



Veterans Museum

and Memorial Center

Volume 2, No. 1

The VMMC Eagle

Spring, 2010

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<http://www.veteranmuseum.org/memorial.html>

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VMMC announces its next major exhibit on one of the last actions of the Korean War, “Hold at All Costs: The Battle for Outpost Harry.”

The defense of “Outpost Harry” entailed a horrendous battle over a nine-day period as a massive contingent of Chinese People’s Volunteers fought Greek, South Korean and American troops for position and prestige just a few weeks in advance of the armistice that effectively ended the Korean War. Ordered to hold Outpost Harry “at all costs,” the vastly outnumbered UN forces fought fiercely from their trenches, driving off waves of Chinese soldiers at night while bringing in supplies and reinforcements by day. The Chinese appeared to have suffered 4,200 casualties by the time they withdrew, a terrible cost in comparison to the estimated UN losses (275 killed, 1,199 wounded, and 40 missing in action).

In partnership with DINI Films, the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center will open a major new exhibit on June 26, 2010 that explores the sacrifices made on both sides of the battle for Outpost Harry. The exhibit will feature superbly accurate reconstructions of the UN and Chinese bunkers dug into the earth at Outpost Harry, populated by an amazing collection of authentic artifacts and memorabilia gathered from veterans on both sides of the battle. Oral-history interviews of Greek, Chinese, Korean and American soldiers who fought at Outpost Harry will play on interactive video kiosks and a series of photographs of the battle will grace the exhibit space as well.

Well-known San Diego automobile dealer Bob Baker, a participant in the Battle for Outpost Harry, has offered the VMMC a generous challenge grant to help fund construction and installation of the exhibit. Mr. Baker will match donations dollar-for-dollar up to \$15,000.00. Please help your Veterans Museum to achieve this exciting goal!

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MUSEUM NEWS

SPECIAL EXHIBITS

American Ex-POWs: A permanent exhibit on the experiences of America's POWs during WWII, Korea and Vietnam. Photos, artifacts, and personal stories provide insight into their trials and how they overcame them.

B-24 Liberator, How San Diego and Consolidated Aircraft Won WWII: A permanent exhibit highlighting the B-24: the men who flew them and the men and women who designed and built them.

Hall of Heroes: The history of the Medal of Honor and the stories of the San Diegans who wear "The Medal".

The Murals of Richard de Rossett: Six large murals highlight special events in military history, from Pearl Harbor up through Iraq.

Stained Glass Windows designed and set by Fred Wieland of San Diego: 12 large stained glass windows in the great hall date from the 1940s and highlight the Naval Hospital, the Navy Medical Department, Chaplain's Corps, the Sea Services and Veterans Organizations

Japanese Americans in the Military, 1900-Present: This new Gallery exhibit opened November 2009.

Hold at All Costs: The Battle for Outpost Harry. In partnership with DINI Films, the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center will open a major new exhibit on June 26, 2010 that explores the sacrifices made on both sides of the battle for Outpost Harry. The exhibit will feature superbly accurate reconstructions of the UN and Chinese bunkers dug into the earth at Outpost Harry, populated by an amazing collection of authentic artifacts and memorabilia gathered from veterans on both sides of the battle. Oral-history interviews of Greek, Chinese, Korean and American soldiers who fought at Outpost Harry will play on interactive video kiosks and a series of photographs of the battle will grace the exhibit space as well.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Veteran of Year: As an Organization, have you recognized your outstanding Veteran? Our Veteran of the Year program assists you in honoring those who have served, and continue to serve, our community. In addition, Corporations and Non-Profit organizations will be recognized for their support to Veterans and the Military. Let us help honor your outstanding Veteran. Nomination forms are on the website at: www.veteranmuseum.org.

Educational Programs: The museum hosts 5th grade students from the Balboa Park Program with Docent led tours, scavenger hunts and stories from veterans. Additionally, we partnered with High Tech Media Arts Middle School to produce mini-documentaries on veterans as part of the Stories of Service Project. Periodic seminars on relevant historical topics are also presented at the museum.

Memorial Day: The VMMC hosts the Vietnam Veterans of America in a ceremony at the San Diego Vietnam Peace Memorial to read the names of those San Diegans who lost their lives during the Vietnam War. A candle light vigil is held on Saturday and a formal ceremony concludes the weekends events on Monday morning.

Combat/Military Nurse Support Project: The combat/military nurse support project-thanking those who care for our wounded warriors in combat & here at home. Our committee is jointly chaired by board member Dennis Schoville and AALNC Philanthropy Chair Karen Wetter, R.N.

If you would like to support our efforts please volunteer to join our committee and/or forward your donation (in whatever amount you choose) to the VMMC with a notation that it is in support of the Combat/Military Nurse Support Project.

Respectfully, Dennis Schoville
Cmdr. Combat/Military Nurse Support Project

Up to date information on Events, Exhibits and Special Projects can be found on our Newsletter link: <http://www.veteranmuseum.org/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dignity Memorial Vietnam Wall: Balboa Park	April 9-11
VMMC Fundraising Dinner & Dance - El Cajon Elks Lodge:	May 22
Memorial Day Events:	May 29-31
UVC Job Fair:	June 5
Korean War Exhibit opening:	June 26
WWII/VJDAY Remembrance:	August 14
Operation HomeFront Freedom Walk:	Sept 11
FEMVETS Health & Wellness Fair:	October 2
Veteran of the Year Luncheon:	Nov. 5
Recurring events 4th Saturday:	
UVC Meeting	9:30-12pm
United Veterans Memorial Service	12:30-2pm

The Veterans Museum plays host to many different events including military ceremonies, cocktail receptions, weddings and more! This serves as a fundraiser for our programs. Active Duty Military and Museum Members get a 10% discount when renting the venue. Help spread the word! Book your event today!

VOLUNTEER AT THE VMMC!

The Veterans Museum and Memorial Center is looking for volunteers in the following areas:

Docent:

Meet and greet visitors and serve as their tour guide, and keep track of our attendance.

Operations:

Are you a handy person around the house? Have you worked as a cashier before? We need people to help with the maintaining and housekeeping of the building. We also need you to help run our gift shop.

Curatorial:

Have a knack for all things historical? Our curatorial department needs help with artifact acquisition and cataloguing.

Volunteer Coordinator:

Are you organized? Do you like to guide people? We need a volunteer coordinator to assist in the organization of our volunteers and their various departments, take inquiries from the public, and find their perfect fit in our volunteer areas.

If you are interested in volunteering or becoming our new Volunteer Coordinator, please contact the main office at 619-239-2300 or e-mail: info@veteranmuseum.org.

The New Veterans National Cemetery at M.C.A.S. Miramar

On January 30th, 2010 the Washington D.C. Secretary for Memorial Affairs conducted an elaborate Ground Breaking Ceremony for the Miramar National Cemetery under construction on the west end of MCAS Miramar, San Diego. The first in-ground burial is planned for September 2010.

The new Miramar National Cemetery joins the original Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery at Point Loma, San Diego. The Chairman of the two National Cemeteries Support Foundation is the World War II B-24 pilot and world famous test pilot, Brigadier General Robert Cardenas, USAF (ret.). He is joined by the Support Foundation's President and C.E.O., Dr. Gary Parks, of National University, along with eight other Board members. Working tenaciously since 2002, the Board of Directors overcame a guidelines restriction perpetuated by the Department of Veterans Affairs in Washington D.C.

The Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery at Point Loma, San Diego, has been operational since 1840 and has been closed to first time casket burials since 1966. The closest available National Cemetery to the predominantly military Southern California coastal communities is Riverside. This situation forces the survivors of deceased veterans to travel an average ninety-mile trip one way to bury or visit a loved one.

The Administration glitch was a short sighted restriction in the Congressional Millennium Report disallowing the building of more than one National Cemetery within a seventy-five mile radius from the center of a major urban population (downtown San Diego). With Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery being so close to Miramar, this restriction denied the proposed 314 acres cemetery plan. In an effort to circumnavigate this unfair limitation, General Cardenas, and three other dedicated board members, repeatedly proposed that the new cemetery be classified as an "annex" to the original Fort Rosecrans. Eventually the Administration adopted this concept. On July 10th 2009, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) awarded nearly one million dollars to a small construction/landscape company to begin expanding burial services for Veterans in Southern California by developing the new Miramar "Annex." By the time the Ground Breaking took place in January of this year, the Administration quietly dropped the "annex" classification, giving Miramar its full National Cemetery status with concurrent and proportional federal support. The new Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Eric K. Shinseki, said, "The VA is committed to providing the best possible service to the Veterans of Southern California (and, indeed, anywhere) by developing new burial areas and building permanent facilities at the Miramar (site)."

The current specific concept and schedule is summarized as follows by the Board of Directors: The new 314 acre Miramar National Cemetery will be built in six phases. Each phase will have 12,000 dual cement burial vaults for casket burials, plus a columbarium with 10,000 niches for cremated remains. In addition, each phase will have 5,000 ground burial spaces with headstones for cremated remains. When phase six is completed, there will be space for 162,000 burials to accommodate the needs of San Diego's veterans for the next 60 years.

The Board of Directors will be conducting fund raising events such as Galas with attendant "silent auctions" and raffles to help support some of the many enhancements to the cemetery that have been proposed by various groups (and the Support Foundation welcomes more proposals, memorials or monuments - the Foundation is a 501C (3) organization and public charity). To date the proposed/approved enhancements include: an Amphitheater, Four Lakes, EX-POW 15' Bronze Statue, Iwo Jima Memorial, DAV Memorial, AMVET Carillon, Jewish War Veterans Memorial, Special Forces Memorial, Avenue of Flags, Korean War Memorial, chapel for services, Vietnam War Memorial, Honor Guard Ceremonies, Memorial Day and Veterans Day Ceremonies.

To contact the Miramar National Cemetery Support Foundation (Board of Directors) please refer to: Dr. Gary Parks, President/C.E.O Miramar and Fort Rosecrans National Cemeteries Support Foundation, 13360 Portofino Drive, Del Mar, CA 92014, Phone (858) 755-8128, FAX (858) 755-0931, www.fortrosecrans.org.



*General Cardenas with
Ben Williams, USMC LCol (Ret).
Both have the DFC.*

SUPPORTING VMMC

The contributions and donations are essential to permitting the Museum and Memorial Center to perform its Mission as a Museum in Balboa Park, and as a Center to support the Veterans of San Diego County. Thank you all

CONTRIBUTORS AND SPONSORS FOR 2009

Honor Roll Patrons: Gifts Exceeding \$15,000

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Gifts Exceeding: \$5,000

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Those that contribute their time, talents and artifacts have made significant donations to the Museum. Without the volunteer efforts of many, we could not provide this service to the Community. Of special note are the special donations of the murals and artwork by the distinguished Marine Artist, Richard DeRosset. Other volunteers of special note include Don Leavitt, Nino Martinez, Tim Smith, Rick Appleton, Greg and Roni Palazzolo, Dr. Richard N. Wiernik, and many others.

Cash Contributions may be made by check, cash or credit card.

A WWII NEWSPAPER DONATION TREASURE



By Bob Krone, Col, USAF (Ret), Eagle Editor

In February 2010 your VMMC received a donation of 277 original World War II newspapers from the Charles E. Swisher VFW Post 1924 in Fallbrook, California. The collection, covering the period 1937 to 1946, had been in the Post storage for an unknown time period, was discovered by Post members who recognized its military history value and contacted the VMMC. Dr. Abe Shragge, the Museum Curator, confirmed the collection's value. Fallbrook VFW Post Members approved the donation.

The VMMC will preserve the collection, will create exhibition and educational uses for it and thanked the Charles E. Swisher VFW Post for this important addition to its military history documents.

VMMC CURATOR DR. ABE SHRAGGE INTERVIEW

The UC San Diego Thurgold Marshall Institute has on its blog an interview with our Dr. Abe Shragge. Copy the URL into your browser to see the interview: <http://blog.ucsd.edu/marshallinstitute/>

DANIEL E. DeMARCO JOINS THE VMMC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At the 10 February 2010 VMMC Board of Directors Meeting, Daniel E. DeMarco was elected to be the newest member of the Board. Daniel's extensive work with military organizations and his special skills with marketing and public relations were enthusiastically welcomed by Board Members.



THE TRAVELING VIETNAM WALL

A Special April Veteran Activity in Balboa Park: The Traveling Vietnam Wall will be in San Diego for viewing from **April 9** through **April 11**, the second weekend in April. This wall, a 3/4 scale model is travel throughout the Country, sponsored by Dignity Memorail. The panels and naes are as engraved in the Washington DC Wall. This display, adjacent to the Veterans Museum, will be open for 24 hours each day during that weekend. In Addition the Vetern Museum will be open for visitors. Come see the Wall, and our Veterans Museum.



by Vicki Nenner, Board Member

Chaplain Ron Ritter

If you ever need a Chaplain, Ron Ritter is the best you can find and the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center is fortunate to have had him on their Board of Directors. He is leaving the VMMC to be the pastor of a church in Poway and we will all miss him.

Chaplain Ritter was the Founder and Director of Eagle's Wings, a bereavement support group that meets at the VMMC and was established to help widowed veterans and spouses during their grieving process. I can personally attest to the value and incredible comfort that Eagle's Wings provides because I attended the sessions after my husband died unexpectedly in 2007. Chaplain Ritter says that "misery not only loves company, it requires it." Being with others who are also grieving a loss and trying to refocus their lives is a comforting and educational experience for all involved. Below is the vision that he created for Eagle's Wings.

Our Vision

Eagle's Wings honors and respects all deceased who have served the United States of America military by ensuring that their beloved spouses receive informed and compassionate support appropriate for their bereavement. We believe that the strong community supports surrounding marriages with the military services do not end when death takes one of the partners. We believe also that death does not terminate the eternal bonds of love that exist within the heart of a marriage. The final honor that we in Eagle's Wings bestow upon the military dead who served their country so faithfully is to ensure that spousal bereavement is addressed and mitigated.

On February 14, 2010 at the Eagle's Wings 10th Birthday Party, he received proclamations from Todd Gloria, San Diego City Council; Bill Horne, County Board of Supervisors; California Assemblywoman Mary Salas; and, a congratulatory letter from Congresswoman Susan Davis. Everyone agreed that Chaplain Ritter connects to people with compassion. Words used to describe him include: understanding; welcoming; dynamic; honorable; humble; kind; calm; and compassionate.

Chaplain Ritter was born in Baltimore, Maryland and he attended Drexel University, graduating with a B.S. in Business Administration. While at Drexel he earned five letters in soccer and lacrosse and his 1958 soccer team was named the top team in the USA that year.

His father, John, served in France in WWI as a hospital corpsman with the University of Maryland Hospital. When Chaplain Ritter was a child during WWII, both of his brothers served in the U.S. Navy as "Brownshoes" and they frequently brought their military friends home to sleep in the dining room and living room when they had weekend liberty. This early contact with the military no doubt influenced his decision later to serve in the military.

Chaplain Ritter met his wife, Judy, while he was in the Lutheran Concordia Theological Seminary and she was in nursing school. They married in 1967 and he completed theological study and was ordained in 1970. They have three sons and a daughter. Sadly, in 1987, their 16 year old son, Steve, was killed in a tragic car accident just ½ mile from their home. Chaplain Ritter states that he "cannot recall any event in my life before or since 30 May 1987 that has had such a dramatic impact on it." Sharing that experience with the participants in Eagle's Wings gave him a credibility that they could understand.

Chaplain Ritter shared two peak experiences of his career. One was when he was the Senior In-Country Marine chaplain for Team Spirit-84 in South Korea. A Marine CH-53 crashed into a mountain during a night exercise with the loss of all aboard. He was a source of solace and consolation for the remaining members of that Team as they grieved for their lost friends.

A second peak experience involved a one of the officers in a squadron who was the quintessential bachelor Hugh Hefner style "stud." Although this man had two to three beautiful women in every port, flashy clothing on liberty, the fastest Corvette, and a well earned reputation, he shared in private with the Chaplain that his life felt empty and he felt alone. Chaplain Ritter gave him a Bible and some reading assignments and shortly thereafter the man left the squadron. Several years later Chaplain Ritter received a letter from that man who said that God was now a part of his life and that he faced his future with hope and assurance that he was truly a child of God.

Chaplain Ritter has had an impact on each of us in different ways. We wish him well as he moves forward with this new phase in his life and career.



Become a member and you'll receive advance notice of our upcoming programs, events, exhibits, discounts and more. But that's just the beginning. Your membership plays a *vital role* in keeping our stories alive for future generations. Just \$35⁰⁰ a year; Sign up on our website at:

<http://www.veteranmuseum.org/membership.html>

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This VMMC Eagle is provided free to current members

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