



Welcome to the Mike Healy Umpqua Valley VVA Chapter 805 Newsletter

Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another



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Email: vva805@mdpartech.com website: <http://vva-or.org/805.htm>



March 2011

Happy St Patrick's Day

Vol 4 Issue 3



Next Chapter Meeting 7:00 PM at the VARHS Auditorium Monday March 7th 2011

NEWS from the Flight Deck

By Rob & Caryn O'Brien

Do you want a "veteran" designation on your Drivers License? DMV will add the designation of veteran to your drivers license or ID card if you meet the qualifications. There is no additional fee for the veteran designation at time of renewal. You must show your DD-214 or DD-215 when requesting the "Veteran Status".

It was reported in the paper that Oregon Attorney General John Kroger has filed a lawsuit against Gregory Warnock, who allegedly kept \$690,000.00 that was raised to help Oregon veterans. The charities are Oregon War Veterans Association and the Military Family Support Foundation. The complaint filed alleges that Military Family Support Foundation was little more than a shell corporation that Gregory Warnock used so he could keep the donations for himself. Mr. Warnock then used the Oregon War Veterans Association to get money telling donors that the donations could be claimed as a "charitable tax deductions" for political purposes, which is contrary to state and federal laws.

Stealing is bad enough, but when you use veterans, children or animals to do so is just unforgivable.

Thank you Rick Sciapiti for filing a complaint regarding the violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 against the VA National Cemetery Parking Lot. This is long overdue, and should have been addressed a long time ago. Roseburg City Manager Eric Swanson acknowledges that the parking lot area is owned by the city and says something does need to happen and has been identified as a future project in the most recent update of the City Parks Master Plan.



The United States Attorney's Office in Portland says they are going to open an investigation and plan on doing a full compliance review, its unsafe to walk on even in the best of conditions. (see picture below)

The membership meeting was held February 7th at the VA Auditorium. The minutes of Decembers meeting were deferred until the March 2011 meeting. Our Secretary, Doug George, lost his son recently. All our thoughts and prayers are with you, Doug, during this rough time.

Continued on page 6



Picture sent to the US Department of Justice shows the Mud puddles and uneven ground which makes it difficult for those with disabilities to negotiate the Roseburg VA National Cemetery parking lot, and the difficulty for them to participate in memorial events.

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President



Tom Johnson

Secretary



Doug George

Sgt At Arms



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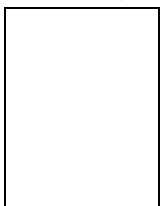
Rob O'Brien

Board Members



Jack Miles

AVVA Rep



Rick Sciapiti

Assist. Chaplain



Scott Munion

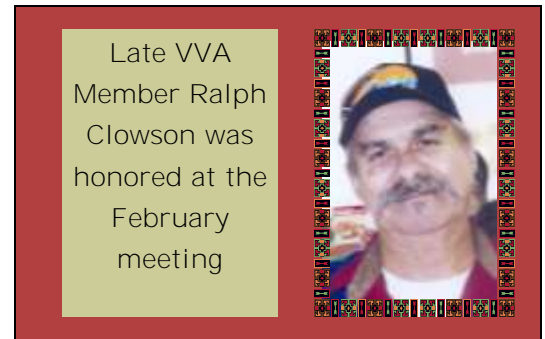
Tribute to a Veteran

Ralph Eugene Clowson *by Rob O'Brien*

At the February 7th VVA membership meeting Pat Coffey wanted us to honor her late husband, Ralph Clowson, in a traditional Native American Ceremony. Pat and Ralph's extended family were there to honor Ralph. Ralph Eugene Clowson was born on April 6, 1939. He crossed over on February 6, 2010. He served in the Navy aboard the USS Saratoga from 1960 to 1966. He had lived and worked in this area since then.

The ceremony was conducted in Native American tradition with the invocation sung. The ceremony took place 1 year and 1 day after his crossing. Members of their family and friends spoke fondly of him. He was also remembered by VVA members. We were honored to be included as part of their family. Part of this tradition is the giving away of Ralph's earthly possessions. Steve Roberts was a close friend and received Ralph's walking stick, very much a part of Ralph's life. I

was honored to be given sage and cedar smudging sticks and very honored to be given a Ralph, which will be kept in a place of honor. Ralph's other possessions were laid out on a blanket and we were invited to take what we wanted. The things to remember about this is 1) It is an insult to refuse a gift and 2) nothing of Ralph's must be left untaken. We were all embraced by Ralph and Pat's family and friends. This is something that will not be forgotten. It was an honor to be there. All our love, thoughts and prayers are with Pat and their family.



Chapter Office Hours

Monday-Wed-Thurs
10-Noon

Tues & Friday
1-3 PM

Chaplain on Duty

Wednesdays

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 805 is a tax exempt organization under the provisions of the IRS Code Section 501 (c) (19) Exemption # 3202 . The Newsletter is published monthly.

Chapter Committee Members

- ✓ Fundraiser : Chair Jack Miles, Tom Johnson
- ✓ Communication: Chair Steve Roberts
- ✓ Membership: Chair Gary Baxman, Stephen Dickinson, Valerie Williams
- ✓ Office Manager: Gary Baxman
- ✓ Government Affairs: Rick Sciapiti
- ✓ Public Relations: John Bewley
- ✓ Newsletter: Editors Rob & Caryn O'Brien, Publisher Rick Sciapiti
- ✓ Advertising: Terry Mooney, Rick Sciapiti
- ✓ Veterans Day Float:: Chair Tom Johnson, Don Hegele
- ✓ Avenue of Flags: Chair Terry Pilson
- ✓ Southern Oregon Stand Down : Rick Freund
- ✓ Women Veterans: Chair Jane Johnson

VETERANS' MUSTER
WEDNESDAY MARCH 2nd 2011
1:30 PM

Oregon State Capitol
Front Steps
Keynote Speaker
ODVA Director Jim Willis



State & Legislative Leaders will discuss
Veteran Goals for the 2011 session

VVA 805 President's

Page 3

Prez Notes

Valentine's Day has come and gone. March is here and spring is just around the corner. Be sure to mark your calendar for our next meeting on March 7th. We will have tickets on sale for the March 30th sit down dinner in remembrance of the end of the Vietnam War. I hope to see many of you there.

On March 2nd there is a **Veterans' Muster taking place in Salem, Oregon** in front of the State Capital at 130 PM. The organization sponsoring this **event is the United Veterans' Group of Oregon (UVGO)**. The purpose of the Muster is to educate the new Legislators on the needs of our Veterans. The UVGO is an organization like the Douglas County Veterans Forum (DCVF) made up of the Oregon State Leaders of the various Veterans organizations in the state. There are members of the DCVF traveling to Salem on this day to network and hold our save our Roseburg VA Hospital signs.

Jane and I plan on making the trip to join in with the others from our area. We have a couple of empty seats and invite anyone wanting to make the day trip to join us. Please call us or drop and email. (541-643-1954 or tomnjane@wildblue.net) This is the chance of a lifetime

to gain more publicity for our cause to save our Hospital.

In case you have not heard, Jim Little one of our members lost his father in **San Diego. Jim's father was 92.** Jim is also the President of the DCVF. He is currently on emergency leave to bury his father and settle the estate. I know our prayers go out to Jim and his family in his time of grief.

An item that was discussed at the last Board of Directors meeting was amending the by-laws of our Chapter changing the term for officers from 2 years to 1 year. I know many of us are getting older and it is a big commitment to serve our chapter for two years. I am starting to feel the pressure myself. So on March 7th please come prepared to discuss the term limits.

We also decided at the board meeting to purchase items for our raffles, since donations for the raffles are drying up. I am sure they will be on display at the next meeting. Just to give you some background, we have been netting about \$300 per quarter on our raffles. Since we have approved funding in our budget for fundraising, we gave approval to Jack Miles to purchase items

Continued on page 5

First Fundraiser
of 2011
is scheduled for
Saturday April
2nd at Sherm's
Thunderbird
Market 8-4

sign-up at the March
Chapter meeting , we
need eight volunteers for
2 hour commitments

This is a fantastic opportunity to spread the mission of VVA and help show support for our chapter in helping to raise operating funds

Support Our Troops

Retirement Sale

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Visit the Websites

Prez notes

Continued from page three

totaling \$100 for each raffle. Jack and I could sure use some help during the meetings with the raffles.

Our battle with the VA to keep a level 2 full service hospital here in Roseburg continues. I feel good that we are finally making headway. But, now is not the time to slack off. We must keep up the pressure and keep our Congressional Delegation informed. Our Congressional Delegation is the biggest weapon we have in our arsenal. It has been 11 months since we launched our campaign. Look at how much has been accomplished. Do not let up, and keep up the fight.

One big event this year is the National VVA Convention August 15-21 at the Silver Legacy in Reno Nevada. I would like to see our Chapter well represented at this event if possible. Two years ago as a chapter we were allocated

funds to send our representatives to this event. The money went unspent. I want to figure out how to use that this year to supplement more than just one or two going. So, mark your calendar again.

Let's make an effort to make a show. Another event we are all entitled to attend is the State Council meeting in April-May. It is taking place in Newport during the Loyalty Days the weekend of April 30th and May 1st, 2011. The Loyalty Days Parade is on May 1st and we can use our float from the Veterans Day Parade. I would like to see a large turn out from our chapter at the council meeting and **at the parade. Yes, you've got it, mark your calendar.**

Well that ends what is on my mind for this month. Make sure you mark you calendar, and hope to see many of you at the next meeting on the 7th of March.

Tom



Traveling Wall
Planning meeting
Thursday March 24th
7:00 PM Sutherlin
Community Building



Buy Your Tickets Today

March 30, 2011

Chapter Dinner

Elmer's Restaurant Banquet Room

Tickets \$20.00 each

Available at the meeting, or call the office

Vietnam Veterans Day

Guess the
Mystery chapter member



Flight Deck

Continued from page One

New guests were there, some of whom are Vietnam veterans who we hope will join VVA. Our Regional Director Francis Rowan was also there.

The Eagle Landing homeless housing project on the VA grounds is still going ahead, but there are problems with investors who are unsure of the future status of our VA facility. There are also some wetlands that need to be untouched, so there will be less spaces available for homeless vets and others.

There is help for veterans who live in the Grants Pass area with transportation to our VA facility. The VA clinic there will only help vets who live in Josephine County. The county line runs through the Grants Pass area, but vets who live just on the other side of the county line can't use the VA clinic there, even if it is the closest one to them.

We have adopted two veteran families this year, one family has six children. We have helped them with money and Valerie Williams helped shop for them. After the December Board meeting we wrapped presents for them. Our adopted family from last year, the Pulliams, also helped this years families. They gave \$100.00 to help them. Their letter of appreciation for last years help is in February's newsletter.

Tickets are now on sale for the March 30th dinner at Elmer's Restaurant Commemorating the end of the ground war in Vietnam. They are \$20 each. We are still looking for door prizes for this event.

Note: Bart's Gift Box is closing

as soon as Bill Bart has sold what he currently has in the store. I, Rob, had said a few months ago that he was selling his store as is, not closing it all together, but it is official now that the store is closing. Bill will still help us from time to time donating items he has or can get for our fundraisers.

The fight to get our facility restored to a full service hospital is far from over, even though the final Booz Allen Hamilton commissioned by the VA is due out in February 2011. Our congressman Peter DeFazio and our senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley are fully with us and are talking directly with General Eric Shinseki, head of Veterans Affairs in Washington DC and also the heads of the House and Senate veterans committees. Senator Wyden said in a private meeting with the Douglas County Veterans Forum (DCVF) hours before the public Town Hall meeting January 19th "I've got 6 more years and I won't shut up until this facility is reopened as a Level II facility". The Roseburg News-Review is also with us. Letters to the Editor about the VA hospital appear every week or more and there is no personal or political bias in excepting the letters. VVA donated \$100.00, over and above our dues to the DCVF to help cover their costs in this fight.

At the February membership meeting Pat Coffey wanted to honor her late husband, Ralph Clowson, and we set aside time. A separate article is in this newsletter.

Towards the end of the meeting Francis Rowan spoke about our fight to get our VA facility restored to full services and that he is with us. VVA National Officers will go to Washington DC to meet with newly elected congresspersons and senators, but we all need to email him so he can speak



for thousands of us when he and other VVA National Officers meet with our elected representatives. Francis said he needs these emails by April 2011 so he can speak with a very strong voice. As an example, a Capitol Hill Legislator proposed saving 4.5 Billion dollars by cutting Veterans benefits. Needless to say that quickly drew the attention of Veterans' and others. As a result of our efforts the proposal was dropped.

There will be a VVA Regional Conference June 10 - 12 of this year in Reno, NV, at the Silver Legacy Hotel. Rooms are \$99 and registration is \$25 including a free meal. Delegates must show their DD -214, their chapter financials and the other info need to be in order. They also must have form 990 and other state tax info.

Steve Roberts won the 50/50 drawing getting \$47.00.



Rob & Caryn O'Brien'



Defense Commissary Services

Friday & Saturday March
18th & 19th
DC Fairgrounds
Friday 0900-1700
Saturday 0900-1600

DOD Photo ID Required



"Women of Valor"

DOUGLAS COUNTY MUSEUM

Exhibit opens March 1st 2011 with a reception from 4-6 p. m.