

NCD VETERANS SERVICE COMMITTEE
MINUTES FOR JUNE 27, 2008 MEETING
AT RANCHO CORDOVA LODGE #2484

Open: 7:05 p.m.

District Committee Members Present: PER Al Russell, Chairman; Bob Burns, Jr., member; PER Dwight Gilmore. Absent: PER Lou Mellot, member;

Lodge Veterans Services Chairs Present: Dale Wiest, Carmichael; PDDGER Ray Beckett, Placerville; PER Rodney Brooks, Rancho Cordova; Deborah Deas, Roseville; Esquire Darnell Lawrence, Sacramento. Absent: Esquire Ralph Daniels, Elk Grove (**in hospital for surgery**); PER Frank Jones, Folsom; Lou Williams, Jackson; PER Chuck Watters, Marysville; PER Sam Butler, West Sacramento; PER Malcolm Fenner, Woodland.

Others Present: Carmichael ER Shirley Gilmore; Carmichael Secretary Bill Cridland; Placerville Leading Knight Chuck Wilson.

Reading of Minutes of Last Meeting:

Treasurer's Report:

Al Russell presented a letter that he has written to the Gold Country Bank adding himself and Bob Burns, Jr. to the check signing list, along with Lou Mellot. Any check issued will require two signatures. Al Russell will also research the Tax ID Number for the Gold Country Checking Account and make sure it is listed as a Tax Exempt entity. If that is the case, the money in the Bank of America Checking Account will be moved into the Gold Country Checking account and the B of A account will be closed.

Old Business:

1. "Van Money" Status: District Leader Jack Parker has advised Al Russell that the money in the CD should not be cashed in until the CD has matured on 08//20/10. Members and Lodge representatives present disagreed with that position because the Veterans need help now, not two years from now, and the committee would like to start spending the money on some other worthwhile project at the Mather Veterans Center and/or at the Yountville Veterans Home (See discussion below in New Business on ideas about where to spend the money). Al will find out from Jack Parker whether the committee has authority to do that.

New Business:

1. Identify the Veterans' activities each Lodge is planning for the year, along with a report of what they have done this quarter:
 - a. **Carmichael Lodge #2103:** Turned in its quarterly report and reported that in May they donated to Yountville Veterans an estimated \$350 in clothing and lap pads. In June they had 39 people from the Lodge make a bus trip to Yountville so they could see where their donations are being used and they donated 20 individual bags of toiletries for residents of the dementia facility. They are very interested in helping Yountville with their Pathway Home project for soldiers who are missing limbs and getting ready to go home from the hospital. The Head Nurse said that they need VHS or DVD players at the hospital. Many Carmichael members are sending cards to active military members in Iraq and Afghanistan. Their Annual Veterans' Ball is planned for November 8th. They also need help in finding a speaker for Veterans Day. They are also planning to use the 200 gallons of spaghetti sauce donated from the "Catch The Spirit" warehouse to hold a Veterans Appreciation Spaghetti Dinner, with Veterans eating for free.
 - b. **Elk Grove Lodge #2577:** Reported that they have adopted a Veteran, Kenny Jew, who resides at the Beverly Living Center in Galt, CA. He is currently 57 years old and suffering from emphysema. Kenny is a veteran of the U.S. Army, where he was a weapons mechanic and a helicopter gunner. He served in Vietnam for 2 years. After serving his country, Kenny came back to the United States and became a professional flat track motorcycle racer and worked as a tow truck driver in Sacramento for over 20 years. Elk Grove Lodge will be assisting Kenny with needs and outings to make his life more enjoyable. They recently gave Kenny a television so he can watch some of his favorite programs. You will often see Kenny at some of the Lodge functions and he will be applying soon for membership to the Lodge. Many of their members are actively interacting with their local VFW and American Legion organizations on a monthly basis and they are golfing with several veterans. They also visit Mather Veterans Center every two months to deliver personal care kits and other needed items. On

the National POW/MIA day the Lodge has a program in the Elk Grove Park where the feed Veterans for free. The City of Elk Grove recently gave the Lodge an Award for their outstanding support of Veterans. The Lodge lets the City use their Lodge room during each Annual Veterans Day Parade and a dinner is served that night.

- c. **Folsom Lodge #2735:** reported that they make periodic visits to the Mather VA Medical Center and provide care packages of clothing, books and personal items to the hospitalized veterans there. A barrel is set up in the Lodge for members to donate clothing, books, toiletries, etc. The Lodge frequently invites Veterans to such events as St. Patty's Day Lunch, Flag Day, and of course the annual Veterans Day Dinner and Parade. At past dinners they have invited some Pearl Harbor survivors to speak. A spouse of one Elk volunteers twice a week to assist the Pre-Op Nurse in the VA Center. About 70% of their Lodge members are also Veterans and there are monthly interactions with many of them such as Golf and Lodge dinners.
- d. **Jackson Lodge #2426:** Reported that they have "Adopted" twenty-two hospitalized, wheel-chair bound, veterans at the Kit Carson Veterans Home. On their birthdays, someone visits them and brings them a birthday card. They also have dinners for them and bring them care packages of toiletries on a monthly basis. They also gave them twenty-two jackets from the "Catch The Spirit" warehouse. They recently took six of them on a fishing trip to the Native Sons Fishing Derby where each one caught at least one fish. The American Legion donated \$230 worth of transportation for each wheelchair bound veteran. There were 12 helpers and 3 Veterans actually fishing and they were provided with a hot dog lunch. Once a year the Lodge holds a Veterans dance. The Lodge will greatly accept the 200 gallons of spaghetti sauce donated by the CTS warehouse for a Veterans Appreciation Dinner. Many of their members are actively interacting with their local VFW and American Legion organizations on a monthly basis and they are golfing with several veterans.
- e. **Marysville Lodge #783:** Reported that they actively participate in the visits to Yountville Veterans Home. Many of their members are actively interacting with their local VFW and American Legion organizations on a monthly basis and they are golfing with several veterans. Many of their members are actively interacting with their local VFW and American Legion organizations on a monthly basis and they are golfing with several veterans.
- f. **Placerville Lodge #1712:** Reported that it visited the Reno VA Hospital in June and personally delivered over \$520 worth of clothing, snacks, toiletries, and crocheted Afghans to the veterans. Another trip to Reno is planned in September. They also have adopted a young military widow (soldier was killed in Iraq 3 months ago) and her two children (8 and 4 years old) and were instrumental in getting her a Grand Lodge Grant of \$400. She plans to invest it, along with some other money she has received, into a scholarship fund for her children. The Lodge will host a Spaghetti Dinner for Veterans on September 19th, and their annual Veterans Dinner is scheduled for October 15th. Many of their members are actively interacting with their local VFW and American Legion organizations on a monthly basis and they are golfing with several veterans.
- g. **Rancho Cordova Lodge #2484:** Reported that they made visits to the Reno Veterans Hospital in April, May and June, delivering over \$210, \$350, and \$340, respectively in toiletries and other personal items. They also visited Mather Veterans Center in April and delivered over \$250 worth of "care packages". The Lodge's year-round "Catch The Spirit" Project has also been very active in helping our Veterans and active military and has offered to work with the other Lodges to help the Veterans, Guard and Reserve families in their areas. See the attached report. Rancho's annual Veterans Dinner is scheduled for November 15th. Many of their members are actively interacting with their local VFW and American Legion organizations on a monthly basis and they are golfing with several veterans.
- h. **Roseville Lodge #2248:** Reported that they have been providing playing cards for the Veterans at Mather Veterans Center and they are interested in participating in the Leather Glove program. They were also been working with the Red Cross and the "Catch The Spirit" Project to help out a Veteran who is wheel-chair bound, unemployed, and waiting for a VA disability ruling on his status. The Catch The Spirit Project was able to get him and his family some provisions and furniture and is continuing to help out in other areas. Roseville also asked for help in identifying all of the Guard and Reserve units in their area. Many of their members are actively interacting with their local VFW and American Legion organizations on a monthly basis and they are golfing with several veterans. The Lodge also reported that they have received their Michael Manning Coin Cans and have been successful in placing 12 of the 32. Their annual Veterans Dinner is scheduled for November 9th.

- i. Sacramento Lodge #6:** Reported that they have been working with the Blue Star and Gold Star Moms in their area and are actively operating a “Welcome Home Troops” project where groups go to the airport to welcome home Guard and Reserve units returning from Iraq or Afghanistan. Anyone wishing to help welcome home the Troops can get the information they need from the NCD web site at: www.ncdelks.org/ . The project is spearheaded by Sac 6 Elk Wayne Bellows, who is also very active in many other Veterans events (See attached information “Elks Recognize Veterans With Freedom Quilt” . Wayne Bellows reported over 105 Elk hours and over 540 miles have been spent this last quarter on sending “Lets Say Thanks” cards to troops overseas, Welcome Home Troops Program, Freedom Quilt Program, Gold and Blue Star Mom Programs, etc.
Many of their members are actively interacting with their local VFW and American Legion organizations on a monthly basis and they are golfing with several veterans.
- j. West Sacramento Lodge #2529:** Reported that many of their members are actively interacting with their local VFW and American Legion organizations on a monthly basis and they are golfing with several veterans.
- k. Woodland Lodge #1299:** Reported that many of their members are actively interacting with their local VFW and American Legion organizations on a monthly basis and they are golfing with several veterans.

1. Donation of Spaghetti Sauce To Lodges For Veterans Appreciation Dinners and List of Guard/Reserve/Veterans Organizations Near Each Lodge: The Lodges are to call Bob Burns Jr. at 916-799-5968 to arrange for pick up of the 200 gallons of Prego Spaghetti sauce for their Veterans Appreciation Dinners.
2. Yountville BBQ August 9th: Everything is on schedule and we hope to have representatives from each Lodge there for the BBQ
3. Adopt-A-Veteran Program/Army of Hope Program: If any Lodge member(s) wants to adopt a Veteran or need the name of a family to help out while one parent is away, call Bob Burns, Jr.
4. Michael Manning Coin Can Project: Only two Lodges have received their cans to date. Those that have are having problems finding volunteers and businesses to accept the cans at their places of business. Roseville has placed them at 11 businesses so far.
5. Welcoming Troops Returning From Iraq/Afghanistan, etc.: See attachment
6. Date of Each Lodge Veterans Dinner (Who Needs Speakers): See Lodge information above.
7. Year’s End Veterans Remembrance Report: All Lodges were reminded that this is a very important mandatory requirement at the end of the year.
8. Send Lodge Accomplishments For Publication on NCD Web Page: Al Russell announced that he would like each Lodge to call or email him with stories about helping Veterans so he can place them on the NCD web page for all to see.
9. Freedom Quilt DVD And Proposed Share of Proceeds Going To Elks National Veterans Service/ENF: See attachment on “Elks Recognize Veterans With “Freedom Quilt”
10. Identify Priority List of Veterans’ Causes Where Van Money May be Spent: The majority of members and Lodge representatives at the meeting agreed that some of the old “Van Money” should be spent on a Recreation/Hospitality Room at the Mather Veteran’s Center. The room could clearly show that it is donated by the North Central District Elks Lodges and it could have a big screen TV, and perhaps some card tables, and a pool table, etc. Dale Wiest also suggested that we might be able to do something for the Yountville Pathway Home Program. It was agreed to table this until the next meeting and Al Russell will check with Mather to see if such an idea was acceptable to the VA.

Good of the Order: None

Next meeting: September 29, 2008 Social at 6:00pm; Spaghetti Dinner at 6:30; Meeting at 7 pm.

Close: 8:35 pm

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Al Russell, PER, NCD Veterans Services Committee Chairman

Rancho Cordova Lodge 2484 “Catch The Spirit”

For the last three months, the Rancho Cordova Elks “Catch The Spirit” Project provided 650 boxes of food and dry goods to 118 National Guard families. These were the families of Guard members who were recently returning to regular active

status for active duty and deployment. Money transfers and relocation stressed their finances and placed the families in need of assistance.

The CTS Project also provided 4 pallets of ice cream (1,000 ½ gallons of ice cream) to National Guard and Reserve units for their “Family Day” functions, which is held to support families. It also has provided food/dairy/meat/bread and ice cream products to the Sacramento Veterans Resource Center for Veterans.

A National Guard family whose home had flooded, was also provided with beds and other furniture items. One Hundred cases of food and beverages were also provided to the American Red Cross in Sacramento when Highway 80 was shut down for three days due to a snow storm. Over 25 people, including some Veterans were stranded at the Greyhound Bus Station in Sacramento with no food or drink.

Food and beverages were also provided for a Veterans coalition dinner, as well as provisions for a Barbeque for 100 National Guard members. And it provided twenty-six new jackets to the Kit Carson Veterans Home in Jackson, California.

The Project has also been instrumental in gaining the association of a Service Dog Training program for Veterans with trauma and loss of limbs. The program will also continue to support others in need and closely work with the VA Hospitals and the American Red Cross.

Recently the Red Cross advised the Project Manager of a young Veteran who had been injured in Iraq, discharged, and re-injured on a job, and was now wheel-chair bound, out of work, and is caught up in the long wait (usually over a year) for approval of his VA disability status. He and his family are struggling to make ends meet. The CTS project has provided him with food, clothing, furniture and other provisions and has put him in contact with the Service Dog Program.

The CTS project is also providing about 220 gallons of Prego Spaghetti Sauce to each of the eleven Lodges in the District (a \$924 value), under the condition that they hold Veterans Appreciation Dinners and provide Veterans with free dinners and report their activities.

In summary, for this quarter, the project has helped over 1845 veterans, expending over 1500 Elk manhours and 1156 helper manhours, 3239 Elk miles driven, 2589 helper miles driven, \$45,700 non-cash contributions and \$3100 in cash contributions.

For further information on the “Catch The Spirit” Project, call the Project Manager/Chairman Bob Burns, Jr. at 916-799-5968 or email him at onefoot@sbcglobal.net

Elks Recognize Veterans With “Freedom Quilt”

Sacramento Elks Lodge #6 member Wayne Bellows is one of millions of Americans involved in recognizing all whom have served our nation in the name of freedom. Last year, the Lodge created a commemorative quilt that American veterans and their family members could sign on behalf of our soldiers. In May 2007, Wayne traveled with the “Capital To Capital Ride Across America” and stopped at Elks Lodges along the way to promote patriotism and provide opportunities for American Veterans and their families to sign the quilt.

During last year's Capitol to Capitol Ride Across America to Arlington for Memorial Day Services, there was a video film crew with them. They filmed each day and most of each night documenting the trip. Recently, the producers attended the Cannes Film Festival to shop their documentary. Last Saturday, there was a reunion in El Dorado Hills with several of the Riders, Veterans, Elks and film crew. They were taking some additional footage of the participants and more detail of the FREEDOM QUILT prior to final editing. Release is scheduled for about 90 days. There will be a DVD and perhaps a TV airing.

The producer asked Wayne about a business deal to distribute and market the DVD throughout Elksdom with a share of the gross going to ELKS nationally. He is going to submit a proposal to that end. Wayne commented that as the FREEDOM QUILT is a 'National Treasure Honoring Veterans', perhaps the Elks' share of proceeds would best be directed to Elks National Veteran's Service / ENF as an endowment. P.G.E.R. & Grand Lodge

Advisory Chairman, Jim McQuillan of Nebraska hosted the riders at Ogallala Lodge # 1760. Also, Jim Grillo, PGER of Stockton lodge serves in the same capacity for our area. Perhaps PGER Jim Grillo can offer some suggestions and help to move this forward if it appears viable for B.P.O.E.