



** VALOR **

George E. Smith Post 7142, VFW
P.O. Box #1251
San Clemente, CA 92674-1251

APRIL-MAY-JUNE 2013

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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS



I recently received a letter from one of the Original Post Members 1947-1948, Bob Carrick. He is now 87 years of age and lives in LaCresta. He wanted to thank me for the newsletters of recent and for reaching out to members that have not attended for a while. He also wanted to share memories of George Smith, our Post's name sake and other veterans from San Clemente in World War II.

Bob and George were the same age and attended Capistrano Union High School. George's father Leo Smith was a building contractor in San Clemente and brought George down to meet Bob when giving a bid for work for Bob's father. They rode their horses on San Clemente Beach with other friends.

George was a very good athlete and held several League Records in Track for a number of years. George graduated from Capo H.S. in 1943 in his naval uniform. There were 4 boys – no girls that graduated that year who were from San Clemente. Two of them enlisted in the Navy and two enlisted in the Marines that year. George was operating a loading craft – Higgins Boat loaded with troops getting ready to land on Leyete, Philippines, when it took a direct hit. There were no survivors.

At the back entrance of the Community Club house there is a bronze plaque with the names of 62 men and one woman who served in WWII. A total of four either were killed or died in service. Dale Collingsworth survived the Bataan Death March. Jack Lashbrook, Bob's friend for 72 years and Bob are the only two left out of the 63.

Bob Carrick graduated in 1943 and in September he joined the Marines 13 days before his 18th birthday. After boot camp he was assigned as a driver for the First Quarter Master of Camp Pendleton. He later was sent to Norman Oklahoma to become an aviation mechanic. He was then deployed to Peleliu Islands. The battle for the Island of Peleliu is considered one of the four deadliest battles the Marines faced in the south Pacific – with 6800 casualties. He was discharged in June 1946 spending his last 6 months in China. He graduated from Cal Poly, the Voorhees Campus, as an Ornamental Horticulture and Landscape Design Major. He owned Shores Garden Nursery in San Clemente. His best customer was Pat Nixon at the Western White House. He also worked with Arabian horses and put on shows in Pomona for William Keith Kellogg, philanthropist and cereal manufacturer. Bob, now retired, is known as the "Trail Boss"; through his years he has built 65 miles of trails in southwest Riverside Country – Los Alamos Canyon Trail, Marijuana Trail, Poison Oak Trail, Las Braises Trail, Wolf Creek Trail, Ginger's Trail, Hombre Lane Trail, Stewart Ranch Trail, Bob Carrick Trail and Kenny's Trail, along with 10 Trails. Thanks for sharing this valuable and colorful information with Post 7142, Bob. Commander Colonel Dee Padgett.

B-Day: 6/14/1775



B-Day: 11/10/1775



B-Day: 10/13/1775



B-Day: 9/18/1947



B-Day: 8/4/1790



Post Happenings:

Photos from the Post Awards Dinner



Highlighting the Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen Essay Winners

Carlos Solorzano, Jr., and parents at the Awards Dinner. Carlos, a senior at J.Serra high school, was the Post's 1st place winner in the Voice of Democracy essay contest and was presented with a check from the Post for \$300.00. The subject of his essay was, "Is our constitution still relevant?" His entry also earned him 2nd place in VFW District #2 competition.



Julie Reyes, the 1st Place Winner in the Patriot's Pen contest for middle-schoolers. Commander Dee Padgett on the left and Julie's parents, Sr. Vice Commander Francis Reyes and Mrs Reyes are on the right. Julie was presented with a check from the Post for \$150.00 as her reward. It's easy to see how proud her parents are for her accomplishment and Julie is all excited about entering the contest again next year.

Now Hear This:



If you haven't visited the Post's web-site, you are missing a great innovation and improvement in how the Post can now communicate with its members. The web-site address is: www.vfw7142.com. Thanks to the hard work of Marc Gold and his committee (D.Padgett, A. Neil, T. Laursen, T. DeVoe and M. Turner) we have advanced to this higher level of technology. Marc worked tirelessly, just days before he underwent serious neck surgery, after being rear-ended in an accident. He underwent surgery on Thursday, Feb 7th and reports indicated it was successful.

Marc's time and expertise were donated to this cause and the Post will forever be indebted to him. He has exemplified what getting involved as a Post member is all about. The Post's contact phone # is [949-464-8391](tel:949-464-8391) and the contact e-mail address is: info@VFW7142.com. So, check out this new tool and let us hear your feedback.

The Distinguished Warfare Medal is a United States military decoration announced by U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta on February 13, 2013. It is the first American combat-related award to be created since the Bronze Star Medal in 1944. The new blue, red and white-ribboned medal will be awarded to individuals for "extraordinary achievement" related to a military operation occurring after September 11, 2001. It is intended to recognize military achievement in cyberwarfare or combat drone operations for actions that do not include valor in combat. Awarded in the name of the Secretary of Defense, the Distinguished Warfare Medal may be awarded for extraordinary achievement to members of the United States Armed Forces. This achievement must have taken place after 11 September 2001, and may not involve acts of valor. Qualifying achievement must have a direct impact, through any domain, on combat or other military operations. These operations must occur under one of the following circumstances:

- Engaged in military operations against enemies of the United States.
- Engaged in operations in conflict against an opposing foreign force.
- While serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in operations with an opposing armed force where the United States is not a belligerent party.

Direct impact of an operation means the "hands-on" employment of weapons systems, including those controlled remotely, or other activities through any domain that had a direct impact on an engagement or operation. When making reference to "through any domain" in the award criteria, this means operations may take place in air, sea, land, and cyberspace.



Barry Trauger joined the Navy in Sept '67 and had boot camp at School of Great Lakes & studied Basic Electricity Electronics Prep. Deployed to BJU-1, USS Princeton then the Okinawa. Performed classified BJU Ops. Worked with USMC on heliborne search & destroy ops. Went on patrols with Marines as an extra rifleman and worked with USCG out of DaNang. Returned to Coronado in Feb '69 then returned to Okinawa in March '69. Completed a combat refresher course at Camp Hardy, run by 1st Special Forces. June of '69 transferred to BJU-1 team in Binh Thuy in the Mekong Delta. He extended his second tour then returned to Coronado and finished his enlistment in Jul '71. Returned to Perkasie, Pa, attended Moravian College earning a BS in Biology in Dec '73. Worked for the Wm. Rorer pharmaceutical Co., then became a Brewing Supervisor with Miller Brewing in Georgia. Went to work for Waddell & Reed, financial services; then Prudential. Returned to Anheuser-Busch in Van Nuys in 2001, then recruited back to Miller where he retired as an Asst. Brew-master I June 2005. Barry & his wife have two grown sons and 5 grandchildren, ages 5 to 19. He still runs and body-boards almost every day and is learning stand-up surfing on a 7 foot board. He also loves music. He invites all his comrades to visit the site: www.Beachjumpers.com to learn what those energetic guys do. Barry currently serves our Post as a Trustee, auditing the Financials.



Robert "Bob" Higgins enlisted in the Army in 1949, in New Jersey and served a tour of duty in Korea as a construction foreman. He served a total of four years and was discharged at Concord, CA in 1953, with the rank of Corporal. Bob is a Life Member of Post 7142 and has served as a Post Trustee in the past. Bob went to college after his service and became a manufacturing engineer where he designed missiles and pressure vessels. He was an operations manager at Sargent Industries in El Segundo for 20 years and Chief of engineering at Kaiser in Irvine for 20 years. He has been married to his beautiful wife, Jan, for 47 years. They have four children (3 daughters and 1 son) plus 6 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. He has resided in San Clemente since 1995.



Eugene Fournier joined the Marine Corps in Sept 1951 and served 20 years starting out at Camp Pendleton. He then was sent to Korea in March '52 and returned in April '53 and was assigned to San Diego from '53 until '54, then transferred to Kaneohe communications where he served from '54 to '57; then back to Pendleton. In Jan '61 his duty took him to Vietnam until Jan '62. He attended Com chief school in San Diego, preparing him for his position of Communications Chief in Vietnam. He was promoted to M/Sgt in 1968 and retired from the USMC in 1971. Gene's fondest memories of his years of service is the lifelong friends he made during his service. His proudest moment was working as a 2561 Cryptographer which required security clearances. Gene resides in San Clemente with his lovely wife, Marian. They have a daughter, Jean, and two sons, Jim and John. Comrade Fournier is a dedicated member of our Post and has spent numerous hours assisting in the Buddy Poppy fund raiser drives.

Interested in sharing your military profile?? Contact the Newsletter Editor, Alex Neil by phone at 366-8477 or e-mail: ajneil@cox.net

WELCOME TO NEW POST MEMBERS

Christopher Padgett (Army) Active Duty. Yes, that's the son of our proud Commander, Col. Dee Padgett, who recruited him into our Post.

Tony F. Medina, (Army) Korean War. Tony was recruited by comrade J. Quinlan.



It is with great sadness that our Post bids farewell to 20 year, Life Member, Ed Lesneski; a USMC veteran of WWII and the Korean War, who passed away on Saturday, Jan 19th. He operated a mortuary in San Clemente since 1968 and also served 7 years on San Clemente's Planning Commission.



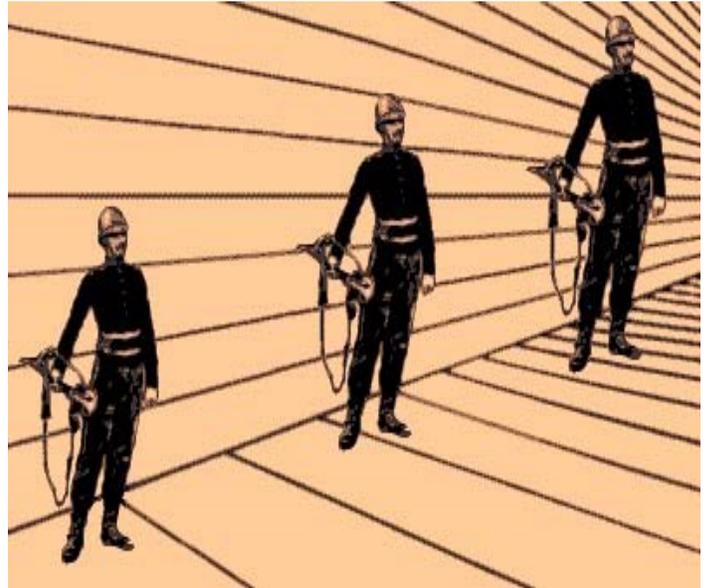
THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

There is no point doing well, that which should not be done at all!

POST OFFICER NOMINATIONS

Commander: Dolores J. Padgett
Sr. Vice Comdr: F. Reyes vs. Marc Gold
Jr. Vice Comdr: Mike Turner
Quartermaster: Alex J. Neil
Judge Advocate: Jim Carson
Surgeon: Don Young
Chaplain: M. Wiechman vs. J. Quinlan
Trustee #3: Barry Trauger
Trustee #1: Kevin Keim vs. F. Reyes

Election voting scheduled for April 10th Post meeting. Final results will be posted next issue.



Which soldier is the tallest? Easy to see, right? Maybe you will want to measure each to be sure.

Things aren't always as they may appear!

VFW STATEMENT ON WOMEN IN COMBAT POLICY CHANGE **VFW wishes all who apply to frontline careers much success**

WASHINGTON —The following statement is by the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, John E. Hamilton, of St. Augustine, Fla., a Marine Corps rifleman in Vietnam and triple Purple Heart recipient:

“The military services will be charged with phasing in this policy change to allow women greater access to frontline career fields, and the implementation will be under intense scrutiny by advocates and critics alike. To the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, there is no question that women have and will continue to serve our nation in uniform with great valor and sacrifice. We fully recognize that not everyone volunteers for the combat arms career fields, but the VFW wishes all who apply much success in meeting the arduous physical and demanding performance standards. Societal norms may have changed, but the mission and environment in which our ground forces operate have not.”

In Honor of the up-coming Memorial Day it appears appropriate to offer this reprint.

Just A Common Soldier
(A Soldier Died Today)
By: A. Lawrence Vaincourt

*He was getting old and paunchy
and his hair was falling fast,
And he sat around the Post meeting,
telling stories of the past.
Of a war that he had fought in
and the deeds that he had done,
in his exploits with his buddies;
they were heroes, every one.*

*And tho' sometimes, to his neighbors,
his tales became a joke,
all his comrade buddies listened,
for they knew whereof he spoke.
But we'll hear his tales no longer
for old Jack has passed away,
and the world's a little poorer,
for a soldier died today.*

*He will not be mourned by many,
just his children and his wife,
for he lived an ordinary
and quite uneventful life.
Held a job and raised a family,
quietly going his own way,
and the world won't note his passing,
though a soldier died today.*

*When politicians leave this earth,
their bodies lie in state,
while thousands note their passing
and proclaim that they were great.
Papers tell their whole life stories,
from the time that they were young,
but the passing of a soldier
goes unnoticed and unsung.*

*Is the greatest contribution
to the welfare of our land,
a guy who breaks his promises
and cons his fellow man?
Or the ordinary fellow who
in times of war and strife,
goes off to serve his country
and offers up his life?*

*A politician's stipend
and the style in which he lives
are sometimes disproportionate
to the service which he gives.
While the ordinary soldier,
who offered up his all,
is paid off with a medal
and perhaps a pension, small.*

*It's so easy to forget them
for it was so long ago,
that the old Jacks of our country
went to battle, but we know
it was not the politicians,
with their compromise and ploys,
who won for us the freedom
that our country now enjoys.*

*Should you find yourself in danger,
with your enemies at hand,
would you want a politician
with his ever-shifting stand?
Or would you prefer a soldier,
who was sworn to defend
his home, his kin and country
and would fight until the end?*

*He was just a common soldier
and his ranks are growing thin,
but his presence should remind us
we may need his likes again.
For when countries are in conflict,
then we find the soldier's part
is to clean up all the troubles
that politicians start.*

*If we cannot do him honor
while he's here to hear the praise,
then at least let's give him homage
at the ending of his days.
Perhaps just a simple headline
in the paper that would say,
"Our country is in mourning, for a
Soldier died today".*

(reprinted with the author's permission)



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VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
George E. Smith Post #7142
"We honor the dead by serving the living"

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|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Commander: | Dolores J. Padgett |
| Sr. Vice Comdr: | Francis Reyes |
| Jr. Vice Comdr: | Donald Young |
| Quartermaster: | Alex J. Neil |
| Chaplain: | Jerald Quinlan |
| Judge Advocate: | James Carson |
| Surgeon: | James Ferguson |
| Trustee #3: | Clarence Kaleta |
| Trustee #2: | Charles Gullett |
| Trustee #1: | Barry Trauger |
| Web-Master: | Marc Gold |

