



Welcome to the Mike Healy Umpqua Valley VVA Chapter 805 Newsletter

Never Again Will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another



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April 2011

Vol 4 Issue 4

Next Chapter Meeting 7:00 PM at the VARHS Auditorium Monday April 4th 2011

NEWS from the Flight Deck *The Last of a Kind*



By Rob & Caryn O'Brien

On March 11th the Patriot Guard was joined by a small group of VVA members who stood a flag line for and honored Miles Robert Vaughan. Miles Vaughan was a U.S. Navy Corpsman, he spent 4 years with the Marines 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion out of Twenty Nine Palms, CA. "Doc" as he was known received a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for Valor and a Navy Commendation, during his service in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Miles Vaughan was only 30 years old at the time of his passing.

John Bewley has resigned as Chapter Vice President and Rick Freund has been appointed interim Vice President by the Board of Directors. Steve Roberts has resigned as Head of Communications due to health concerns. We need a new Communications Committee Head. In the mean time, those of you who have Phone Tree lists should continue to use them to notify us about meetings and other veteran related events.

We have 3 new members. Norm Nelson, a Navy vet, was introduced at the meeting. The Board of Directors has also signed off on 2 more

applications for membership. Our membership is at 93 with 64 of them Life Members.

There are some important events coming up:

The VVA State Council is meeting in Newport, OR, April 30th thru May 1st. If a lot of us go, we might bring our VVA Veterans Day float for the parade as well.

VVA Regions 8&9, Northwestern U.S., Conference in Reno, NV June 10th thru 12th at the Silver Legacy Resort.

The Vietnam Memorial Traveling Wall will be in Sutherlin July 27th thru 31st. There will be WWII and Korean War Memorials as well.

The National VVA Conference is August 17th thru 20th in Reno, NV at the Silver Legacy Resort. Chapter funding may be available for the National Conference, but the Region 8 & 9 Conference and the State Council meeting are on your own dime.

A veterans rally was held at the state capitol in Salem. There were at least 7 "Save Our Roseburg VA Hospital" picket signs present. At least 12 state

Continued on page 2

By Caryn O'Brien

America's last WWI Veteran, Frank Buckles, passed away in February in his home in Charles Town, W. Va. at the age of 110 years old. Frank lay in repose at the Arlington National Cemetery's Memorial Amphitheater until his burial on March 15th. His funeral was attended by President Obama and Vice President Biden.

Frank Buckles was born in Missouri and raised in Oklahoma. At 16 years old and determined to enlist, he finally convinced an Army Captain that he was 18. He had been repeatedly rejected by a string of military recruiters. He became a corporal by the time he left the Army.

While his family was satisfied with honors at Arlington, they wanted him to lie in repose in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda. Congressional leaders failed to approve that plan, as politicians clashed over how to honor him.



WWI Veteran Frank Buckles

CHAPTER OFFICERS

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Doug George

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Don Hegele

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Stephen Dickinson

Women's Chaplain Chaplain Asst



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Scott Munion

Board



Jack Miles

AVVA Rep



Vacant



Chair Rob O'Brien

Board member



Rick Sciapiti

Flight Deck cont from pg 1

lawmakers and other officials spoke or met with veterans present.

On February 28th, the Roseburg City Council signed a resolution supporting the restoration of our VA Hospital to a full Level II Hospital. Copies of this resolution are available on request.

The Oregon State Senate has signed legislation that makes March 30th "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day", a State holiday.

One important note: There is a desire for the "terms of chapter offices" to be changed from 2 years to 1 year. A lot of us are having personal health and other issues taking priority. It might be a good idea. Some of us might be able to serve just one term, and some might want to serve longer.

Bart's Gift Box is closed, so we will

have to go elsewhere for our pins, patches and other items for our fundraisers.

VVA member Pat Coffey thanked us for the respect shown for her family's traditions during the February 7th ceremony honoring her late husband, Ralph Clowson. It would be great if everyone could show respect for different traditions and beliefs.

Concerning the VA cemetery parking lot. At a City Council meeting, February 28th, I asked about the status on the parking lot repairs. The Mayor and the Roseburg Chief of Police cited funding issues, having raised only \$10,000. When \$180,000. Is needed to repair it. Numerous lawsuits have been filed with the Department of Justice under the Americans with Disabilities Act. All of the lawsuits have been combined into one class action suit. The city has also applied for state and federal grants to help finance the repairs. The grants, if given, might only amount to about 60% of the funds needed for the project. *Continued on page 3*

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 organiza-
tion under the provi-
sions 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:
- ✓ Membership: Chair Gary Baxman, Stephen Dickinson, Valerie Williams
- ✓ Office Manager: Gary Baxman
- ✓ Government Affairs: Rick Sciapiti
- ✓ Public Relations:
- ✓ 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

Prez Notes

Boy, tax time is upon us. That is hard to believe. The current officers of our chapter are over half way through their terms of enlistment and our membership is hovering right at that century mark. Thank you to everyone who has helped to increase our membership.

A proposed amendment to the chapter's bi-laws was discussed at our last membership meeting. That meeting was not well attended, so I want to bring everyone up to date. The term for our officers is currently 2 years. The

Board of Directors has been discussing changing that to 1 year. The reason for a change is: 1. we are all getting older, 2. the work load for our officers is rather large, and we are seeing that many of us are burnt out after a year. If you have any input about this issue please feel free to call or email me about it. 541-643-1954 or tomnjane@wildblue.net.

We have a dinner in honor of the end of the Vietnam War coming up on the 30th of March. As of today there are 29 of us that have signed up to eat and enjoy each

others company. I still have tickets available until Monday March 27th. We have some good door prizes that will be given away, so come join us. I spoke to Elmer's this morning and if a few of you have a change of heart, we can still add you on right up until an hour before dinner.

Our first fund raising effort is coming up at Sherm's on Saturday, April 2nd. We have a full list of those wanting to help, but please stop by and visit us. We have another fundraiser the following week at the Roseburg

Cont on page 5

DECK

Continued from page 2

Agent Orange update: Three new diseases have been added to the long list of diseases recognized as service connected for veterans exposed to Agent Orange during their service. They are Parkinson's disease, Ischemic Heart Disease and B-cell Leukemia. It took us over 30 years to get the government to acknowledge the damage that Agent Orange could do, but the fight continues. I look forward to the day when all who served in country, but also those aboard ships in the Tonkin Gulf, at bases in Thailand and state side as well as anywhere else Agent Orange was kept or passed through.

The final Booz Allen Hamilton report on the future of our hospital has been sent to Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki, but not released to the lawmakers and veterans as promised. We as veterans have a right to have it now, as it concerns our health care futures. A request under The Freedom of Information Act has been sent to VISN 20 (the ones who commissioned the BAH Study in the first place) by Dona Brewer. Brewer was told that we will not get to see it until after Secretary Shinseki makes his decision. One thing that we could do is to let Secretary Shinseki know that the future of any veterans and homeless facilities on this campus is also up in the air as well as that of the hospital itself.


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

[Agent Orange Information](#)

VVA Information website for those using the online edition

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Vicki Hegele Manager



Prez notes

Roseburg Bi-mart on Tuesday, April 5th. We are short handed for this event and I know Patti Coffee is working for 4 hours straight. Please stop by and give Patti a break. One last thing about the fundraising, Jack and Gary were able to come up with a lot of new pins and patches as a result of Bill Bart closing his store. Come and check them out. I would like to thank Bill for supporting us and the Veterans of Douglas County and wish Bill well with his retirement.

Moving on, the campaign regarding the Roseburg VA Hospital continues. During the past month the BAH review has been sent to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. There has been no news regarding the outcome. Senator Merkley met with the Douglas County Veterans Forum after a town hall meeting at Umpqua Community College March 19th and stated that our Congressional Delegation has not heard anything either. The Senator is still very supportive of our cause. Our delegation is working hard for us and appear to be doing a lot of brainstorming with in their staffs to further our cause.

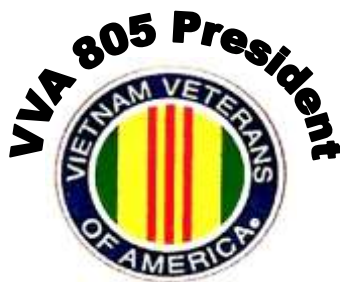
Some of our membership traveled to Salem, braving the weather to picket on the steps of the State Capital during a Veterans Muster that took place there. Many of our State Legislators told us about their support for our cause regarding the Roseburg VA

Hospital. Jim Willis the Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs really applauded our efforts in Southern Oregon.

The VVA had a table at the Douglas County Job fair and at the VA's Social fair during March. We were able to network with many Veterans at these events. Several Veterans took applications and may be joining our ranks and one Veteran was able to secure a bus pass from Tom Rapant's fund at the Employment Office to help him get to his treatments at the VA. Thanks Tom for all you do.

I am looking for someone to help me with ideas of how we can be helping the Veterans in our community. With all that has been happening in the past 15 months I am afraid we have lost site of a part of our creed. As I sit here trying to get this article done for the news letter I still have several more meetings to go for our chapter. I need some help.

Tom



Sutherlin
Traveling Wall
Planning meeting
Thursday April 28
7:00 PM Sutherlin
Community Building

Flamingo
Fundraiser

sutherlintributewall.site

Guess the
Mystery chapter member

Your
Military
Picture
Here

Last month
Don Hegele

Behind the Scenes

Behind the Scenes

During a recent event at the Roseburg VA, I was manning our table. A Veteran stopped to shake my hand and thank me for his service. I thanked him back and a conversation ensued. Scott had finished overcoming his addictions recently after spending 18 months down at White City. He is currently enrolled in a program at the Roseburg VA. As we talked further I found out his brother and father were also Veterans. He had lost his father mother and brother all within a couple of years and as the black sheep of his family, he headed down the toilet.

Scott is very proud of his father who had served 37 years in the

Oregon Army National Guard. As I asked him who his father was the hair began to stand up on the back of my neck. Boom, his father was someone that my father had served with, as well as someone Jane and I had served with. Instantly Scott's father was standing there in front of me. A very strong resemblance!

But, this story is not through. With in our membership is a man who owns a couple of homes in the Mill Pine District of Roseburg. He makes rooms available for Veterans who are down on their luck and trying to dig their way out. He has reached out to Scott and given him a place to hang his hat. Scott is forever

grateful to this man.

In our mist we have a very big man. He is our Chaplin Stephen Dickinson. I talked to Stephen at the end of the day and thanked him for what he is doing. He had already heard the news from Scott about our chance meeting. Stephen and I met at the office just yesterday and again we talked about what he is doing for fellow Veterans. Stephen got a big smile on his face, this is his passion.

So, next time you see our Chaplin, shake his hand and thank him for what he is doing. THANK YOU Stephen!!!

Tom Johnson

