



## LINCOLN HILLS VETERANS GROUP

# BULLETIN

July 2009

Lest We Forget

VOLUME 9, No. 7

### President's Corner

## Contemplating Our Heritage

My wife and I sneaked away in May for a visit to Pennsylvania. We'd been to Philadelphia previously and to a lot of the historical stops that are located in and around New England. It's amazing to see where the beginnings of our great nation occurred. It's also humbling when one considers the sacrifices of our early citizens to create our country.

On this trip, we had the opportunity to visit both Valley Forge and Gettysburg. Both places are in the National Park system and are scrupulously maintained and historically preserved. Although the sites are important for different reasons, the lessons learned at both of them have helped to keep us a free society.



General George Washington's army was in a bad way when he decided that

they would winter over at Valley Forge. Most of the rank and file were poor people who had enlisted for reasons both of patriotism and the promise of remuneration. They soon found that funds were scarce and paid in Continental Currency. Remember the saying, "not worth a Continental?" Most arrived in whichever uniform they owned or often in no uniform at all. Some had no shoes. In spite of these shortcomings, they all turned to and created a comfortable encampment comprised of log huts which they built for themselves. Interestingly enough, women were present and provided support in roles such as laundresses and cooks.

The cold winter was always present. The turnover was enormous, with many returning home after their

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### Next Event

## Flying Doctor has 85 Missions and He's Preparing for the Next One

David Morgan, a Lincoln Hills resident and longtime flying doctor, will be the featured speaker at the July 16 joint meeting of the Veterans and Aviation Groups



in the Kilaga Springs Presentation Hall at 1 p.m.

Born and raised on a family farm in Kings County, David's desire to fly started in

1937 when the most prominent story in the news was about Amelia Earhart being lost in the Pacific. He took his first opportunity to learn to fly in 1945 and continues to fly to this day in his Cessna 182.

Following graduation from high school in 1946, he enlisted in the Army Air Force and spent two years in Japan as a radio operator sending and receiving Morse code.

Following his Air Force service, David earned undergraduate and medical degrees, graduating in 1957. He has practiced as an M.D. for more than 50 years.

In 1974, Los Medicos Voladores (The Flying Doctors) called him to volunteer medical service to the very poor in remote areas of the world. His 85 missions to date have included Mexico, Peru, the Solomon Islands and Indian reservations in the Coachella Valley in southeastern California.



Los Medicos Voladores is a 34-year-old organization with five chapters and about 500 volunteer members.

Visit the Veterans Group Website at [www.lhvets.org](http://www.lhvets.org)

**Lincoln Hills Veterans Group  
2009 Officers and Directors**

*President:* Doug Cooper 408-7173  
*Vice Pres.:* Steve Witmer 408-2455  
*Secretary:* Jon Hodson 543-4687  
*Treasurer:* Rich Williams 543-4887  
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*Public Relations:* 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:

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**President's Corner, continued from page 1**

enlistments had expired. Logistics were a continuing problem and hunger was never far off. Despite this, Washington and his fellow generals were able to pull together a real, trained army which went on to eventual victory and, hence, the creation of the United States. No one died at Valley Forge; rather, ill individuals were taken to surrounding towns for medical treatment and, if they didn't recover, were often buried in these towns.

Gettysburg is interesting for other reasons. It was an eventual Union victory; however, the costs were dear. Tens of thousands died on both sides. One battle resulted in over 5,000 horses killed. You see, it took six horses to pull one cannon onto the battlefield. The Union victory was not the end of the conflagration, only another bloody step. Many of the dead were buried on the field where they perished. Often the only remains were scattered pieces due to the violence of the fighting. President Lincoln's eloquent Gettysburg Address summed it up, although it would be years before people recognized the full meaning of his words.

My brief visit to these hallowed fields has reinforced what I have long understood. We are a great country and this has been demonstrated countless times through the actions of our military members, despite cold, hunger, disease and a seemingly overwhelming numbers of adversaries. Should we continue to be blessed with our wonderful way of life, it will be to the credit of those who answer the call to arms. Our present soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen do us a great service and honor, as have their parents and grandparents. We offer our best wishes and our prayers to them and to their families on this Fourth of July 2009.

- Doug Cooper

**Treasurer's Report**

As of May 11, the group had \$4,479.03 in its checking/savings account and \$3,426.02 in a CD.

**Membership Report**

As of May 11, the group's paid membership stood at 278, including 47 life members.

**Welcome, New Members**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Service</b>
Andrew Petro	Marine Corps

**New Life Member**  
**Bob Dunn, U.S. Navy Air Reserve and U.S. Army**

## Calendar of Events

### July

- 4** Independence Day\*   
**15** Directors Meeting  
**16** General Membership Meeting

### August

- 19** Directors Meeting  
**20** General Membership Meeting

\* National Holiday. Proudly fly the American flag.

## Items of Interest to Veterans

### VA Welcoming Vets Home with New Website, Blog

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has launched its new "Returning Veterans" Web site -- [www.oefoif.va.gov](http://www.oefoif.va.gov) -- to welcome home veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts with a social, veteran-centric website focusing on their needs and questions.

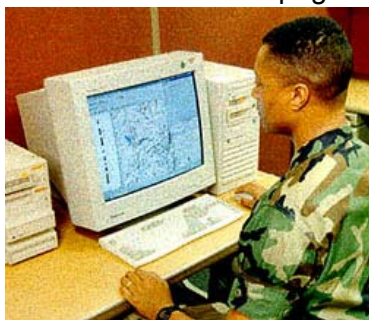


"VA is entering the world of Web 2.0, because that's where this generation of veterans is already communicating," said

Dr. Gerald M. Cross, VA's principal deputy undersecretary for health. "We're opening our doors to them virtually to let them know what they can expect when they step through our doors in reality."

The website will feature videos, veteran stories, and a blog where veterans are encouraged to post feedback. The site also will restructure the traditional index-of-benefits format found on other VA pages

into question-based, categorized, and easily navigated links by topic. This will allow veterans to find benefits of interest easily and discover related benefits as they explore.



"We hope our returning veterans find this site easy and helpful, but also engaging," Dr. Cross said. "As the site grows, we will be linking to veterans' blogs and highlighting more of their own stories from their own views. We are their VA, so we are eager to provide a forum for veterans to discuss their lives."

- Dept. of Veterans Affairs

Visit the Veterans Group Website at [www.lhvets.org](http://www.lhvets.org)

## Unsung Heroes of World War II to Get their Due

The Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) program was born in 1942 to create a corps of female pilots able to fill all types of flying jobs at home to free male military pilots to travel to the front.

Some 65 years after their service, the WASP are being honored with the Congressional Gold Medal -- one of the nation's highest civilian honors.

Sens. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, and Barbara Mikulski, D-Maryland, shepherded a bill through the Senate, and it now awaits a vote by the House of Representatives.

With fewer than 300 living former WASP, all in their late 80s or older, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Florida, a sponsor of the bill, said it's important for the House to act quickly. "This is a largely overlooked veterans group. They haven't gotten the medals they deserve, the recognition they deserve."



◀ **Some 25,000 women pilots applied: 1,830 were accepted. Eventually, 1,102 women completed the program and were assigned to 120 bases across the country.**

They did everything from participating in

anti-aircraft practice; towing targets for air-to-air gunnery practice with live ammunition; flying drones; conducting night exercises; testing repaired aircraft before they were used in cadet training; serving as instructors; and transporting cargo and male pilots to embarkation points.

They flew more than 60 million miles in every type of aircraft -- from the PT-17 and AT-6 trainers, the fastest attack planes like the A-24 and A-25 and heavy bombers such as the B-17 and B-29.

- Multiple sources

### American Red Cross--128 years of Service to the Military

Clara Barton, born in 1821, had been a school-teacher, a clerk in the U.S. Patent Office, and had earned the nickname "Angel of the Battlefield" during the Civil War before she founded the American Red Cross in 1881.

On June 6, 1900, the American Red Cross was given a congressional charter that mandated the organization to fulfill the provisions of the Geneva Convention by rendering aid to those wounded during war, providing communication between family members and members of the U.S. military and administering relief to those affected by disasters during peacetime.



World War I exponentially expanded the American Red Cross, which sent thousands of nurses overseas, helped organize the home front, established veterans hospitals, delivered care packages,

organized ambulances, and even trained dogs to search for wounded.

In World War II, the American Red Cross played a similar role but also sent millions of packages of food to POWs, began a blood collection service to aid the wounded and established clubs such as the famous Rainbow Corner to offer entertainment and food to servicemen.

After World War II, the American Red Cross has continued to be an important organization, offering aid to millions affected by wars and disasters.

- American Red Cross

### [Lest We Forget](#)

## July 18, 1863 – Death at Fort Wagner

Although African Americans served in both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, northern racist sentiments kept them from taking up arms for the United States early in the Civil War. However, a clause in Abraham Lincoln's 1863 Emancipation Proclamation made possible the organization of African American volunteer regiments.

The first documented African American regiment formed in the north was the Massachusetts 54<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Infantry, instituted under Governor John Andrews. African American men came to enlist from every region of the north, and from as far away as the Caribbean. Robert Gould Shaw was the man Andrews chose to lead this regiment.

Robert G. Shaw was the only son of a wealthy and well-connected New York and Boston family. They were also radical abolitionists and Unitarians. Robert did not blindly follow his parents ideological and religious beliefs, but all recognized the importance

and responsibility involved in leading the Massachusetts 54<sup>th</sup> Regiment.



◀ **Robert Gould Shaw was the colonel in command of the all-black 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. He is the principal subject in the 1989 film "Glory."**

The regiment was mustered into service on May 13, 1863, with Shaw as its colonel, and was sent to the South Carolina coast to take part in operations against the cradle of secession,

Charleston. On July 18, 1863, along with two brigades of white troops, the 54<sup>th</sup> assaulted Confederate Fort Wagner. As the unit hesitated in the face of fierce Confederate fire, Shaw mounted a parapet and urged his men forward, but was shot through the heart and died almost instantly. His body fell into the fort.

Shaw was buried in a mass grave with many of his men, which the Confederates considered an insult. However, Shaw's father publicly proclaimed that he was proud his son was interred in such a manner, befitting both his role as a soldier and a crusader for social justice.



◀ **The most acclaimed sculpture on Boston Common is Augustus Saint-Gaudens's Robert Gould Shaw Memorial, which depicts Colonel Shaw on horseback leading the**

**Massachusetts 54<sup>th</sup> Regiment, the first all-volunteer black regiment in the Union army organized in a northern state.**

The Massachusetts 54<sup>th</sup> Regiment became famous and solidified its place in history following the attack on Fort Wagner. At least 74 enlisted men and 3 officers, including Shaw, were killed in that battle and scores more were wounded. Sergeant William H. Carney, who was severely injured in the fighting, saved the regiment's flag from being captured. He became the first African American to be awarded the Medal of Honor. In the last two years of the war, an estimated 180,000 African Americans served in the Union forces.

- National Park Service, Wikipedia and civilwarhome.com

Visit the Veterans Group Website at [www.lhvets.org](http://www.lhvets.org)