



The Recorder



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Don Diego V.F.W. Post 7420 Newsletter

August

2017



Post Commander:

Comrades and Auxiliary members,

I want to start off by saying how excited I am going into August with the many events that we have scheduled and have been invited to be part of. We continue to fundraise by being part of La Vuelta every other Wednesday, our tardeada on Sunday evenings and our famous Karaoke by Fred. It has been a tremendous month in July that has allowed us to purchase a new ice machine that is finally installed, the purchase of new shirts and hats that will be for sale and an estimate on new beer coolers for each bar. We will continue to improve our Post with new upgrades and welcome all ideas. After all why have an old building filled with out of date stuff under this beautiful new roof with solar panels? When I say I appreciate all that our volunteers do, I say it for all of the membership and nothing would be possible without you, to include the cleaning, cooking and planning from

both the VFW and Auxiliary members. I ask all of you to observe the updated Don Diego website that has now been updated with an events calendar and past editions of our newsletter. I am still updating emails so I can continue to improve our communication and that no member gets left behind. This month's goals will be to continue updating the life member board for both VFW and Auxiliary and continue to provide great service to our Veterans and community. In closing I want to express our sincere condolences to the family of Walter Hamilton who passed away recently. RIP Walt. Below are the details for the services.

Services for VFW Past State Commander of California 1992-1993, Walter Hamilton will be held on Sunday, August 20th, 2017 at S.A.B.L.E. VFW Post 2275 which is located at Veterans Civic Memorial Association, 136 Chambers, El Cajon CA 92020-3304 at 11:00 hours.

Thanks,

John Lewis





Auxiliary President

Auxiliary members,

Greetings everyone,

I am honored and excited to have been elected Auxiliary President 2017-2018. We have a wonderful team of members that work hard to support our Veterans. As we continue on with many of our traditions and commitments I look forward to new opportunities for our Auxiliary. I would like to recruit new members to help support our Veterans and be active in the community. I invite all of our Auxiliary Members to attend your monthly meetings the first Thursday of every month at the Post at 7pm. We would love for you to get involved. If you would like to volunteer in any way or perhaps you might have an idea on how we can assist our Veterans or the Post then please bring it up at the meeting.

Membership engagement is important for our future and our continued success in supporting our Comrades. Thank you again.

Respectfully,

Bobby Godinez
Auxiliary President
bobbygodinez@yahoo.com

Veteran of the Month Bio



Comrade Ruben A. Rivera, was born June 1950 in Corpus Christi, Texas. Our Comrade has two daughters, one son, one grandson and married in August 1970, till 2001. Our Comrade enlisted at the age of 17 after being given the option of enlisting or going to California Youth Authority for one year and served in the United States Marine Corps during 1968-1969, he also lived in Old Town National City at the time of his enlistment.

Comrade Rivera found himself at MCRD San Diego for 12 weeks of boot camp on Friday June 13, 1968. During ITR (Infantry Training Regiment) his MOS was designated as 0311; Rifleman. Next was Basic Infantry Training, 20 days of leave, 50 Caliber Machine Gun Training, immediately followed by Staging Training. Upon completion of Staging Training he was deemed ready to report to my duty station. That duty station would be West Pac, which meant headed for Vietnam.

In December of '68 I reported to Okinawa, Japan with many others before going to Vietnam. Our Comrade was assigned to 2nd Battalion 26th Marines, Fox Company and spent most of his time in this unit and was part of a BLT (Battalion Landing Team). Many of the members of his platoon were in Khe Sanh, our tours overlapped slightly as they were finishing their tour and they were sent to take their place. Comrade Rivera participated in two ops together in the two months prior to the short timers' departure; Linn River and Bold Mariner.

Bold Mariner is noted as the largest amphibious assault in the Vietnam War. 107 Vietnamese were found hiding in a tunnel two levels deep and 158 yards long. Of the 107 captured, 7 were killed while resisting, and through interrogation we discovered 56 others were "sappers" (suicide bombers).

Our Comrade participated in five more ops during his time in Vietnam; Eager Pursuit I & II, Valiant Hunt, Taylor Common, and Brave Armada, he also spent time occupying areas while other battalions were out tending to their own operations. Comrade Rivers unit was often called in because of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army activity, but it was also common for a regiment in the area to request assistance when being harassed by the enemy. These joint operations occurred frequently and were quite effective at keeping the VC at bay.

During the war, success was measured by kills, finds, and how well one could survive in Charlie's backyard. Fire discipline, for example, was extremely important; they couldn't all run out of bullets at the same time. Operations were coordinated by officers that were advised of enemy activity in the area by scouts. They would then plan accordingly, brief the battalion, and they would conduct the

assault the following morning. A single operation could last three weeks to one month. Sometimes an operation would roll into another when a neighboring battalion would request assistance. One operation would end and we would immediately shift locations to provide support to our brothers.

Being an infantry unit is what war is all about. Being in the enemies' sights is to their advantage, and they were likely to get the first shot, but it's the payback the Marine Corps is known for. Our sharp shooting and quick response is what kept us alive during an ambush. In addition to ambushes they also had to worry about booby traps, especially during night movements. Night movements were meant to surprise-attack the VC by morning, but this strategy brought on new problems such as night medevacs, which often gave away our position.

Our Comrade knew they were not getting out of a battle without fighting, and fighting alongside brave Marines is what got us through the firefights. Thanks to daring leaderships, well thought-out assaults, and his courageous platoon he could fight for his country and make it home alive. Comrade Rivera is thankful for the brave Marines that he served with who gave their all and were completely committed to watching each other's backs. Comrade Rivera, is proud to be a Vietnam Veteran and to have served with his Brothers in the Marine Corps' 2nd Battalion 26th Marines. Comrade Rivera serviced as a past Post Commander of Don Diego VFW post 7420 from 2004-2005 and 2006-2007.



Auxiliary Treasurer

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

As of now, last days of July, the MALTA system is not up and running. This means I cannot set up our Auxiliary information. Once I do, annual members can pay their dues directly to National. Or you can just keep sending them to me.

Last month I reported life members would get a new card, well by now all life members should have received their new card. It's cardboard!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

When many of you joined, you said, I don't do meetings, but if you ever need help I'll be there for you. Well we need to be able to contact you by email or phone. Please take the time to give me your current address, phone number and email if you use email. The holidays will soon be upon us and we need you to help needy veterans and their families enjoy to them.

Alicia Ketcham,
Treasurer/Membership Chairman
ketchme47@gmail.com

SERVICE OFFICERS PAGE

WHAT IS VA PENSION?

Pension is a needs-based benefit paid to wartime Veterans, who meet certain age or non-service connected disability requirements.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

You may be eligible if:

You were discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions, AND

You served 90 days or more of active duty with at least 1 day during a period of war time*, AND

Your countable income is below the maximum annual pension rate (MAPR), AND You meet the net worth limitations, AND

You are age 65 or older, OR, you have a permanent and total non-service connected disability, OR, you are patient in a nursing home, OR you are receiving Social Security disability benefits.

*Veterans who entered active duty after September 7, 1980, must also serve at least 24 months of active duty service. If the total length of service is less than 24 months, the Veteran must have completed their entire tour of active duty.

For current maximum annual pension rate (MAPR), visit our Veterans Pension Rate Table.

HOW MUCH DOES VA PAY?

VA calculates annual pension by first determining for your particular circumstances that Maximum

Annual Pension Rate (MAPR), an amount set by Congress. For example, if you are a Veteran with no dependents, the MAPR is \$12,868. Next, VA determines your countable income. VA determines countable income by subtracting from your total income received in a particular 12-month period, the amount of those exclusions provided by law. VA subtracts your countable income from the MAPR; the difference is your annual pension entitlement. VA divides this amount by 12 and rounds down to the nearest dollar, this is the approximate amount of your monthly pension payment. VA deducts certain expenses paid by you, e.g., unreimbursed medical expenses, from your annual household income, which will decrease your countable income and increase your monthly pension payment. A complete list of these exclusions is provided in section 3.272 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations. These regulations are available at the Government Printing Offices website.

HOW CAN YOU APPLY?

You may apply for pension by filling out VA Form 21-527EZ, Application for Pension, and mailing it to the Pension Management Center having jurisdiction over your claim. If you do not know which PMC has jurisdiction over your claim, you may submit your request to the VA regional office closest to your current

residence. A directory of VA regional offices is available at [Directory of VA Regional Offices](#).

For more info contact our Post Service Officer: Anthony Medrano

SERVICE OFFICERS PAGE

Cont.

WHAT IS SURVIVORS PENSION?

Survivor's pension is a needs-based benefit paid to surviving spouses and children of wartime Veterans, who meet certain age, disability, and marriage requirements.

You may be eligible if:

The deceased Veteran was discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions,

AND

He or she served 90 days or more of active duty with at least 1 day during a period of war*, AND

you are the unmarried surviving spouse (or previously married and the marriage was terminated prior to November 1, 1990); OR you are the unmarried child of the deceased Veteran who is under 18, who became permanently helpless before 18, or is between 18 and 23 and pursuing a course of instruction at an approved educational institution, AND your countable income is below the amount listed in the chart below, AND you meet the net worth limitations.

*If the deceased Veteran entered active duty after September 7, 1980, he or she must have served at least 24 months of active duty service. If the total length of service is less than 24 months, the Veteran must have completed their entire tour of active duty.

VA calculates annual pension by first determining for your particular circumstances the Maximum Annual Pension Rate (MAPR), an amount set by Congress. For example, if you are a surviving spouse with no dependent children, the MAPR is \$8,630. Next VA determines your countable income. VA determines countable income by subtracting from your total annual income the amount of those exclusions provided by law. VA then subtracts from the MAPR your countable income; the difference Pension and Fiduciary Service – December 2015 is your yearly pension entitlement. VA divides this amount by 12 and rounds down to the nearest dollar, this is the approximate amount of your monthly pension payment. VA deducts certain expenses paid by you, e.g., unreimbursed medical expenses, from your annual household income, which will decrease your countable income and increase your monthly pension payment. A complete list of these exclusions is provided in section 3.272 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations.

HOW CAN YOU APPLY?

You may apply for survivors' pension by filling out VA Form 21-534EZ, Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits, and mailing it to the Pension Management Center (PMC) that has jurisdiction over your claim. If you do not know which PMC has jurisdiction over your claim, you may submit your application to the VA regional office closest to your current residence. See our directory of VA regional offices. We ask that you provide a copy of the Veteran's death certificate with your claim.

For more info contact our Post Service Officer: Anthony Medrano

Veterans Benefits Page

MGM's new military, veteran discount program Covers rooms, iconic Vegas shows and more

A new discount program announced Thursday by MGM Resorts International makes military members, veterans and their families eligible for room, food and entertainment deals as well as other savings at a variety of MGM properties, including some of the most iconic acts in Las Vegas.

The deals, outlined at the program's website, include 10 percent discounts on rooms at 17 resorts around the country (including MGM National Harbor outside Washington, D.C.), and a 10 percent discount on certain food and beverage purchases at select restaurants, bars and dining destinations.

A 25 percent spa discount is available at 12 of the resorts. Savings on entertainment and attractions include a variety of Las Vegas offerings:

- Comedian Terry Fator (40 percent off some tickets).
- The Jabbawockeez dance troupe (15 percent off certain seats).
- Cirque du Soleil shows "Zumanity," "Ka" and "The Beatles Love" (up to 35 percent off some tickets).
- The Luxor hotel's Titanic artifact exhibition (30 percent off tickets).

- After-hours fare ("Fantasy" and "Thunder from Down Under," 50 percent off some seats).

You'll need to present proof of service when you visit the resort for the first time, and as always, check for requirements, conditions and limitations before you go.

The MGM Resorts Military & Veterans Program, or MVP, is available to all active duty, guard, reserve and retired military members, veterans and spouses of eligible military personnel.

MVP is an extension of M life Rewards, the company's premier loyalty program. MVP provides service members with an M life Rewards card that has an MVP logo and provides access to all of the available military benefits throughout MGM Resorts destinations. While those eligible can sign up online, the card is provided when the service member, veteran or spouse visits one of the MGM properties, with one of the following approved forms of identification, according to Brittany Harris, a spokeswoman for MGM Resorts International:

- Active duty military ID.
- Dependent ID.
- Retiree and reserve ID cards.
- VA ID cards.
- Form DD-214.

- State-issued ID cards or driver's license with "veteran" designation.

MGM Resorts destinations include multiple Las Vegas resorts (Bellagio, Aria, Vdara, MGM Grand, The Signature at MGM Grand, Mandalay Bay, Delano Las Vegas, The Mirage, Monte Carlo, New York-New York, Luxor, Excalibur); Beau Rivage and Gold Strike in Mississippi; MGM Grand Detroit; MGM National Harbor in Maryland; and the Borgata in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

In addition to M life Rewards' existing benefits, new MVP cardholders are upgraded to the second Tier Level, Pearl, with benefits including complimentary self-parking at MGM Resorts properties and exclusive discounts on selected entertainment, dining options, attractions, spa treatments and room rates at all MGM Resorts destinations across the U.S.

"As a company, we have always supported our country's greatest heroes," said Jim Murren, Chairman & CEO of MGM Resorts International, in an announcement. "Our new Military & Veterans Program provides us with another channel to recognize and thank them for their service. Including spouses in our program allows us to honor these important partners as well for their incredible bravery and commitment to family and country."

LOGAN AVENUE CONSORTIUM PRESENTS

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CAR SHOW, VENDORS, FOOD,
BEER GARDEN, LIVE MUSIC, DJ'S

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