islands in 1944, the islands of Tinian, Saipan, and Guam became launch sites for large B-29 raids against

Japan in the final year of the war. These islands could be easily supplied by ship, alleviating the difficult, costly and time-consuming burden of supporting bomber bases in China by flying supplies over the Hump from India.

The first B-29 arrived on Saipan on October 12, 1944, and the first combat mission was launched from there on October 28, with 14 B-29s attacking the Truk atoll. The first mission against Japan itself from bases in the Marianas was flown on November 24, 1944, with 111 B-29s sent to attack Tokyo.

From that point, more-and-more intense raids were launched regularly until the end of the war. These attacks succeeded in devastating most large Japanese cities and they gravely damaged Japan's war industries. In addition, the aerial-mining program carried out by B-29s against Japanese shipping routes and harbor approaches profoundly degraded Japan's ability to support its population and its army to fight the war.

Visit the Veterans Group Website at www.lhvets.org

**Lincoln Hills Veterans Group
2010 Officers and Directors**

<i>President:</i>	Jon Hodson	543-4687
<i>Vice Pres.:</i>	Steve Witmer	408-2455
<i>Secretary:</i>	Vern Luke	253-3711
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Rich Williams	543-4887
<i>Director:</i>	Bob Dale	543-2133
<i>Director:</i>	Vic Ioppolo	434-6113
<i>Director:</i>	Lorraine Bivalec	408-7004

Advisors and Committee Chairs

<i>Past</i>	Doug Cooper	2009
<i>Presidents:</i>	Steve Witmer	2008
	Vern Luke	2007
	Wayne Ford	2006
	Dick Schultz	2005
	Mark Dentinger	2004
	Dick Meyer	2003
	Ed Foley	2002
	Mickey Haggard	2001
<i>Membership:</i>	Larry Wilson	408-0667
<i>Programs:</i>	Rich Williams	543-4887
<i>Vets Resource:</i>	Tom Rainbolt	434-5555
<i>Webmaster:</i>	Bob Stackhouse	645-5581
<i>Social Events:</i>	Mary Hodson	543-4687
	Lorraine Bivalec	408-7004
	Lillian Nawman	408-2184
<i>Chaplain:</i>	Alan Hearl	543-4860
<i>Public Relations:</i>	Steve Witmer	408-2455
<i>Nominations:</i>	Bob Dale	543-2133

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. Dues are \$10 a year. Life membership is \$100. For further information, please contact Larry Wilson at 408-0667 or any of the board members, advisors or committee chairs listed above.

Bulletin Contributions

Contributions to the monthly *Bulletin* are appreciated. Please send material for consideration to:

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switmer@starstream.net

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music. Finally, in December we capped-off our social year with our annual Holiday Party. My thanks go to Lorraine Bivalec, Bob Garry, Mary Hodson, Lillian Nawman and all the others behind the scenes for their efforts to make these events the successes that they were. Don't go away; we have a whole new year ahead of us.



I don't know how anything could have been considered more successful than our tribute to veterans on November 11. The celebration to commemorate Veterans Day was led by Steve Witmer and supported by Dave Machado, who arranged for performances by the Roseville Community Concert Band and the Lincoln Hills Singers. Their

combined efforts resulted in a standing-room-only turnout in the Ballroom as we paid tribute to all those who have served or are serving today.

The Veterans History Project has been a stunning success in the past year. During 2009, Bob Stackhouse and Doug Cooper interviewed twenty veterans and filed the interviews with the Library of Congress, in addition to providing copies of the interviews to the interviewees and their families.

Looking forward, one of the initiatives that is near and dear to me personally is to expand the number of off-campus



adventures. Last year Doug Cooper and I led a bus trip to Travis Air Force base to my first air show (well, my first *peacetime* air show), and we hope to do more of this in the coming year. In the future we will be coordinating these adventures with the Community Association activities staff.

I want to extend my personal note of appreciation to all of the chairpersons and advisors who do so much behind the scenes to make sure that our group is all that it is.

As I look to the New Year, I hope that we can continue to build on our successes, learn from our mistakes and aid each other in accomplishing all that we can.

- Jon Hodson

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Treasurer's Report

As of November 30, the group had \$3,114.94 in its checking/savings account and \$3,464.38 in a CD.

Membership Report

As of November 18, the group's paid membership stood at 298, including 50 life members.

Welcome, New Members

Member	Service
Milton Brown	Navy
Richard Hull	Army
Dave Quirarte	Navy

New Life Member
Rich Williams, U.S. Air Force

Calendar of Events

January

1 New Year's Day* 

18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day* 

20 Directors Meeting

21 General Membership Meeting

February

15 Presidents' Day* 

17 Directors Meeting

18 General Membership Meeting

** National Holiday or Observance. Proudly fly the American flag.*

Items of Interest to Veterans

VA Extends "Agent Orange" Benefits to More Veterans

Relying on an independent study by the Institute of Medicine (IOM), Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki decided to establish a service connection for Vietnam Veterans with three specific illnesses based on the latest evidence of an association with the herbicides referred to as Agent Orange.

The illnesses affected by the recent decision are B cell leukemias, such as hairy cell leukemia; Parkinson's disease; and ischemic heart disease.



Used in Vietnam to defoliate trees and remove concealment for the enemy, Agent Orange left a legacy of suffering and disability that continues to the present. Between January 1965 and April

1970, an estimated 2.6 million military personnel who served in Vietnam were potentially exposed to sprayed Agent Orange.

In practical terms, Veterans who served in Vietnam during the war and who have a "presumed" illness don't have to prove an association between their illnesses and their military service. This "presumption" simplifies and speeds up the application process for benefits.

The Secretary's decision brings to 15 the number of presumed illnesses recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Other illnesses previously recognized under VA's "presumption" rule as being caused by exposure to herbicides during the Vietnam War are: Acute and Subacute Transient Peripheral Neuropathy, AL Amyloidosis, Chloracne, Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia, Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2), Hodgkin's Disease, Multiple Myeloma, Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, Porphyria Cutanea Tarda, Prostate Cancer, Respiratory Cancers, and Soft Tissue Sarcoma (other than Osteosarcoma, Chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or Mesothelioma)

Additional information about Agent Orange and VA's services and programs for Veterans exposed to the chemical are available at:

www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange.

- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Sierra College Vets Send Thanks

Catherine Morris, our October speaker and a veterans' counselor at Sierra College, assists



returning veterans with academic and benefit issues as they re-integrate themselves into civilian society.

The Veterans Group contributed a small stipend to

her program to support a "Writers Weekend" for her student vets. The weekend was very successful and the participants signed a certificate of appreciation which Catherine sent to President Doug Cooper,

Ms. Morris can be reached at her email address:

cmorris@sierracollege.edu.

Visit the Veterans Group Website at www.lhvets.org

Oldest Female Marine Laid to Rest

The oldest female Marine died on Veterans Day and was buried in the Cypress Hills National Cemetery. Miriam Cohen was one of the oldest females to enlist in 1943, at age 35, said Debra Allee, the 101-year-old's niece. Cohen answered her nation's call twice, serving during World War II and the Korean War.

During their eulogy, her friends and family remembered Cohen's energetic life and attachment to the Marines. She worked with veterans all her life, and in that her loved ones found meaning in the timing of her passing.



"She died on Veteran's Day; that makes that day an even more sacred moment," said Rabbi Deborah Hirsch.

- Marine Corps News by Sgt. Randall A. Clinton

Lest We Forget

January 30, 1968 – Tet Offensive Launched in South Vietnam

By late 1967, forces of the U.S. Army, its allies, and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), had entrenched themselves in the six major cities of South Vietnam and were reporting growing success in the countryside. A series of scattered diversionary attacks by the Vietcong (VC) gradually drew more U.S. and ARVN troops away from the cities.

North Vietnamese leaders believed they could not sustain the heavy losses inflicted by the Americans indefinitely and had to win the war with an all-out military effort. In addition, Ho Chi Minh was nearing death, and they wanted a victory before then.



Then in late January 1968, on the first day of Tet, which had previously been observed with a cease-fire, the combined forces of the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese Regular Army (NVA), about 85,000 strong, launched a major offensive throughout South Vietnam.

The Vietcong attacked five of South Vietnam's cities, most of its provincial and district capitals, and about 50 hamlets.

In Saigon, they attacked the presidential palace, the airport, the ARVN headquarters, and fought their way onto the U.S. Embassy grounds. The U.S. and ARVN forces, which were caught off guard, quickly responded and within a week had recouped most of the lost territory. Hue was a different story, however, as the Vietcong held their ground. By the time the city was retaken on February 24, the historic city had been all but leveled. Thousands of civilians were executed and 100,000 residents had lost their homes. It became known as the "Massacre at Hue."

► **The Tet Offensive was a series of surprise attacks by the Vietcong and North Vietnamese forces on scores of cities, towns and hamlets throughout South Vietnam. It was considered to be a turning point in the Vietnam War.**



American spokesmen initially described the Tet offensive as a failure for the Vietcong, pointing to their retreat and staggering casualties. But when General William Westmoreland reported that completing the Vietcong's defeat would necessitate 200,000 more American soldiers and require an activation of the reserves, even loyal supporters of the war effort began to see that a change in strategy was needed.

To a growing segment of the American public, Tet demonstrated the resolve of the Vietcong and the tenuous control South Vietnam had over its own territory. It also helped unite those at home in their dissenting opinions of the war. Tet became a propaganda victory for the Vietnamese due in part to graphic news reports on television which helped turn U.S. public opinion against continuation of the war.



On February 18, 1968, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) posted the highest U.S. casualty figures for a single week during the entire war: 543 killed and 2,547 wounded. As a result of the heavy fighting, 1968 went on to become the deadliest year of the war for the U.S. forces with 16,592 soldiers killed.

- The History Place, US History.com

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