

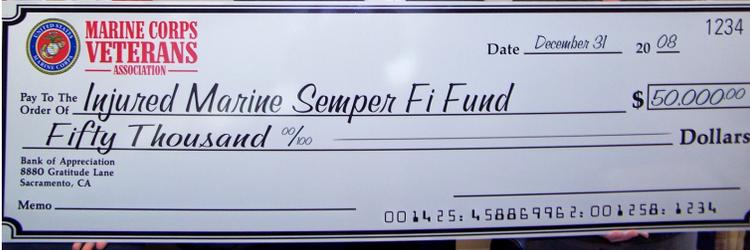


News & Updates *of MCVA Activities*

The Marine Corps Veterans Association was proud to be a sponsor and a participant in the Annual Cinema City International Film Festival held at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles. The festival ran from September 10-12 and MCVA sponsored an all expenses paid trip for three injured soldiers (two Marines and a Navy Corpsman) and their guests. It was our way of saying “thank you” to these brave men, all of whom were severely injured while serving our country in Iraq.



Our injured honorees from the VA Palo Alto Polytrauma Unit and Marine guests pose with actor Barry Pepper of Saving Private Ryan, Flags of Our Fathers, The Green Mile and We Were Soldiers, in Hollywood, California.



Another donation included \$50,000 to the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund. We are proud to be the largest contributor of any Veterans group in America!

From The Commanding Officer’s Desk

By George Marsh

We sadly report the deaths of three veterans – two Marines and a Navy man – from the Sonoma County area in the span of one week. All were admired and respected, as Doug Ernst observes in the St. Helena Star.

Of Rudy Papale, age 85, Ernst writes, “I never knew he was a Marine until I read his obituary.” We’ve all known many Marines who seldom mention their military careers, let alone their achievements. When pressed on the issue, they almost always reply, “I’m no hero. The real heroes are those who gave their lives on the battlefield.”

Another veteran was Navy submariner Ray Foster, 92. Like Rudy Papale, Mr. Foster apparently had a humble personality, rarely mentioning his personal military accomplishments. Ernst, who knew Foster well, had this to say: “I didn’t know (until I read the obituary) he had earned the Bronze Star, Silver Star, Navy and Marine Corps Medal, China Service Medal, Presidential Unit Citation (with Star), World War II Victory Medal, and the United Nations Service Medal.”

The third veteran was Marine Christopher Cousins, just 23 years old. Chris had undergone six eye surgeries after being injured in a blast in Iraq in 2005. He graduated in January, 2009 from the Pathway Home program at Yountville Veterans Home. The program helps returning veterans cope with their combat experiences and readjust to civilian life and assists others with coping with being redeployed to combat.

Chris said he wanted to attend college and study sociology, in order to “help out the other guys.” But nine days ago, on March

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23, he took his own life in Fernley, Nevada. A fellow graduate of Pathway said Chris was "having trouble dealing with his demons." Chris was Pathway Home's first ever graduate/suicide.

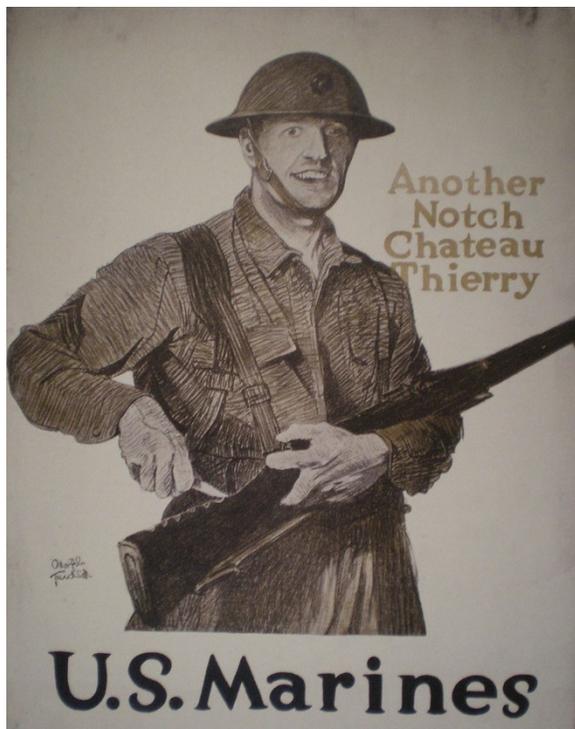
The Pathway Home is a program the Marine Corps Veterans Association has supported financially, and will continue to support. We know such programs can't always guarantee success. Yet, because young people like Chris gave everything for their country, the least we can do is help them when they come home. One way is to support programs like the Pathway Home. To help, please visit: www.thepathwayhome.org

Parris Island Memories

It was on April 6, 1917 that the United States officially entered World War I and by its end (1918), some 41,000 recruits had been processed at Parris Island.

During the war, all recruits were issued rifles in case they should have to defend the Island. Each Non Commissioned Officer and each recruit squad leader carried a bandolier of ammunition until the end of the war according to Eugene Alvarez, a researcher for the Marine Corps Historical Division Headquarters Marine Corps.

And speaking of Parris Island, congratulations to Lima Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, honor graduates for April, 2010: PFC's T.N. West, J.M. Davis, J.J. Porthouse, S.S. Burke, J.M. Balsor, and A. Haley.



Recruit Contact

During the first two weeks of recruit training, recruits will send home a letter stating they've arrived at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) San Diego and will provide an address for which to receive mail. To process the message quickly, provide the recruit's name, social security number, company and platoon.

Here is an example for recruit mail:

Recruit John E. Doe
1st Bn, Alpha Co. Plt _____
36001 Midway Ave
San Diego, Ca 92140 (plus platoon #)

(Source: marines.mil official website for the United States Marine Corps.)

Emergencies

If a message is required to notify a recruit of an emergency situation at any time during recruit training, contact your local American Red Cross or please visit the American Red Cross Emergency Services web page to have an official message sent to MCRD, San Diego.

Opportunities for Former Marines (Enlisted)

Former enlisted Marines with broken or continuous service who meet basic reenlistment prerequisites can apply for an off-contract waiver of reenlistment in the Marine Corps Reserve. Requests for waivers of these requirements to reenlist will only be granted to those Marines who are exceptionally qualified and possess critical skills or experience. Eligibility requirements and application procedures are contained in MCOP1040R.35. All applications must be initiated by a Prior Service Recruiter who will facilitate the required enclosures and aid in finding vacant billets.

Contact:

Reserve Affairs Division
Career Management Team (CMT)
3280 Russell Road,
Quantico, VA 22134-5103
Phone: (703) 784-9130/9131/9132
Toll Free (877) 415-9275 Option 5
DSN: 278-9130/9131/9132
Email: CMT@usmc.mil

(Source: marines.mil official website for the United States Marine Corps.)

In The News...

New Rules of Engagement

New Rules of Engagement have been designed to reduce Afghan civilian deaths. But at what cost?

The leader of the coalition forces in Afghanistan, Army General Stanley A. McChrystal, is adding more restrictive rules of engagement (ROE's) aimed at minimizing civilian deaths in Afghanistan. Previous rules were mainly focused on when and where to drop bombs on residential compounds, but the new rules go even further —focusing on all areas in which their might be civilians who could end up being casualties.

McChrystal and his supporters, which apparently include most of the high-ranking field commanders from the Army and Marine Corps, believe such an approach serves America well in the long run by gaining support and sympathy from the Afghan populace, while reducing support for the insurgents by the populace.

Critics of the new policy argue that focusing on minimizing civilian casualties will invariably endanger American lives and that had we followed such a policy in World War II, it is unlikely we would have won the war.

Marine Sergeant's Conviction Overturned

It's been reported that the murder conviction of Marine Sgt. Lawrence Hutchins, has been overturned and dismissed by the United States Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals. Hutchins' defense counsel successfully argued that Hutchins had been denied a fair trial by a military judge's error in relinquishing a highly respected military attorney who had spent three years on the case and had knowledge that was critical to the outcome, which, according to Hutchins attorneys, would have proven Hutchins innocence.

Originally, prosecutors had said that Hutchins had led a squad of six other Marines and a Navy Corpsman to a home in the Iraqi village of Hamdania, and dragged a 52 year old man from his home, put him in a ditch and shot him. They then allegedly planted a shovel and an AK 47 to make it appear as if he was a terrorist planting an explosive.

As the trial proceeded, however, Hutchins' involvement was not so clear-cut. He was cleared of the home break-in charge as well as the kidnapping when it was determined he had not actually been with the squad, but only learned of the break-in and kidnapping when radioed by his squad, who informed him they had shot a man believed to be a terrorist. Only after the investigation did Hutchins learn the man had not been a terrorist.

Still, Hutchins spent nearly four years in prison. The government was given 30 days to decide whether to appeal or seek a new trial or Hutchins will go free.

The case comes in the wake of several other losses by government officials seeking convictions of American soldiers and Marines accused of killing unarmed Iraqis.

Army "Disinvites" Franklin Graham from Prayer Event

After complaints from liberals and Muslim leaders, Army spokesman Colonel Tom Collins said that the Army has rescinded the invitation to Franklin Graham to preside over a National Day of Prayer at the Pentagon. Collins said that Graham's statements on Islam were "inappropriate" in today's Army, which he said seeks "diversity" and to "honor all faiths". Graham had previously called Islam "evil" and "offensive".

SOUND OFF!

If you have a story you'd like to share such as the Haditha incident involving Marines in Iraq, contaminated water at Camp Lejeune, WW II, Vietnam, Persian Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, the global war on terror, etc., please submit it to the editor at:



mcvatimes@sbcglobal.net

The **MCVA Times** is published by the Marine Corps Veterans Association. The goal is to provide information concerning the activities of the organization.

Send all news items, editorials, pictures, news releases, address changes, corrections, comments, or suggestions to:

mcvatimes@sbcglobal.net

When submitting articles, include your name, address and phone number to facilitate any questions. Letters may be edited for clarity and content.

The views expressed by the authors may not necessarily constitute those of the **MCVA Times** or the Marine Corps Veterans Association.

Please visit the MCVA website at www.marinevets.org for the latest news and information.

Member Pictures

MCVA associate member, Gerald Plot, submitted a photo of his Marine son, Captain Joseph Plot, now serving in Afghanistan.



From left to right, Marines Major "Deuce" Capili, Captain Joseph Plot, and Major "Jorge" Ramsey.

Captain Plot had this to say about his assignment: "It is interesting when I'm the only Captain in the crew, but I'm also the Mission Commander which means that the Majors are doing what I say during the flight. Jorge was also one of my flight school instructors, which also makes it weird."

Below: Photo of Hindu Kush mountain range.



MCVA Times

Got a picture you would like to share? *MCVA Times* is always looking for member photos. Send your photos to: mcvatimes@sbcglobal.net

Upcoming Community Events

Northern California Statewide Collaborative Meeting

This is an open forum promoting the exchange of information and resources for the care of military, veterans and families. Meeting dates for 2010 are: July 3, August 14, September 25, November 6 and December 18. For more information, contact: Bobbi Park at (916) 409-09462; (530) 388-8074 or bobbipark-caswc@gmail.com

Fifth Annual Veterans Memorial Golf Tournament

The Fifth Annual Veterans Memorial Golf Tournament will be held in Pleasant Hill on September 20, 2010. The tournament is sponsored by the American Legion, the Marine Corps League, the Navy League and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Prizes, events, dinner and live auction! The proceeds from the event benefit the Palo Alto Polytrauma Center for the severely wounded from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2009, the Marine Corps Veterans Association was a major contributor to this event. For more information call: Wil Wilcox at (925) 672-6159 or wilcoxw@sbcglobal.net

Carmichael Park District Seeking Nominations for Patriots Park Wall of Honor

The District is seeking nominations for its Wall of Honor. Eligible are Carmichael district residents who gave their lives while serving their country or community. Nominees must not have been convicted of a felony.

Candidates for nomination must be submitted by July 31, 2010.

Visit www.carmichaelpark.com and click on the navigation bar "Wall of Honor" for an application and the list of current heroes. Call (916) 485-5322 extension 23 for more information.



The Brutality of World War II

by George Marsh

With World War II fading further into the murky depths of history, recounting the brutality of the event is a worthy exercise, especially if it helps avoid such horrors in the future.

It's been 65 years since the worldwide conflict, remembered by Richard B. Frank, in the April 2010 edition of "Naval History." Frank, a consultant for the HBO miniseries "The Pacific," lays out some disturbing facts, including the estimation that between 50 and 65 million people were killed during World War II. That included 17 to 27 million in the Pacific theater, or about a third to half of all war deaths.

But contrary to popular belief, there were more noncombatant deaths in the Pacific than in Europe, the intense Allied fire-bombing of Dresden notwithstanding. And while the ratio of noncombatant deaths to military deaths in Europe was 1 to 1.3, the ratio in the Pacific was from three to five noncombatants for every military death. Of the noncombatants, 90% were not Japanese. Even with the bombings of Tokyo, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the casualties only constituted between 2 to 4% of all noncombatant deaths in the Pacific.

Frank also points to the American public's seemingly selective understanding of the facts of war. He notes that although most recognized Hitler as a menace to democracy and an evil to be opposed, a November 1944 Gallup Poll found that only 3% of the American public believed Hitler had killed as many as a million Jews when the actual total was six times that number.

Frank's findings are enlightening, but there are many more that have been forgotten over time, or perhaps never learned. This alone is disturbing if you agree with the philosopher Santayana, who so eloquently said "those who cannot remember the lessons of history are condemned to repeat it."

Many, if not most, Americans are unaware of the magnitude of the brutality of Hitler and his forces, along with the Japanese, during the era. Such ignorance puts democracy at risk, for if people do not understand tyranny they will be unable to recognize it when it next appears somewhere in the world.

It's also critically important to appreciate the significance of America and the concept of it being the shining beacon on the hill to the oppressed of the world, and an example for other nations to follow. While that image is ridiculed today, it is an idea that should –must– be resurrected. It is our inheritance of the principles of law, liberty, equality and justice, along with free market economics, unmatched by any nation past or present, that has benefited America and the rest of the world.

But recognize –let alone accept– that fact or not, we have an obligation to preserve and if necessary fight for those principles for those that follow us in recognition and honor of Americans whose blood runs through our veins, Americans who gave their lives in defense of those principles.

In that spirit, this report will first discuss and analyze World War II in Europe and then in the Pacific Theater against Japan.

American military deaths totaled 292,000 in World War II, with another 6,000 civilian deaths, and most at the hands of Adolf Hitler's Nazi forces.

Hitler's history of hatred, atrocity and tyranny is well-documented and does not need to be repeated here. Suffice to say that his lifetime was spent crossing the border between genius and insanity, and that he came close to succeeding in his goal of world conquest before his death.

Hitler believed that in any conflict, only victory –not right– mattered, a philosophy evident from his earliest days. He had no compunction against executing anyone at any time, including enemies, former allies and supporters and friends. This practice, of course, had the desired effect of reminding those who survived to stay in line and never question his leadership or authority.

Other nations, most notably Great Britain and Czechoslovakia, found that appeasement would not tame the dictator who was now being called a wild beast. France openly disregarded solemn written guarantees to safeguard Czech borders, and when they were informed of the betrayal by their western allies, Czechs cried openly in the streets of Prague.

Many Americans are aware of the failure to achieve peace and avoid bloodshed as the legacy of signed agreements with dictators, but are often unaware of the American and allied positions regarding Jews both before and during World War II. Hitler's opinions and intentions regarding Jews were made clear as early as the 1920's in his book "Mein Kampf," in which he described them as an evil race deserving of extermination.

But this reality seemed lost on western world leaders, including America's, in 1938, when an intergovernmental committee was formed at the urging of Franklin Delano Roosevelt to propose means of allowing Jewish immigration to western countries. A total of 26 nations took part, but the agreements reached failed to save a single Jew from Hitler's death camps. Delegate after delegate spoke with sympathy toward the plight of the Jews, but most also said their quotas for Jewish immigration had been reached and they could not allow more to escape to their borders.

German Fascism was thus allowed to continue to rob, torture and drive Jews from their homes, many facing agonizing ends

in place like Dachau, Buchenwald and other Nazi death camps.

Hitler's Nazi followers, who were conditioned to believe that all Jews were less than human, were adept at exercising brute force against the Jews and other enemies, while he also sought to achieve and sustain absolute power over the German people by neutralizing powerful institutions, such as the Christian church. The Nazi's multi-fork strategy of intimidation against a variety of real or potential opposing parties is one that has been followed by dictators around the world to this day in the Soviet Union, China and Communist Vietnam.

Nazi brutality against the Jews has been told over and over, but even as the war progressed, there were Americans who refused to believe the accounts of death camps and spreading terror. Such doubt could be the result of propaganda and false information printed during World War I, including stories of German crucifixion and amputation of American soldiers' hands. Consequently, when some Americans read or heard of the brutal treatment of Jews during World War II, they discounted it as simply more of the same propaganda.

Among the skeptics was Joseph Pulitzer, editor of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. At the end of World War II –just days before Hitler's death and Germany's defeat– he toured the Buchenwald concentration camp along with several other newspaper and magazine editors at the invitation of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Pulitzer concluded that the years of stories of savagery and horror had been understated, saying “the brutal fiendishness of these operations defies description...these pestilence-ridden murder factories of Buchenwald.” He also spoke of the lampshade and other “objects of art” made for the wife of a German SS leader from “human skin bearing unusual tattoos.”

Even before the war's end, Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels told an assembly of newspaper editors that there were “still 48,000 Jews in Berlin. They know with deadly certainty that as the war progresses they will be packed off to the East and delivered up to a murderous fate. They already feel the inevitable harshness of physical extermination.” The date of the speech: September 23, 1942.

Even earlier, in the fall and winter of 1940, the U.S. State Department was informed of the systematic killings of mentally ill patients in German asylums. A U.S. counsel in Leipzig told top department officials of a sudden increase in death notices appearing in local newspapers, placed by relatives of patients in the Grafenck mental asylum. A short time later, an anonymous letter arrived at the U.S. War Department from the German-Swiss border, signed by a “Christian, who cannot bear to witness this any longer. Thousands of patients are secretly murdered monthly, including paying patients and those who are

only slightly ill. Hurry, and with your expressions of horror prevent further murders.”

The use of mental asylums to “deal with” political dissenters and others deemed undesirable – Jew or Christian or whatever – has been a “remedy” favored by both Nazi and Communist dictatorships. Willing, or intimidated, doctors will sign papers verifying that the patient is a risk to himself or others, and once behind asylum walls, that patient becomes fair game for the brutal and sadistic impulses of his captors. Yet despite all this horror, Hitler and his dream of world conquest were defeated.

In April and May 1945, American soldiers visited the burial pit at the Belsen concentration camp, seeing first-hand the countless Jewish corpses, emaciated, shot or clubbed to death by their Nazi captors.

One of the victims who died before the American liberation was Anne Frank, who even in the darkest moments of her ordeal maintained her ideals and envisioned an end to this horrific madness that had been set upon her and others. “It's really a wonder I haven't dropped all my ideals,” she wrote in her diary, “because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them because, in spite of everything, I still believe people are good at heart... I see a world gradually becoming a wilderness, I hear the ever-approaching thunder, which will destroy us too. I can feel the suffering of millions, and yet, if I look into the heavens, I think that...this cruelty, too, will end.”

At about the same time Joseph Pulitzer was observing the Buchenwald camp, American and British forces were moving toward Berlin from the west while Russian troops were advancing from the east.

The U.S. Army's 90th Division was conducting cleanup operations near Buchenwald requiring local Germans to remove the bodies of 161 Polish Jews from roadside mud holes for burial in the nearby town of Neunberg. The Jews had been murdered by the German's elite SS, which had put about 11,000 Jewish prisoners on a forced march from Buchenwald. Those too weak to continue were shot or clubbed to death, with only 6,000 surviving the march by the time the Americans arrived.

Together with the full, undeniable realization of the horrors Hitler's Nazis inflicted upon the Jews came another visited upon American prisoners of war that until only recently has received scant media attention. And American and Western political leaders must share a huge part of the blame.

Throughout World War II, there were several dozen POW camps in Germany holding American and Allied fighting men. These camps also housed Russians but yet not all were sympathetic to either Nazi totalitarianism or their own homeland's version, Communism. Many had in fact fought against the Communist revolution in Russia and had no interest in returning

home upon the war's end. They knew all too well they faced execution or a lifetime of forced labor in Siberia.

This shameful part of our history began in February 1945, when Roosevelt and Britain's Winston Churchill met with Russia's Joseph Stalin at Yalta. The two Western leaders agreed to forcefully return – repatriate – up to two million Russian POWs, almost all of whom were anti-Communists.

Such an agreement was sure to be unacceptable to the American public and other westerners, so the Yalta conferees agreed to keep it secret. Stalin insisted upon the return of the Russian POWs because he feared the West would use them as effective propaganda tools at the end of the war. His bargaining chips were American POWs that would soon be liberated from the German camps. Roosevelt died in April 1945 and Harry S Truman became U.S. President and another meeting on the subject was held in Hale, Germany, that May, to spell out the details of the agreement reached at Yalta. America agreed to return all the anti-Communists, by force if necessary, and the Soviets agreed to return all American prisoners.

Complicating matters was the inconsistency of the U.S. observance of the agreements, and as events unfolded, things became worse. It can be one thing to make a deal with the devil and stick to it, but it is even worse to make the deal and instead of backing out of it, attempting to reach the impossible compromise of straddling the fence between heaven and hell.

That, however, was the position the Americans took, and Stalin soon learned the Americans and British were cheating on the agreements by secretly holding back thousands of anti-Communist POWs from release. Stalin, for his part, followed through on his promise to not release any Americans liberated by the Russians from German camps. It is also clear that the unholy agreement was tainted from the beginning by uncertainty among U.S. officials who were concerned that the Soviets could not be trusted to keep their part of the agreement.

By the last week of April 1945, Soviet troops observed the streets of Berlin littered with the bodies of Germans who had committed suicide. There were about 40,000 German deserters in the subway tunnels beneath the city, and on the buildings of Berlin, there were posted orders from Heinrich Himmler that there would be immediate reprisals against the families of deserters.

Near Berlin, in the town of Luckenwalde, Soviet troops had freed Americans held in a German POW camp. But the freedom was short-lived.

Some Americans and British POWs were turned back at gunpoint and became prisoners of the Russians. This same scenario was played out in numerous other prison camps in Germany. Americans who had been prisoners of the Germans,

now became prisoners of the Russians. Up to 23,500 American POWs were known to be alive during the last week of April, yet never returned home.

No doubt in an effort to protect American perception of its leadership, the Pentagon by June 1945 had created paperwork, including falsified documents, to account for the loss of the 23,500 American servicemen. Information of the American and British POWs during World War II became highly classified and, reportedly, even hidden from Congressional representatives.

At the same time the Allies and Russians were advancing on Berlin, Japan was continuing to wage its fierce war in the Pacific Theater while extending its history of brutality that actually pre-dated Pearl Harbor and World War II.

While the public was aware that Nazi Germany had killed at most tens of thousands attacking Poland in 1939, it also knew that the Communists under Stalin had killed, at minimum seven million persons in the 1930's and that Japan had killed millions of Chinese between 1937 and 1941.

In April 1945, a Japanese Kamikaze (suicide) plane attacked a clearly marked and lighted American Navy hospital ship, the USS Comfort, evacuating wounded soldiers from Okinawa, killing 29 and wounding 33. The ship had large red crosses on her white decks and superstructure.

The attack was similar to an example of the barbarity Japan had unleashed in 1937 in what became known as the Rape of Nanking. Here, Japanese soldiers murdered an estimated 300,000 Chinese civilians and raped tens of thousands of women and girls, some as young as 11 or 12 years of age.

More civilians were killed in Nanking than the combined totals of civilians killed by American atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Some of the estimated 200,000 to 300,000 female victims were raped as many as 50 times in a single day. Those that developed a venereal disease were summarily shot by the departing Japanese soldiers to prevent them from infecting Japanese soldiers arriving in Nanking for rest and recreational tours.

The Japanese invasion of China is estimated to have cost the Chinese 19 million civilian lives, while some experts put the number closer to 35 million.

Similar conduct characterized the actions of the Japanese throughout World War II, as indicated by William Manchester in his book, "The Glory and the Dream." He notes that "What made Pacific combat so ferocious, and turned it into a conflict in which few prisoners were taken, was that the Japs thought it shameful for their enemies to surrender too. Their captives were not treated gently. Corregidor's survivors were led on a death march after their capitulation – that is, the weak and the

wounded were literally marched to death. Nips beheaded Marine raiders captured on Makin Island, at Milne Bay they left behind bayoneted Australian prisoners whose penises had been lopped off and the foreskins sewn to their lips. Above hung a taunting sign, "It took them a long time to die." Manchester says that Japanese swimming ashore after the Battle of the Bismarck Sea were carved up by New Guinea headhunters and others, on Guadalcanal, were eaten by their own comrades.

Such Japanese atrocities were not isolated. Most American over the age of 60 are aware of the Bataan Death March and of the diabolical medical experimentation on living American and Chinese prisoners by Japanese doctors in the notorious Unit 731 Laboratory in Manchuria.

These experiences with the Germans and Japanese, along with the knowledge of the wholesale slaughter of millions under Stalin's Russian Communist dictatorship in the 1930's, made the Allies –and especially the Americans– realize we must prevail in World War II or sacrifice mankind to perhaps a thousand years of darkness. It cannot be overstated that those in America and the West who worked to develop and eventually use the atomic bomb were fully aware of the stakes involved. With victory, America could continue on the path of being the "guiding light" to the world, affording its people not only the highest in material prosperity but more importantly as the exemplar, with no equal, in safeguarding and extending the notions of freedom, equality and justice within a constitutional scheme safeguarding freedoms of speech, press and religion. The race to develop the atomic bomb can only be understood with these ideas in mind.

Japan's desire to fight a bloody, protracted war to the very end, regardless of the casualties to their side –civilian or military– was an openly stated position of its leadership. So, in the spring and summer of 1945, when the Allies and America were optimistic concerning a German surrender in the not too distant future, feelings were much more guarded about the Pacific Theater.

America, for one thing, was still suffering immense casualties. On February 19, 1945, U.S. Marines began the Battle of Iwo Jima, and within the first 47 hours, some 3,600 of them were dead. Within 26 days, Marine casualties totaled 23,000. In the battle for Okinawa in May 1945, American deaths stood at 7,000, with another 36,000 wounded.

With increased optimism that we would soon prevail against Hitler and the Axis, greater attention was focused on Japan. The first serious air raids occurred in March of 1945 as 300 super fortresses struck Tokyo and its main military, industrial and business center and a population of one million. American bombings laid waste to 15 square miles and 83,000 Japanese

died, including thousands of civilians. Super fortresses virtually destroyed the city of Nagoya in May 1945 and a month later the White House discussed the issue of the nature of an eventual Japanese surrender.

President Truman's position was that Japan needed to be completely demilitarized while enabling the country to retain its religion, way of life and its emperor. It was felt that any other solution would drive the Japanese to fight to the end, even if such a decision was suicidal.

Only July 1, following Truman's approval of the invasion of Kyushu, American intelligence intercepted a Japanese message in which its foreign minister told its cabinet that "We need to agree to surrender now." The Japan cabinet's response was that the country should fight "to the bitter end."

The rest, as we have come to say, is history, including America's use of the atomic bomb and Japan's unconditional surrender on essentially the terms President Truman had initially proposed.

The surrender, unfortunately, came too late for millions of Japanese civilians. On August 6, Hiroshima was hit with an atomic bomb with the equivalent of 20,000 tons of TNT. An area of four square miles – 60% of the city – was wiped out and 78,000 killed and another 37,000 wounded. The decision to use the atomic bomb was decided upon because the alternative of a land invasion of Japan would have cost some one million American lives, another one million Allied lives, and as high as two million Japanese lives.

With the defeat of Germany, Italy and Japan, the accounting began. America suffered 292,000 military deaths, along with an additional 6,000 civilians. Two million Japanese military died.

In retrospect, the United States took a noble path following the conclusion of World War II, despite the documented brutalities unleashed on the world by its opponents. Instead of seeking world conquest and dominance made very possible by its sole possession of the atomic bomb, America sought reconciliation and began cultivating peace among the nations of the world. America, of all the world's nations, became the major contributor in supplies, food, and finances to those countries ravaged by the war. The aid extended to not only our friends, but to those who had been our enemies during the war.

Perhaps the position reflected a determination to extend Abraham Lincoln's principles and compassion into the 20th century. In 1865, with Union victory in sight, Lincoln spoke of his vision for America: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, ...to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which

The Brutality of WWII... Continued from Page 8

may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.” (Second Inaugural Address).

Or it might be fair to conclude that America’s philosophy reflected Anne Frank’s optimism that regardless of the brutalities of war, people are basically good at heart.

Surely it reflected both.

MCVA Photos



L. Jason Poole, 1st Sgt. Fred Tittle, Chaplain at VA Palo Alto Medical Center, U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman Shawn Nerdlinger, Cpl. Cameron White, L. Jason Poole.



George Marsh, Commanding Officer of the Marine Corps Veterans Association and Todd Dierdorff, Executive Director, Toys for the Troop's Kids.



Suzanne DeLaurentiis, film producer and associate producer of Rocky V, and founder of Cinema City International Film Festival, poses with U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman Shawn Nerdlinger, LCpl. Angel Gomez, L. Jason Poole.

Great Links & Contacts

Links and Contact Information

United States Marine Corps: www.marines.mil
is the official website for the United States Marine Corps and provides news stories, press releases, photos, unit directory, and command information to active duty and reserve Marines and veterans.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
www.va.gov (800) 827-1000

To replace military medals:
www.va.gov/vaforms/

Replacing military records:
www.archives.gov/research/index.html

or:

National Personnel Records Center
Military Personnel Records
9700 Page Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63131-5100

Calendar of Events — 2010

June	July	August
June 22 at 1900 hrs MCVA Regular Monthly Meeting Sam's Hof Brau 2500 Watt Avenue Sacramento, CA (near the corner of El Camino Ave.)	July 27 at 1900 MCVA Regular Monthly Meeting Sam's Hof Brau 2500 Watt Avenue Sacramento, CA (near the corner of El Camino Ave.)	August 24 at 1900 hrs MCVA Regular Monthly Meeting Sam's Hof Brau 2500 Watt Avenue Sacramento, CA (near the corner of El Camino Ave.)



Cole Hauser (2nd from left), whose film credits include: Good Will Hunting, Hart's War, White Oleander, 2 Fast, 2 Furious, The Family that Preys and The Chronicles of Reddick poses US Navy Hospital Corpsman Shawn Nerdlinger, Angel Gomez and Jason Poole.

Links... Continued from Page 9

Education (GI Bill): 1-888-442-4551

Health Care Benefits: 1-888-222-8387

Life Insurance: 1-800-669-8477

Gulf War / Agent Orange: 1-800-749-8387

Health Care Services:

Sacramento Veterans Center
 1111 Howe Avenue, Suite 390
 Sacramento, CA 95825

Application for Membership
Cut and mail to the address below

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Date of Birth _____

Membership Type (Please check one):

Regular Marine

(must provide proof of honorable service)
 \$40 Annual fee; includes the following:
 Your choice of

Leatherneck Magazine

Marine Corps Gazette

Associate (non-Marine)
 \$20 Annual Fee

Date: _____

Signature _____

Marine Corps Veterans Association
 PO Box 214183
 Sacramento, CA 95821