

American Legion
 Gilroy Post #217
 74 West 6th Street #D
 Gilroy, Ca. 95020



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September/October
 2014 Edition



Post #217 Officers

Commander
 Bob Armendariz
 408-310-9419

1st Vice Commander
 Camilo De La Cueva
 408-230-4987

2nd Vice
 Commander
 Jose Garza
 408-763-6732

Finance Officer
 Nick Marquez
 408-848-5099

Adjutant
 Ray Sanchez
 408-607-3280

Chaplain
 Steve Charvez
 408-710-1655

Sgt-at-Arms
 Jose Delgado
 408-427-5824



ASSORTED INFORMATION...worth repeating here we go again beginning in July you started receiving your membership renewal notices, pay your dues one time and one time only, in spite of the fact that the national office will continue to send you renewal notices, if you paid once do not pay again!!! if you are 85 or older or a past commander you have received your membership card along with a letter explaining why you are entitled to a free membership do not pay again...the Veterans Outreach Project and the Anniversary dinner were both very successful if you missed them this year make plans to attend next year...**don't forget socials start at 6:00 PM and members are free everyone else is \$10** ...some of the information in this newsletter may seem familiar, that's because the news takes a while to sink in so we have to keep reminding everyone over and over again...if you want to help set up tables and chairs for the socials contact Nick Marquez, 408-848-5099...we have finally ARRIVED we now have a website albeit with limited information, special thanks to Iann Webb for donating his time, talent and skills, he is a recent graduate of Gavilan College where he won a scholarship to attend San Jose State, you're a class act Iann...

So type in the following: www.americanlegion217.org and there you are..the South Santa Clara Valley Memorial is the board that manages and maintains the Veterans Memorial Building they will be charging our post rent (about \$360 a month) once the members approve, attend the business meetings and stay informed voice your opinions...special thanks to past commander Nick Young for donating to our Gavilan College scholarship fund...in this issue find a form "Gilroy Veteran Tribute" if you want your picture posted on the local cable channel fill out the form and send it to Joe Kline at the address or email listed, **do not** mail it to the Adjutant...fyi never leave membership renewals or applications in the bar, send them to the Adjutant for quicker results and so they don't get lost.

Ever Wonder What Your American Legion Post #217 Does In The Community And With Veterans Affairs? Check Us Out..These Are Some Of The Projects We Work On.

- We award scholarships to Gavilan College students
- We sponsor a community outreach for area veterans
- We provide free meals for veterans as well as members on Veterans Day
- We provide scholastic certificates and medallions to outstanding students at all middle schools at their graduation ceremonies
- We donate to worthy veteran charitable causes as well as to individuals in need of temporary help with housing and finances
- We alternate annually providing Memorial Day Remembrance at the local cemetery and sponsoring the parade
- The post also lays out flags on Memorial Day and Veterans Day at the cemetery
- With the Boys State program we support and provide financial assistance to high school students. The program teaches them the workings of government. Our last student earned a trip to Washington DC
- We work with local scouts teaching them flag protocol
- We award free memberships to all who are past commanders or are 85 years of age and recognize members for their longevity with a dinner and awards each year

Important Numbers To Remember

- Veterans Administration Health Care.....877-222-8387
- Act Addiction.....866-717-1978
- Billing Inquiries.....866-3472353
- Homeless Hotline.....877-424-3838
- Pharmacy.....800-311-2511
- Suicide Lifeline.....800-273-8255
- Telephone Care800-455-0057
- VA Benefits.....800-827-1000
- Women's Program.....650-852-3229
- Veterans Specialist Steven Grace 831-464-4575ex2700
- Patient Advocate Stephen Rogers.....650-493-5000 ex 63543

**Coming Events
 2104**

Business meeting
 September 4th
 Social
 September 18th

Business meeting
 October 2nd
 Social
 October 16th

Business meeting
 November 6th
 Social
 November 20th

Business meeting
 December 4th
 Social
 December 18th

2015

January 1st
 No Business meeting
 Social
 January 15th

Business meeting
 February 5th
 Social
 February 19th

Business Meeting
 March 5th
 Social
 March 19th

FOR YOUR SOCIAL
 RSVP
 CALL
 ADJUTANT
 RAY SANCHEZ
 408-607-3280
 OR SIGN THE SLIP



If you are having trouble receiving this newsletter check with your mailman there have been many instances of improperly delivered mail....you may also read this newsletter in color on our brand new website www.americanlegion214.org

ARLINGTON, VA. — A lingering image for any Arlington National Cemetery visitor — more than caissons bearing the soon-to-be-interred or even the white-gloved honor guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier — is the perfect symmetry of alabaster headstones endlessly arrayed.

The stone sentinels give up their dead only on close inspection to visitors who leave pathways to gingerly step close and read the black lettering etched into marble.

“Christopher David Horton, Spc. U.S. Army, Afghanistan, Oct. 1, 1984, Sept. 9, 2011, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Valiant Warrior, Fearless Sniper” are words on one of more than 900 graves from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars in the cemetery’s Section 60.

For the dead — like Horton, killed in a hail of enemy AK-47 fire — the words are a spare summary of sacrifice; what Abraham Lincoln called “the last full measure of devotion.”

More than 400,000 are buried here.

The epitaphs are reminders that ever since Union Army Pvt. William Henry Christman became the first to be buried here on May 13, 1864 — 150 years ago Tuesday — this place has always been less about grandeur, stone and protocol than about people.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus touched on this theme before a congregation at an Arlington burial service a year ago for two sailors killed in war: “We are joined as Lincoln again reminded us by ‘the mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield, and every patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone.’”

The sailors’ remains were recovered years earlier from the sunken wreckage of the USS Monitor, famed for battling a Confederate ironclad to a draw in 1862.

As the Civil War dead were carried to their Arlington graves, hundreds gathered. Scattered throughout were sailors of today in dress uniforms eager to link with this moment, each crisply saluting from wherever they stood.

The place is about people.

It was the bitterness of Quartermaster Gen. Montgomery Meigs that first led to the cemetery’s creation.

Angry that his former mentor, Robert E. Lee, had joined the rebellion and desperate for more space to bury the accumulating dead of the Civil War, Meigs recommended that the Lee estate overlooking Washington be turned into a graveyard. Burials had already begun by the time approval came through on June 15, 1864.

A century later, it was with a simple nod of her head that Jacqueline Kennedy acquiesced to the gravesite for her husband on the slope below the Lee Arlington House. She insisted that the assassinated president be laid to rest in a public, accessible place because “he belongs to the people.”

A half-century after that, it was the outpouring of grief by young widows, parents and battle buddies that led to the only consistent splash of color within 624 acres of cemetery — the balloons, childhood drawings, stuffed Easter bunnies and unopened bottles of beer left on the graves of Iraq and Afghanistan war dead.

The now-widely recognized Section 60 is a long stroll from popular tourist sites such as the Kennedy grave and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Unlike the deceased retired military that make up most of the 27-30 burials that occur at Arlington each day, the dead of Section 60 were so young, that the grieving here is far more intense.

So it is a place where a grieving father may be seen laying prostrate on his son’s grave or where a mother sits in a thunderous downpour unaware that her lawn chair is sinking into a softening earth.

Those who mourn regularly have coalesced into a kind of club, but one that one mother conceded “nobody wants to be in.”

For visitors who stroll the walkways or ride the trolleys across the cemetery, there are more stories than a single trip can encompass.

Here are seven seldom-known facts about the people of Arlington National Cemetery:

- For decades, an area south of the cemetery was home to thousands of former slaves. They began filtering into the capital area shortly after Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, hundreds settling near Arlington House. Freedman’s Village was born and thriving with a school, hospital and church until disbanded about 1900, the land eventually included in the cemetery. About 3,200 unmarked contraband graves remain.

- Among the more infrequent of headstones at Arlington are those with gold lettering against the white marble. There are 403. These signify that the buried service member received the highest valor award — a Medal of Honor. One of the more recent belongs to 19-year-old Army Spc. Ross McGinnis, who lowered himself onto a grenade thrown inside the Humvee he was riding in Iraq in 2006.

- When John F. Kennedy was assassinated, his younger brother, Robert, urged that the grave be adorned with a simple white cross. He was overruled by his brother’s widow, Jackie. After Robert was assassinated five years later, he was laid to rest near his brother, the grave marked with a simple, white wooden cross. The same now adorns the nearby grave of Edward “Ted” Kennedy. They are the only two wooden crosses in the cemetery.

- Among 16,000 Civil War dead buried at Arlington, including several hundred Confederate soldiers, is the son of cemetery founder Montgomery Meigs. Lt. John Rodgers Meigs died in a skirmish in October 1864. His father later had him re-interred at Arlington beneath a tomb depicting in statuary the lieutenant’s death scene, his body laying in the mud amid trampling hoof-prints of Confederate horses.

- Amid the head-stone covered hills of Arlington is one bare but for three graves representing two generations and two wars. One is the grave of Gen. John “Black Jack” Pershing, who led U.S. forces in World War I. Nearby are two grandsons: John W. Pershing, an Army veteran who died 1998 and Richard W. Pershing, killed in Vietnam in 1968. Along the slopes of the hill are buried troops the elder Pershing commanded.

- Three of the seven service members depicted in the iconic Marine Corps Memorial, showing the flag raising on Iwo Jima, are buried at Arlington. Two, Ira Hayes and Rene Gagnon, survived the battle and lived to see the memorial built just outside the cemetery. The third, Michael Strank, was killed in combat six days after the famous AP photo that inspired the statue was taken.

- A very rare group at the cemetery are the 184 victims of the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon. They are represented as co-mingled, unidentified remains buried under a memorial. There are individual victim graves nearby. One person whose remains were never identified was a 3-year-old girl aboard American Airlines Flight 77 that struck the Pentagon. The site is in a distant southeast corner of the cemetery several hundred feet from the Pentagon. It is unique in Arlington to be buried so close to where death occurred, cemetery officials say.

GILROY VETERANS TRIBUTE

Please submit one photograph of the veteran in uniform along with this completed questionnaire. Because of space limitations, we can display only one photo per veteran. Each photograph used will be carefully handled, scanned, and returned to the submitter.

Please return this completed form with photo to Joe Kline, Public Information Officer, at Gilroy City Hall, 7351 Rosanna Street, Gilroy. Submission can also be sent via e-mail to joe.kline@ci.gilroy.ca.us

Photos will be on display ay Gilroy City Hall November through December. The tribute will also air on Cable Channel 17 during this time.

Name of Veteran: _____

Military Branch, Rank, Unit: _____

Military Job: _____

Where Stationed: _____

Dates of Service: _____

Submitted by: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

A little something for you history buffs.

Hours after Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Secret Service found themselves in a bind. President Franklin D. Roosevelt was to give his Day of Infamy speech to Congress on Tuesday, and although the trip from the White House to Capitol Hill was short, agents were not sure how to transport him safely. At the time, Federal Law prohibited buying any cars that cost more than \$750, so they would have to get clearance from Congress to do that, and nobody had time for that.

One of the Secret Service members, however, discovered that the US Treasury had seized the bulletproof car that mobster Al Capone owned when he was sent to jail in 1931. They cleaned it, made sure it was running fine and had it ready for the President the day after.

Al Capone’s 1928 Cadillac 341 a Town Sedan, Now the President’s Limo, December 1941. And run properly it did. Capone’s car was a sight to behold. It had been painted black and green so as to look identical to Chicago’s police cars at the time. It also had a specially installed siren and flashing lights hidden behind the grille, along with a police scanner radio.

To top it off, the gangsters 1928 Cadillac 341A Town Sedan had 3,000 pounds of armor and inch-thick bulletproof windows. Mechanics are said to have cleaned and checked each feature of the Caddy well into the night of December 7th to make sure that it would run properly the next day for the Commander in Chief. The car was sold at an auction price of \$341,000 in 2012.