CALVET
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

All veterans are reminded that the fastest way to learn about and secure the benefits they have earned is by visiting their local County Veterans Service Office. A listing of these offices is available at www.cacvso.org.

JUNE 2014

CALVET, STATE CONTROLLER TO REUNITE 95,000 VETERANS WITH UNCLAIMED PROPERTY

Following Governor Brown's directive to work more closely with state agencies and departments to better serve California Veterans, CalVet Secretary Peter J. Gravett recently joined with State Controller John Chiang to announce the findings of a new partnership.

Under a partnership agreement between the State Controller's Office and CalVet, the department found 95,305 veterans who may have unclaimed property at the Controller's Office waiting to be claimed. According to the data run CalVet completed, the veterans have more than $36.3 million available to claim with an average value of approximately $300.

"As Americans who enjoy the freedoms provided by their service, we support those who wear and have worn the uniform," said Chiang. "As thanks for their duty and sacrifice, we strive to continually look for opportunities to do more for our fighting men and women. This includes this latest partnership between CalVet and my office to return tens of millions of dollars to California's veterans."

"The CalVet mission is to serve our state's veterans and their families and help them connect with the benefits and services they have earned through their honorable service in the U.S. Military," said Secretary Gravett. "This latest effort is just one of our ways to make sure our veterans are served well."

When someone serves in the military, many times they move around a lot and family heirlooms are forgotten, utility deposits are ignored and

UNCLAIMED, page 3 >>

INSIDE

Medal of Honor Ceremony p. 4
Water Shortage p. 5
Cracking the Job Code p. 10
NEVER FORGET Ride 2014 p. 12

Secretary's Message

This month we mark the anniversary of two very big events in our country's history, the landing and invasion of occupied Europe at Normandy and the creation of the original G.I. Bill®.

It was 70 years ago on June 6th that more than 156,000 America and allied troops landed on the beaches at Normandy, France in one of the largest amphibious and air assaults in history. By the end of the day, more than 4,000 allied troops were killed and thousands of others were wounded or missing. This invasion was a huge risk and a bold move in the Allies' efforts to free Europe from the grip of Nazi occupation but ultimately it paid off and the Nazis were defeated.

While we celebrate this important milestone, we also should remember that this month marks the 70th anniversary of another bold decision and vitally important act—the signing of the original Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the GI Bill®, on June 22nd 1944, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The GI Bill®, has been called as one of the most significant pieces of legislation ever produced by the federal government. This legislation literally helped millions of World War II veterans transition from their military service into civilian life, and it paved the way for an unprecedented period of economic growth and development in this country that has been unmatched since.

The GI Bill® helped nearly 8 million World War II veterans pursue higher education and technical training that they then utilized to transform this Nation's infrastructure and economy.

Since the first time a veteran attended college or completed technical training under the GI Bill®, that single piece of legislation has literally helped millions of American veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and even peace-time service. While it has been modified a few times, the basic premise of the original bill, that an education is a valuable tool to help a veteran transition successfully to civilian life, has remained unchanged. And now, in its most recent form, the Post-9/11 GI Bill provided today's veterans with many of the same benefits their grandfathers enjoyed, including full tuition for any state college or university, a housing allowance and a stipend to pay for books and fees.

As we look back at the past 70 years of the GI Bill®, we, at CalVet, should take great pride in the impact the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 has had on this country for one very important reason. The "Father of the GI Bill®," Warren H. Atherton, was the general counsel for the department and its preceding boards and commissions. During World War II, while he worked at this department, he also served as the National Commander of the American Legion. It was his role with the American Legion and his past experience as a veteran of World War I that helped Atherton become the author and promoter of the GI Bill®, which was eventually signed by President Roosevelt.

So, while we should always remember the sacrifices of those men and women who went before us and those who died on the beaches of Normandy, we should also remember those who served at CalVet before us and the impact they have had on our lives.

Sincerely,

Peter J. Gravett

Peter J. Gravett, Major General (Ret)
Secretary, California Department of Veterans Affairs

<< UNCLAIMED

things get lost. This cooperative effort will help thousands of California veterans recover their forgotten, lost or misplaced valuables.

Gravett noted that to preserve the confidentiality of the veterans' records, CalVet will be sending letters over the next several months directly to the veterans notifying them of the unclaimed property program.

California's Unclaimed Property Law was passed in 1959 to protect consumers by preventing businesses from keeping unclaimed property, using it as business income, losing it through mergers or bankruptcies, or drawing it down by fees. After losing contact with an owner for at least three years, businesses are required to send unclaimed or abandoned property to the State for safekeeping until the owner or heirs can be found and the property claimed.

The most common types of unclaimed property include cash or assets abandoned in bank accounts, terminated insurance policies, forgotten utility deposits, and stocks and bonds. Other types of unclaimed property include precious valuables or collector's items found abandoned in safe deposit boxes.

As Controller, Chiang has returned nearly $3 billion in unclaimed cash and $235 million stock shares to its rightful owners, and he wants to make sure that our veterans are claiming every dollar owed to them of the $7.1 billion available.

One of Controller Chiang's proudest highlights was returning a lost Congressional Medal of Honor and Navy Cross to the family of Lieutenant Commander Jackson Charles Pharris, who received the awards for acts of bravery during the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

The new eClaim feature in the Unclaimed Property program allows unclaimed property owners to claim single-owner accounts worth up to $500 without the "paper and snail-mail" process. More than 18 million accounts are eligible to be claimed through eClaim, and property owners can expect to receive payments within 14 days. Since launching eClaim in late January, the Controller has returned more than $5 million with an average wait time of approximately 10 days.

VETERAN LICENSE PLATE

RESERVE YOURS TODAY!

All proceeds from the sale of Veteran plates will be used to expand veterans services in your community.

WWW.CALVET.CA.GOV

CALVET
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

CALVET HOSTS MEDAL OF HONOR CEREMONY FOR FIVE CALIFORNIA VETERANS

On March 18, 2014, President Barack Obama awarded long overdue Medals of Honor to five Californians who served our country valiantly during WWII, the Korean War and the War in Vietnam. Although these men received the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest military award back then, a review of Jewish American and Hispanic American Veterans through the Defense Authorization Act of 2002 found that these men were more than eligible to receive the Medal of Honor.

On May 27, 2014, CalVet hosted a ceremony on the west steps of the State Capitol to recognize and honor the brave actions by the five Californians who were recently awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously by President Barack Obama.

In attendance were family members representing the five Medal of Honor recipients: Specialist Fourth Class Leonard L. Alvarado – Vietnam War; Sergeant Jesus S. Duran – Vietnam War; Sergeant First Class Eduardo C. Gomez – Korean War; Private Joe Gandara – World War II, and Private First Class Salvador J. Lara – World War II. Also in attendance was CalVet Secretary Peter J. Gravett; Brigadier General Sylvia R. Crockett; Senator Richard Roth; Assembly member Rocky Chavez; the Reverend Jaime Soto, Bishop of Sacramento, veterans and the general public.

"These Medals of Honor have been a long time coming and I am most pleased that such a regrettable oversight is finally being addressed," said CalVet Secretary Peter J. Gravett. "These men fought for our country and their fellow soldiers with bravery, commitment and patriotism and now their descendants can receive comfort in knowing they descend from authentic American heroes."

Following the ceremony, CalVet hosted the family members at a special unveiling of plaques with the names of each Medal of Honor recipient on CalVet's Medal of Honor Wall in its headquarters facility.

INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON VETERANS CONTINUES COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

Nearly three years after its creation, the California Interagency Council on Veterans (ICV) continues to identify and prioritize the needs of California's veterans and coordinate the activities at all levels of government in addressing those needs. Among other things, the ICV is currently working to:

- raise awareness of presumptively connected service disabilities to clinicians, veterans and their families;
- connect civilian behavioral health providers with no-cost and low-cost continuing education programs related to military specific culture and treatments;
- identify the needs of county mental health offices with regard to military veteran cultural awareness training and culturally specific treatment modality education with an emphasis on suicide early intervention and prevention;
- raise awareness of judges, district attorneys and veterans regarding alternative sentencing options available in California;
- facilitate the creation of a guide which includes a catalog of campus-based veterans services and a list of best practices for colleges seeking to build veteran resource centers;
- craft a survey of educational institutions to build a list of transition-ready educational and certification programs;
- coordinate the development of a career ladder for veterans to nursing and other allied health careers;
- coordinate homeownership opportunities and identify funding for home modifications for veterans who are impacted by post traumatic stress, military sexual trauma and traumatic brain injury;
- identify strong and sustainable homelessness outreach, prevention and intervention models;
- identify or assist in the coordination of an effective Military Operating Specialty/Ratings (MOS/R Translator) and translate that to civil service classifications at state, county and city levels; and
- expand apprenticeship opportunities for veterans.

For more information about the ICV and its activities, go to www.icv.ca.gov.

WATER SHORTAGE AT IGO CEMETERY

On April 24, 2014, Northern California Veterans Cemetery Administrator Steve Jorgensen received a hand-delivered letter from Kurt Born, General Manager of the Clear Creek Community Service District. The letter outlined the District's latest and immediately effective water-use reductions.

The State already ordered a restriction of 20% of 2010 use which the cemetery has been following, constantly measuring water usage to ensure compliance. The new restriction limits the cemetery's water consumption to 50% of 2012 usage. This means that drastic steps need to be taken to keep some of the turf, plants and trees alive.

In an attempt to preserve turf in the burial areas, the cemetery has decided to stop watering the non-burial areas, Sections 1, 2, 8 and 9. This action will affect the appearance of the non-burial areas; however, it is necessary to maintain the appearance of areas in which veterans are already buried. In addition, the cemetery staff is developing a plan to rejuvenate turf affected by water use restrictions once the drought ends and restrictions are lifted.

One of the water-saving changes being considered is not making

SHORTAGE, page 6 >>

<< SHORTAGE

water available on weekends. That means those delivering flowers to grave sites would need to bring their own water. New signs posted at the cemetery will inform the public of the water use limitations and water availability changes.

Staff at the cemetery will do all they can to keep the grounds as beautiful as possible. But, they can only do so much. The days on which grounds can be watered will be determined by the District, and water use will be measured daily. With the initial State water reduction order, watering could be done 21 days a month. With the new restrictions, watering days will be reduced almost half.

All we can do is support cemetery staff in their efforts to conserve water and hope for rain over the summer!

UNCLAIMED VETERANS' REMAINS HONORED IN MADERA COUNTY

By Carmen George, The Fresno Bee, March 28, 2014

When Bob "Doc" Protzman discovered that the remains of U.S. veterans sometime sit indefinitely on shelves in morgues or mortuaries -- or that they are buried, without recognition for their service -- he knew he had to do something about it.

He wasn't about to let that happen in Madera County.

About a year ago, he approached county officials with his concern, asking for permission to help. Ultimately, he was named veterans remains officer for Madera County.

He's also the county coordinator for the Missing in America Project, which helps locate and identify unclaimed remains of veterans, and then honors them.

On Friday, a ceremony was held for one of those unsung military members: Carlton Neal Jr. of Madera, formerly of Chowchilla.

Pat Neal, center, receives the folded American flag during a ceremony Friday, March 28, 2014, at Madera's VFW Post 1981 honoring her cousin, Carlton Neal, Jr. who died in January of this year. ERIC PAUL ZAMORA — THE FRESNO BEE

Members of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1981 in Madera conducted a full military honors ceremony in front of their post. It included a 21-gun salute and bugle playing taps to honor Neal, who served in the U.S. Air Force. He achieved the rank of airman first class before he was honorably discharged, Protzman said.

Neal was a Cold War veteran who served in peacetime between 1958 and 1960. Outside of his military service, the Oklahoma native worked as a farm laborer for 20 years. He died Jan. 21 in Madera Community Hospital due to respiratory problems, Protzman said. He was 75.

Little more was known of Neal by those who honored him Friday. But many of those at his ceremony said they know this: U.S. veterans should not be buried without being paid proper respect.

After the ceremony, Neal's ashes were driven by Charles Hunnicutt,

HONORED, page 7 >>

<< HONORED

veteran service officer for Fresno and Madera counties, to the San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery in Santa Nella. A large cluster of motorcycles, the Patriot Guard Riders, followed as an honorary motorcade.

Another military ceremony was held at the national cemetery before Neal's remains were laid to rest.

"The goal is to give him the proper military burial and respect that he deserves," Hunnicutt said. "It doesn't take too much to be motivated to help veterans. When you hear other comrades asking you for your assistance, you don't even hesitate."

Protzman was contacted earlier this year by the county, because immediate family had not been found for Neal. His only known living relative is a second cousin, Patricia Neal from Chowchilla.

Patricia Neal told Protzman she was close with Carlton Neal, and that he helped care for her because she has a disability. But because she wasn't immediate family, his remains couldn't be released to her.

Protzman wanted to help her get the closure she deserved. At the Madera ceremony, she was presented a folded American flag in her cousin's honor.

Madera County Supervisor Rick Farinelli attended the ceremony to applaud collaboration between the VFW, the veterans affairs office and Missing in America.

"It's very impressive," Farinelli said of the ceremony, adding he's hopeful many more veterans will be found and honored in the same way.

Norman Allinder, vice commander for VFW Post 1981, took the day off as Madera County's director of planning and building so he could help with the ceremony and accompany Neal's remains to Santa Nella.

"Remember to look out for your friends and neighbors," Allinder said. "You never know what they've done or how they've sacrificed."

The reporter can be reached (559) 441-6386, cgeorge@fresnobee.com or @ CarmenGeorge on Twitter.

THE SOLDIERS PROJECT EXPANDS ELIGIBILITY

Returning home from combat presents difficult challenges for the individual as well as their support system. Service members, wives, husbands, children, parents and other loved ones are all affected by the separation that is part of serving in the military, but oming home brings additional challenges. Many will have suffered psychological injuries no less serious than visible scars of war.

The Soldiers Project, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, is committed to providing a safety net of psychological care for military service members and their loved ones. The organization also educates the general public on how the psychological consequences of war affect not only those who serve, but also their loved ones at home and in our communities. The organization provides free, confidential professional psychological counseling services to those who have served in our nation's military after September 11, 2001 and others.

Therapy offers loved ones a safe place in which to talk and share their

ELIGIBILITY, page 8 >>

CALVET WINS BIG AT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS CEREMONY

The California State Information Officers Council (SiOC) bestowed seven Excellence in State Government Communication awards on CalVet at a recent ceremony. The annual awards are given to public information officers, graphic designers, web designers, writers, editors and other California state government communicators and honored outstanding work done in the preceding year.

CalVet received awards for seven of its nine entries.

- **GOLD AWARD Event**
  Julie Cusator – Fresno Veterans Home Grand Opening
- **GOLD AWARD Writing, Opinion**
  Carolyn Ballou – Benefits Grow More Important as Veterans Age
- **GOLD AWARD Writing, Feature**
  Carolyn Ballou – A Father's Love
  (This piece also won a California Association of Public Information Officials AWARD OF MERIT)
- **SILVER AWARD Event**
  Gary Moore – Redding Veterans Home Grand Opening
- **SILVER AWARD Publications, Newsletter**
  Carolyn Ballou, Editor/Thomas Moralez, Graphic Designer – CalVet Newsletter
- **SILVER AWARD Publications, Special Publication**
  California Department of Veterans Affairs – California Veterans Resource Book, 5th Edition
- **HONORABLE MENTION Writing, Feature**
  Lynn Scott – Young Vet Finds Healing

Last year, the California Veterans Resource Book and a feature article written by Carolyn Ballou won SiOC GOLD awards, and the CalVet Enterprise Strategic Plan won a SILVER award.

<< ELIGIBILITY

hopes and fears, the excitement and disappointments and even disturbing changes. "We offer these free, confidential services in the hope of easing the way home for our veterans and their loved ones'," said Judith Broder, M.D., The Soldiers Project Founder and Executive Director.

With mental health practitioners who understand the far-reaching consequences of these war-related experiences, the organization can provide the support that is needed to smooth the transition to family and civilian life. Now, the Soldiers Project eligibility requirements have recently been broadened. Services are now available to:

- Active duty uniformed service members who have served Post 9/11
- Members of Reserve/Guard military units with service Post 9/11
- Veterans of OEF/OIF
- Family members of the above, including spouses, parents, grandparents, children, siblings, etc.
- Other loved ones (e.g., girlfriends, boyfriends, partners)

For more information, go to www.thesoldiersproject.org or call (877) 576-5343.

THE WORST HOMECOMING: DEPORTATION OF VETERANS BORN ABROAD

By Bradford Adams

Veterans are subject to the same burdens we all risk every day: unemployment, homelessness, lack of health care, poverty. When these arise in the veteran community we see the injustice most clearly. We must add to that list the injustice of veteran deportations.

The military admits non-citizens as enlisted service members. Citizenship applications of active service members and some veterans may be expedited. But, amazingly, fighting for the country does not guarantee your right to reside here. Even if citizenship is granted during service, after discharge the veteran's citizenship may be revoked if the discharge involved even minor misconduct. This affects not only service members but also their families. The government only recently decided that family members of active service members should not be deported while that service member is on active duty. Even then, the government only grants a "parole."

This arises from strict rules for "mandatory removal." Congress has ordered deportation for anyone that has participated in certain crimes, and forbids immigration courts from considering any factors that might influence how we think about that situation, including prior military service. This is true both for convictions at trial and for plea bargains that are never seen before a jury of peers. Deportation is not the punishment, it is what veterans call a "double punishment": they are kept in the U.S. to serve out whatever prison time is appropriate for the crime, and then they are told never to return again. The injustice here is undeniable.

There has been recent attention around the case of Howard Baily, a Jamaican-born longtime US resident and green card holder, a family man, a business owner and a veteran. He is now prohibited from entering the country he served. But his case is not that unusual. Banished Veterans, a support group, estimated that 4,250 veterans have been deported since 1996.

Former Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Richard Myers has said that veteran deportation "is not fair, and it's not appropriate for who we are as a people." He is right. This is not just about what veterans deserve. It is also about whether we aspire to fairness in our communities. This sort of injustice is beneath us.

Bradford Adams is Skadden Fellowship Attorney at Swords to Plowshares

WINGS OF FREEDOM TOUR

For over 20 years, The Collings Foundation has recovered and restored many of the true landmark aircraft that built world aviation history. Aircraft from the very roots of aviation up until the supersonic jets of modern day are represented in their collection which spans nearly 80 years of powered flight. The Collings Foundation visits more than 150 locations nationwide per year to help promote aviation's living history and the remembrance of our veterans.

Your chance to see or, in some cases, fly aircraft spanning from the early days of aviation up to the thunderous roar of modern jet fighters, like the F-4 Phantom, is coming to a number of California cities, including Camarillo, Santa Ana, Santa Barbara, Monterey, Mountain View, Livermore, Santa Rosa, Sacramento, and Concord. For more information, including tour dates, venues, and how you can fly some of the aircraft, go to http://www.collingsfoundation.org/menu.htm.

CRACKING THE FEDERAL JOB CODE

Looking for federal employment can be confusing, but given that the U.S. government typically advertises between 15,000 and 20,000 jobs a day, it's worth taking the time to learn the different between a GS-0493 and a WG-2810. There are 442 white-collar and 410 blue-collar occupations listed in the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM's) Occupations of Federal White-Collar and Blue-Collar Workers report. Each job title is identified by a unique job series number, and each job series is listed in a specific occupational group.

What the Numbers Mean – White-collar jobs are typically found in the administrative, management, science and professional fields, while blue-collar jobs are reserved for general labor and trades occupations. To further define jobs, Uncle Sam lists each job in an occupational group or family. There are 22 white-collar groups and 36 blue collar families. A complete list of occupational groups and families can be found at www.federaljobs.net. For example, GS-300 is the occupational group for general administrative, clerical and office services. The job series, GS-0303, is for the job title clerk and assistants.

General Service vs. Wage Grade – Each job series is associated with an Occupational Group for white-collar jobs or Occupational Family for blue-collar jobs. Most white-collar jobs are in the General Schedule (GS) pay system and blue-collar jobs are in the Wage Grade (WG) pay system. Each job title has an associated job series number. All job announcements list the job title and series number and add a number that identifies the pay band for that position. To further understand, review the following job announcement summary that was taken from OPM's USAJOBS website www.usajobs.gov. You can also refer to www.usajobs.gov/veterans.

Department Of Veterans Affairs - Health Revenue Center
Delegated Examining Unit
Vacancy Announcement
Vacancy Identification Number: VZ185480 TDC
Opening Date: Jan 15, 2004
Closing Date: Jan 22, 2004
Position: Secretary (Oa), Gs – 0318-05/05
Salary: $25,697.00 - $33,402.00
This is a Career/Career Conditional Appointment
Location(S): Gainesville, Fl – 1 Facancy
Employing Agency: Va Medical Center Gainesville

This secretarial position, job series GS-0318, is advertised at the GS-5 pay range of $25,697 to $33,402 per year. There are 15 pay grades in the GS pay system. This position doesn't have career progression above the GS-5 pay grade, because the position is listed as a GS-0318-05/05. But if this position was listed GS-0318-05/07, that would mean there could be career progression from an entry-level GS-05 through the GS-07 pay grade. See the chart at www.federaljobs.net/salarybase.htm to view current pay tables. USAJOBS links job summaries to job announcements that describe the specific position in detail and provide application instructions and links to required forms. You can now apply online for some positions.

JOBS, page 11 >>

SALLIE MAE ORDERED TO PAY RESTITUTION TO SERVICEMEMBERS

Federal regulators have ordered SLM Corporation (commonly known as Sallie Mae, originally the Student Loan Marketing Association) to pay $96.6 million in restitution and penalties to address allegations that the organization violated several consumer protection laws related to federal and private student loans, including the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) which protects active-duty military personnel against harmful overcharging.

Improper practices related to student loan servicing for members of the military has been a concern for the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). In October 2012, CFPB published a report describing a number of complaints from servicemembers with student debt, including:

- Improper requirements for servicemembers to be "deployed" or serving in a "combat zone" in order to receive student loan benefits
- Burying servicemembers in bureaucracy and paperwork, requiring multiple submissions of military orders
- Denying SCRA rights for servicemembers who do not have military orders with end dates – even though officer orders frequently have no end dates

Read the 2012 report at www.consumerfinance.gov/reports/the-next-front-student-loan-servicing-and-the-cost-to-our-men-and-women-in-uniform.

If you know any consumers who may have been victims of Sallie Mae's misconduct, you may wish to share these additional resources:

1. Submit a complaint against Sallie Mae. While today's orders will provide restitution directly to most victims, consumers may still wish to file a complaint if they are concerned their account was illegally handled. Visit www.consumerfinance.gov/complaint or call (855) 411-CFPB (2372).
2. Share the action guide for servicemembers with student loans. We released a new action guide for servicemembers with student loans. The guide contains clear information on how active-duty military personnel can take advantage of student loan benefits and avoid misleading – and potentially illegal – conduct by student loan servicers.

For more information, go to consumerfinance.gov.

<< JOBS

Excepted Service – When searching federal job databases, you may find some job announcements with alpha characters other than GS or WG. These announcements are advertised by agencies that are in what is called the "Excepted Service" and may have a different pay system. The pay for this type of position will be listed on the job announcement. About 50 percent of all federal positions are in the Competitive Service.

Competitive Service jobs, for the most part, are advertised in the GS pay system. Excepted positions may have different alpha characters such as FB-03`8 or FG-0318, and these agencies use different characters to differentiate the pay systems from the General Schedule system. If you take the time to decipher the federal classification system, you're bound to discover lots of interesting job vacancies. Read the announcements thoroughly to ensure you submit all required forms and requested data by the closing date. Check out all occupations in the same occupational group and explore related opportunities in other groups as well.

Source: Military.com article, March 2014

NEVER FORGET RIDE, 2014

By Doug Lyvere, SgtMaj, Marine (Ret)

In May of '66, I returned from my first of two and a half tours in Vietnam. We were early returnees, so the "celebrations" had only just begun. We were subjected, at best, to indifference-- at worst, to disrespect and hostility. We were stunned at this treatment, having served at the call of our Country.

In the years since the Vietnam War, I have watched as some realized that the way they treated our military was horrible. I watched as many of my brothers and sisters and their families tried to recover from not only the trauma of war, but the bigger trauma of being accused of being murders and baby killers, of being ignored and shunned. Many suffer from their individual experiences in Vietnam. Many have never overcome what was done to them when they came home, and sadly, many more have already gone to their final resting place without the respect and recognition they deserved. Very few have been told "thank you" for their sacrifices. I want to change that as much as I can.

When I came home I did my best to forget what I could as many of my brothers and sisters have done, or have tried to do. Although I've managed to put memories from Vietnam away, I've never been able to forget the protests and treatment of my fellow vets. I will NEVER FORGET the ones that did not return – the names on The Wall – KIA and our POW/MIA. I encourage all to go to http://thewall-usa.com/names.asp -look at the "statistics". And I will NEVER FORGET that we have thousands more that have "not come home" – yet. We must bring home our POW/MIA, and we must make amends to our brothers and sisters who have come back from Viet Nam, but who have never really Come Home.

In June 2014, I will begin the NEVER FORGET Ride to get people to remember the Vietnam Veteran, their families, and our POW/MIA's. I want to remind all that our military in the past, present, and future deserve respect and a thank you – every day. I will travel by motorcycle to at least one Vietnam Memorial in each state, including Alaska and possibly Canada. I'm hoping to meet Vietnam Veterans and their families, as well as the families of our POW/MIA's. I will be carrying a POW/MIA Flag and hope to get signatures – at least one for each branch, for each year, plus POW/MIA Families, and Gold Stars (Vietnam).

My trip will begin at The Wall in Washington, D.C. on Memorial Day weekend and end at the National POW/MIA Memorial in the Riverside National Cemetery on Sep 19 – National POW/MIA Day. If you're a Vietnam Vet or the family of a deceased Vietnam Veteran, come out and say hello so I can say, from one Vietnam Vet, "Welcome Home and Thank You for your sacrifices, and sorry it's taken so long". If you're the family of a POW/MIA, come out so I can say "sorry it's taking so long", and, we will NEVER FORGET. If you're one of my brothers and sisters that still hasn't quite made it home, come say hello, please.

The route is posted but check frequently for any changes to dates, times and locations as it's a complex ride. I will be doing a blog on www.eaglesup.us for those that wish to "follow along".

NEVER FORGET (again).

For information about the NEVER FORGET Ride route, to go https://medium.com/never-forget-ride-sponsors-schedule/bfdb577d8660.

To follow Doug's NEVER FORGET Ride Blog, go to https://medium.com/never-forget-ride-blog.

CALVET HOME LOANS

VETERANS IN CALIFORNIA PURCHASING HOMES

RATES AS LOW AS 3.90%*

NO MONEY DOWN**

For more information contact (866) 653-2510 or loanapps@calvet.ca.gov

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

*4.25% - Estimated total monthly payment/APR based on a $200K sales price, no down payment & financing of the VA funding fee under the CalVet/VA program, $200K assessed value, mandatory hazard, and disaster indemnity insurance. Your actual payment can vary due to replacement costs for your home, location, local taxes, fees, and assessments and subsequent use of VA benefit, etc.
** Not all buyers will qualify.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE 14

JUNE 5
Cal Humanities Public Conversations
"How Far We've Come: LGBTQ Veterans and the Military"
San Francisco Public Library
Contact: (415) 557-4277

JUNE 6
Veteran Small Business Workshop
CalVet/Deloitte
980 9th Street, Sacramento
Contact: (916) 503-8383

JUNE 7
American Legion Post 731
PTSD Day of Support
Linda Vista Road, San Diego
Contact: (619) 500-2454

JUNE 11
Cal Humanities Public Conversations
"Changing Faces: Diversity and the Veteran Experience"
San Diego Public Library Central Branch
Contact: (813) 457-8098

JUNE 13
Brian Patch Golf Tournament
Rebuilding America's Warriors
Teal Bend Golf Course, Sacramento
Contact: (916) 444-7123

JUNE 14
Flag Day Event
AMVETS Vietnam
Lone Tree Cemetery, Hayward
Contact: (510) 247-0777

JUNE 21
American Heroes Air Show
Hansen Dam Sports Complex, Los Angeles
Contact: (818) 631-8132

JUNE 25
Veteran of the Year Luncheon
California State Assembly
Sacramento Convention Center
Contact: (916) 492-0550

JUNE 29
Golf Tournament Honoring POWs
VFW Post 233
Calimesa Golf Course, Calimesa
Contact: (951) 845-7807

Note: To view full calendar, visit www.calvet.ca.gov/Files/Events_Calendar.pdf

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