



THE BLADE



A Newsletter of the 63d Infantry Division Association, USAR

Volume 21

Fall 2016

Number 1

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

I think that it is safe to say that we all share an interest in what's happening to "our Army" and the Military in general. There is little agreement among the politicians on what the role of the military should be and how much funding should be provided to insure that we remain safe and free.

I (and you no doubt) have been asked a number of times "what's happening in the Army" by friends who have served and those who have not and I have found myself having to answer I don't really know. We all know and understand that organizations change in order to respond to the problems that they face. The changes that the Army has made are hard to keep up with. So I was glad to learn of a new publication from the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) entitled "Profile of the United States Army-a reference handbook". This is a user-friendly information source for people familiar with the Army and an easy to read introduction for others who are interested in what today's Army is all about. It contains information on everything from uniforms, the Army's command structure, current operations, and a series of maps that illustrate locations of current Army combat corps, and divisions, Army National Guard divisions and brigade combat teams and Army Reserve direct reporting commands. You can access the handbook at <https://www.ausea.org/publications/2016-profile-united-states-army>.

The debate over buying more billion dollar ships or aircraft continues. If you're like me and wonder who is the enemy that these weapons systems are designed to defeat than you will appreciate the article by MG (Ret.) Bob Scales entitled "Boots on the Ground: Why America Must Invest in Dominant Infantry Forces." Scales points out that the last ship-on-ship battle was fought in 1944 and the last time the air service fought against a serious aerial opponent was the Christmas bombing offensive over North Vietnam in 1972. Our enemies don't fight in the air or on the seas; they fight us on the ground. Scales points out that in what he calls "The America Era" or since the end of WWII (the past 70 years) 81% of all Americans killed at the hands of the enemy (not resulting from accidents or disease) have been infantrymen, not Soldiers or Marines but infantrymen, a group of men numbering 4% or about 50,000 out of the 1.2 million men and women on active duty. Not surprising this 4% gets only "one" percent of our defense budget. To fully appreciate what's happening here I recommend that you read the whole article at <http://mwi.usma.edu/boots-ground-america-must-invest-dominant-infantry-forces/>. Clearly there should be a change in our priorities.

The last item that I would like to bring to your attention is a new book entitled "Warriors & Citizens" by Retired Marine General James Mattis. In this book Mattis and his colleagues at the Hoover Institution in California conducted ground-breaking research about the cultural gap between the military and the civilian population it serves. They analyze extensive polling infor-

President' Message cont.

-tween civilian and military attitudes on issues central to the military profession and the professionalism of our military, determine which if any of these gaps are problematic for sustaining the traditionally strong bonds between the American military and its broader public. Analyze whether any problematic gaps are amendable to remediation by policy means, and assess potential solutions. This book looks at the question can a democracy be served by an all-volunteer military. Interesting reading and something to think about.

Don't forget our annual meeting set for 30 April 2017.
Have a joyous holiday season and I'll see you next year.

Chuck Ebner
BG USA Retired

(Comments to the President's message are welcome, send to Jwisenb662@gmail.com)

ANNUAL HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

If you have never attended one of the The Holiday Luncheon for the 63rd Infantry Division Association (USAR) and other military organizations, this is the year to reunite with comrades.

This event is Saturday, 3 December 2016, 1100-1400, at the Sizzler Restaurant, 1401 N Harbor Blvd, Fullerton, CA 92835.

Your host for this event is COL Alfred Diaz who is reminding everyone that the party must end by 1400 because another function is planned at that time.

**63RD INFANTRY DIVISION
ANNUAL LUNCHEON AND
BUSINESS MEETING
SUNDAY 30 APRIL
HOTEL FULLERTON**

1500 RAYMOND AVE, FULLERTON CA

LOOK FOR MORE DETAILS AND REGISTRATION FORM IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER.

PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH ANY CALIFORNIA VETERAN YOU KNOW

Veteran Designation on California Driver License and ID Card

Starting November 12, 2015, the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) and the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) launch the Veteran Driver License Initiative. This initiative allows California Veterans to obtain a "Veteran" designation on their California driver license or identification card (DL/ID). Interested Veterans need to present a valid DD-214 (must show discharge status) to a local County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) to receive Veteran Status verification. Then the Veteran takes the CVSO verification form to a DMV field office for processing. DMV charges an additional \$5, plus the cost of a new, renewal, or duplicate license fee for this enhancement. FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO <https://www.calvet.ca.gov>

Thanking Vietnam veterans — Unsung, Unseen American Warriors

Reprint from James T. Jackson, Special to Military Times August 13, 2016

Across the nation, Americans are uniting in community to thank and honor Vietnam veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice.

Why, you ask?

This initiative is the main focus of the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration, a national 50th anniversary commemoration authorized by Congress, established under the secretary of defense, and launched by the president in May 2012.

Yes, America is 50 years, and in some cases 60 years, late in this effort, as this commemoration includes all 9 million U.S. veterans who served from Nov. 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975, and their families. While we acknowledge the distinction between veterans who served in-country, in-theater, and who were stationed elsewhere during this period, we honor all who served. All are known to us simply as "Vietnam veterans."

Across our country, more than 10,000 local, state and national organizations, businesses and governmental agencies have joined the Defense Department as commemorative partners, and are conducting events and activities in small towns and large cities that publicly share the nation's gratitude with these warriors and their families.

Without thought of rehashing the war or rewriting history, this commemoration is firmly set on honoring those who bore the pain and price of the war. When asked, these veterans answered the nation's call. Some fought the war in a distant land of which most had never heard, while others were assigned to support the effort from different locations around the world. Vietnam veterans bravely pursued the goals and objectives established by our elected leaders, yet returned to a society in turmoil. Few wanted to hear their stories, share their hardships, or understand their problems. Most Americans did not separate the warrior from the war, and wanted the veterans — a reminder of the war — to simply disappear.

Flag-draped caskets enshrouded more than 58,000, while many who lived came home with scars born of battle and, in too many cases, invisible wounds coupled with haunting memories. Upon reaching U.S. shores, these veterans (with the exception of the former prisoners of war) received no formal public welcome or recognition of service afforded veterans of previous wars. Instead, the vast majority quietly assimilated back into their communities, raised families and used their talents and leadership skills to strengthen America. Many innovations in the business, education and military sectors can be attributed directly to the Vietnam generation of veterans.

Now is the time to not only remember those who gave their all during the Vietnam War, but it's also time for all Americans to fully embrace the brave men and women who returned home from Vietnam, often to shame and disgrace, by publicly thanking them with honor and dignity, as well as recognizing the sacrifices of their respective families. Unfortunately, this effort comes too late for 2 million who wore the uniform during this turbulent period in our country's history, including the 58,000-plus whose names are inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.; these Vietnam veterans already have passed and will not experience their nation's appreciation during this commemoration.

In addition, the Veterans Affairs Department estimates we are losing as many as 382 veterans a day who served during this period, so we must act now. We have the opportunity to make a positive difference in the life of every one of the 7 million living Vietnam veterans, and each of their families. Reaching out to them with a sincere "thank you for your service and sacrifice" is a strong start.

To quote retired Army Col. Albert Nahas, a Vietnam veteran, "We had no expectations but to serve where duty called us. We asked for no reward except a nation's thanks."

Join the nation ... thank a Vietnam veteran! Find out more at vietnamwar50th.com.



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HELP US KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU! Please send your current email address to our Secretary at Jwisemb662@gmail.com,