



Important Dates:

- Apr 1—April Fool's Day
- Apr 3—Good Friday
- Apr 5—Easter
- Apr 9 to 12—Traveling Vietnam Memorial @ GGNC
- Apr 11—Monthly Meeting—11 a.m.
- Apr 15—Tax Day
- Apr 23—May article deadline

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LEAVING 'A CITY THAT DOESN'T WANT US' FOR SANGER, CA

By Clara Pon

Most everyone has likely heard that The American Legion Department of California headquarters will be moving to Sanger, CA sometime this fall after renovations are completed. The announcement of the nearly unanimous vote by all 30 district commanders at the 2015 spring D.E.C. (Department Executive Committee) meeting in Santa Maria on March 14-15 to purchase the former Westamerica Bank and move headquarters there was a shock to many Legionnaires, even to those present at the meeting.



Spring DEC at Veterans Memorial Building in Santa Maria on March 14-15, 2015.

Shock, confusion, disbelief, suspicion, excitement, happiness, relief, and many other emotions were felt and voiced by many veterans in the Bay Area upon hearing the news that the Dept. of CA will be relocating its headquarters after over 80 years at the San Francisco War Memorial Veterans Building. A great number of people undoubtedly upon hearing the news said, "Sanger? Where the heck is Sanger, CA?" One could certainly wager that the Internet search engines for 'Sanger, CA' surged to an all

-time high and the number of search visits on March 14 & 15 following the announcement probably totaled more in two days than it had in the last five years, maybe even 10.

With a population of just over 24,000 in, a median age of approximately 30, and annual average household income under \$40,000 in Sanger compared to \$76,000 in San Francisco according to US Census Bureau, it is undeniably a much cheaper alternative to the expensive metropolis of San Francisco. As the completion of the seismic retrofit of the SF War Memorial Veterans Building across the street from City Hall draws near, the newly renovated, ADA compliant, and updated office spaces will be ready for the American Legion War Memorial Commission and other veteran organizations to move back in save The American Legion Department of California. They will instead be in the eastern part of Fresno County, just over an hour and a half south of Modesto or just over an hour and a half north of Bakersfield.

There have been constant rumblings, none positive about the move to Sanger from members all around the Bay Area. In SF alone, there are over 1,100 members, 1,400 in the peninsula, 2,500 in Silicon Valley, and nearly 4,000 in the North Bay, and over 4,000 in the East Bay. Opinions and thoughts that have

(Continued on page 2)

Moving to Sanger, Continued

(Continued from page 1)

passed my ears from Legionnaires these past weeks have been plentiful and range from “we should boycott the state convention in June” to “let’s see how long they’ll last out there in the boonies.” “They better hope and pray property value there doesn’t take a nose dive.” Some of the more controversial and lambasted comments whispered amongst Legionnaires aren’t just about the hastiness of purchasing a building in Sanger, but how quickly such an unlisted agenda item got “railroaded by the top echelon” at the meeting.

One of the many questions and concerns is about the staff. It is very likely many of the

department’s long-time permanent staff members will not be relocating to Sanger. If that is indeed the case, the next obvious concern are their replacements. Finding, recruiting, and teaching new employees the ropes from employees who have been doing their job for decades won’t be an easy task.

Even though Sanger is more affordable, safer, and parking less challenging, it is not the City by the Bay. Many of the employees are rooted in the Bay Area and enjoy the cultural richness and diversity of the theaters, museums, restaurants, quaint neighborhoods, micro climates, parks, malls, and the overall unique atmosphere of city living. Tony Bennett sang it best with his ever

popular song “I left my heart in San Francisco.”

The most excited and vocal about the move are city officials, residents, veterans of Sanger, and the Legionnaires in the surrounding cities, as they should be. It is an exciting time for them and their city as they prepare for a mini-invasion of Legionnaires, along with the possibility of members from Sons of the American Legion, Auxiliary, and Legion Riders. Some will be passing through while others will be there on a more permanent basis. Whatever the case, let us hope Sanger’s infrastructure, retailers, housing, and other businesses are ready for the unexpected influx of people in the coming months.

Traveling Vietnam War Memorial at GGNC By Nelson Lum

A very significant event will take place between April 9 and April 12, 2015. The “Wall That Heals,” a replica of the Vietnam War Memorial will be on display 24 hours at the Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno. This replica has been traveling across the country to offer those who have not or cannot visit the memorial in Washington D.C. a chance to feel the healing power of such a moving monument. For those who visited the memorial in D.C., it will still be a very gratifying and soul moving experience to visit this monument. It may allow closure for some and offer a chance for others to relive their moments of grief in order to heal. (See flyer on next page.)

Members of American Legion Redwood City Post 105 and a few members of Cathay Post No. 384 have committed to assisting and helping organize this historic event and to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. Please mark the dates on your calendar and bring your family members to visit and witness the healing power of this monument. For those of you who are Vietnam War Veterans, I know this monument will touch your soul.



APRIL 9 – 12
OPEN 24
HOURS

THE WALL THAT HEALS

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

The traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. is coming to the San Francisco Bay Area April 9 – 12, 2015. The *WALL THAT HEALS* will be at the Golden Gate National Cemetery 1300 Sneath Lane (Veterans Way), San Bruno, CA 94066. Come see the memorial to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War.

OPENING CEREMONY – THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2015 AT 10 A.M.



VOLUNTEERS & SPONSORS NEEDED

THE WALL THAT HEALS will be open to the public, free of charge from Thursday, April 9 to Sunday, April 12, 24 hours a day. We are looking for volunteers and sponsors. Meetings are held at 10 a.m., 1st & 3rd Saturdays now through April 4 in the chapel at Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno.

Traveling Wall courtesy of
Vietnam Veterans Memorial
Fund. www.vvmf.org.

For more information on how you can help and to donate:

Contact: Leo McArdle

Telephone: (650) 303-2725

Email: leopmcardle@yahoo.com

Avenue of Flags Committee is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization. Donations are tax deductible. Contact: Regina Gonnella, rmgonnella@sbcglobal.net.

**Traveling Vietnam Veterans Memorial, The Wall That Heals is hosted by Avenue of Flags Committee,
Golden Gate National Cemetery to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War**



COMMANDER JAY PON

Commander's Mission Statement: Cathay Post No. 384 is here to support fellow veterans, youth programs, and the local community. We are part of a national veteran's non-profit group established by Congress after World War I. Chartered in 1931, we serve San Francisco and the areas around it. My focus will be: (1) preserving the rights of veterans and patriotic organizations in the War Memorial Veterans Building; (2) increase Post external events for members; (3) preserving our Post history, culture, and traditions; (4) support youth and educational programs; and (5) increase the use of our clubhouse to the community.

Commander's Intent: To build esprit de corps within Post 384 by having events that support our mission statement where members can have pride and enjoyment in participating. Some events will be rigorous and other events will challenge the mind. If you want to take charge, let me know and the Post can find a task or passion for you. If you want to be mentored or help out, please let us know which of the 5 missions you would like to support.

Thank you to those that attended the March meeting. I apologize that I could not attend as my other non-profit passion, Freemasons, held a leadership workshop down in Monterey, CA. I hope the check the Freemasons' donated towards Boys State made up for my absence. Also, I want to say thanks to Nelson, Vic, Roger, Vincent, Thomas, Lisa, Ed, and Hank for helping clean up the post and to prepare the rooms for the sprinkler installation after the luncheon. It's amazing how much stuff (junk) we've accumulated.

For April, the Boys State selection process has begun. Post 384 is sponsoring a young man from both Galileo and Lincoln High Schools, and one from Saint Ignatius College Prepara-

tory this year. Even though Boys State is scheduled from June 28 to July 3, 2015, I will begin the process of interviewing potential candidates in the next few weeks. Good luck to the young men trying out for Boys State 2015!

Post 384's resolution of allowing the sponsorship to both CA Boys and Girls State by the American Legion and the Auxiliary is moving through the path established by Legion By-laws and is currently at the Department level. It is Cathay Post No. 384's intention to (1) make it easier for both the local Legion posts and the Auxiliary units to sponsor both boys and girls to the California Boys and Girls State; and (2) bring the number of girls attending CA Girls State (about 400 girls) to a more

equitable level when compared to CA Boys State (1,000 boys). While researching this subject, we found that other states are less restrictive on who is allowed to sponsor a male or female high school junior to Boys and Girls State. It is Cathay Post members' hope that the Department of California will strive to treat both the boys and girls equally. If approval is recommended, the Department By-laws Committee will advance the resolution to the floor of the Department Convention on June 25-28 for approval or disapproval by the convention delegates. [Click here for a copy of our resolution.](#)

Please save the date. Mark your calendar for Friday, May 29, 2015 at 6 p.m. Our 84th anniver-



Jay Pon

jpon@jps.net

1 (415) 409-8858

Cathay Post Member
since: 2001

Branch: Navy, Army

Final Rank: Major

"It is Cathay Post members' hope that the Department of California will strive to treat both the boys and girls equally."

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1st VICE COMMANDER NELSON LUM

**Nelson Lum**

nelson1431@aol.com

1 (415) 797-7384

Cathay Post Member
since: 2005

Branch: Army

Final Rank: SPC

“Once the installation process has begun, there may be times when it will be necessary to close our building to all scheduled activities.”

“March winds and April showers bring forth May flowers.” April is here and for those of you who like to tend to plants and flowers, it is that time of the year to witness the fruits of your labor.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for those members who helped out with the spring cleaning after our March regular monthly meeting at our post. While we are still inundated with numerous items that we must discard, your efforts advanced us toward accomplishing our goal to rid the post of many of the unwanted items which have been accumulating for decades.

As preparation for the installation of sprinklers is being readied, we will need your assistance along with understanding in order to facilitate the process. Once the installation process has begun, there may be times when it will be necessary to close our building to all scheduled activities. The entire process may take as long as three months. Once again, I ask for all of you to be patient for the inconvenience. When this phase of the building

improvement is completed, our building will be a much safer place for all.

Please keep in mind the nomination process is still on-going. Every elected position is still open and additional nominations will be accepted at our April regular monthly meeting. I urge all of you to look at the duties of the elected positions (pg. 10) and decide what contribution you would be able to make if you were elected to that position. Our newly elected Adjutant Connie Tseng will certify and close the nomination process at the end of the April monthly meeting. The election of officers will take place during the May regular monthly meeting and the results will be announced at the conclusion of the meeting.

As was the process for last year’s election, you have to be present and a Cathay Post member in good standing to cast your ballot. Ballots will not be mailed out and there is no voting by proxy.

A reminder for all of you that April 15, 2015 is Income Tax day. Uncle Sam wants his share of your income so don’t be late or he will demand

even more of it.

In keeping with our goal of supporting our military, our post will host an all-day training session for a group of Marine recruiters on April 24, 2015. Approximately 65 Marine recruiters will participate in the training. Comrade John Stevens referred the Marines to contact us about the usage of our facility, and we are glad that we are able to provide such support. Anyone who would like to be recruited into the Corps is welcome to stop by.

Looking ahead to the month of May, our 84th anniversary and 12th annual honoring of first responders dinner will be held on Friday, May 29th. The newly elected officers will also be sworn in at the banquet. The event will be at Far East Cafe in the heart of Chinatown. As members, your participation is paramount, and we will need your assistance. We will be setting up committees to organize and make this a great event that we can all be proud of. If you have ideas, share them with us. Hope to see all of you at our April monthly meeting.

Jay Pon, Continued

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sary banquet is where we celebrate the swearing in of our new post officers, honor our first responders, community hero, and student scholarship recipients. Reservations can be made by sending an email to: cathaypost384events@gmail.com or call 1 (415) 797-7384. Costs for the dinner will be finalized soon. Be sure to check our Facebook page for the flyer with price in the next few days.

Lastly, our most important mission at Cathay Post No. 384 is to preserve the

rights of veterans at the San Francisco War Memorial Veterans Building (WMVB). The American Legion War Memorial Commission (ALWMC) has presented to the Board of Trustees and the City Attorney's office a final demand for settlement letter and a court Petition to pursue judicial action. If the City refuses to negotiate with the ALWMC the outstanding issues regarding space allocation, the court Petition will be filed. It is Post 384's desire to support the ALWMC in its efforts to bring back and consolidate veteran services organizations into the War Memorial Veterans

ADJUTANT CONNIE TSENG



Our 2015 goal for memberships is 134, which was set for us by National. So far, we have 108 members that have renewed for 2015. That is nearly 81% of our goal. That is pretty good, but we're not there yet. We need to continue our record of attaining 100% membership by June 1.

If you know a member who hasn't renewed yet, give them a nudge and remind them to either mail in their dues or go online to pay it. I am proud to be a part of this great and growing group. Let's try to recruit more members and share our lovely community with more veterans!

March meeting was definitely interesting and fun! It was the first time that I led the nomination process for the new 2015-16 elected officers. This was the first of two (2) nomination opportunities. If you missed last meeting, here are your nominees.

- ◆ Commander: Nelson Lum
- ◆ 1st Vice Commander: Roger Dong
- ◆ 2nd Vice Commander: Helen Wong
- ◆ Finance Officer: Victor Lum
- ◆ Adjutant: Connie Tseng
- ◆ Secretary: John Li
- ◆ Sergeant-at-Arms:
Vince Neeson (not accepted yet)
David Adams (not accepted yet)
- ◆ Chaplain: Richard Ow
- ◆ Judge Advocate: Evered Cohen
- ◆ Historian: Stan Ellexson Jr.
- ◆ Quartermaster: Ed Wong
- ◆ Service Officer: David Wong

Please come to the April meeting for more nominations! Elections will be held May 9th! Don't forget, you have to be a member of Cathay Post in good standing and present to cast your vote next month.





Veteran Affairs &
Rehabilitation

The Dissenting Voice By Nelson Lum



San Francisco War Memorial Veterans Building.

After almost 84 years of calling the War Memorial Veterans Building (WMVB) in San Francisco home, the Department of California (Department), American Legion, has decided to purchase a new home in the city of Sanger. Aside from the realization of its long held plan to own its own building, the Department also cited the location of the city of Sanger being centrally located in the state, is far more accessible to Legionnaires state wide. These are strong arguments for the sudden decision to purchase and move to the new location. However, the abruptness of the decision and the path of the decision making process needs to be looked at for the purpose of clarity.

The WMVB was built in the 1920s under a Trust Agreement that was accepted by the City's board of supervisors and signed by the mayor. The San Francisco posts of the American Legion are listed in the Trust as one of the beneficiaries. Over the years, the San Francisco posts of the American Legion established a commission, the American Legion War Memorial Commission (ALWMC) to oversee all matters arising from the WMVB, and to act as the Legion's liaison to deal with the City appointed Trustees of the War Memorial Performing Arts Center who are also in charge of the overall opera-



The AL Dept. of CA's new headquarters in the old Westamerica bank building.

tion, upkeep, and maintenance of the WMVB. The Department was welcomed by the ALWMC from day one and continues to be welcomed to this date.

The Department was assigned a very generous amount of prime space (approximately 5,200 sq. ft.) on the first floor of the WMVB and for over 40 years, the Department was not required to make any financial contributions to the ALWMC. It should be noted during that period of time, legion posts were required to contribute a small fee whenever the common area was used or reserved. In the late 1970s, both the Veterans' Theatre (Herbst Theatre) and the Veterans' Library (Green Room) were placed under the control of the Trustees by the ALWMC in return for an annual stipend. The Department was asked, and agreed to assist the ALWMC financially by contributing \$500 every three (3) months. In May of 2013, the ALWMC along with the Department moved out of the WMVB to allow for the seismic retrofit and renovation work to take place. The Department was assigned more than 1,200 sq. ft. of space at the temporary location, more than the space assigned to the ALWMC. The rent paid by the City for the temporary location exceeds \$9,000 per month.

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Dissenting Voice, Continued

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Due to the closure of the Herbst Theatre nearly two (2) years ago, no stipend from the income it normally receives was available to sustain the day-to-day operations of the ALWMC. The Department was asked to increase its contribution to \$500 a month instead of every three (3) months, which it did. As mentioned previously, the ALWMC has no income. No matter how frugal the Commission tried, there was no way to sustain its operations until this September when the stipend resumes.

Anticipating the Department would occupy over 5,000 sq. ft. of newly renovated and modernized space in a completely restored historical building in the heart of Civic Center, the current market rate for office space in the area runs well above \$4.50 per sq. ft. A decision was made by the ALWMC to ask the Department to contribute \$1,500 per month for its current space from January 2015 to August 2015 and \$2,000 per month once it is back in the WMVB. The ALWMC further guaranteed that amount of contribution to remain the same for at least the next three years. The Department had and has been given the utmost consideration. It was offered a space that is worth well over \$22,500 per month for less than 9% of its value. With such a massive renovation, when completed, the WMVB will conform to all existing San Francisco building code requirements along with being 100% ADA compliant. Additionally, the Department would once again have access to fifteen (15) parking stalls on the premises as before the move.

When representatives of ALWMC appeared in front of the Department's Finance Committee (Committee) last

month, a question was asked by one of the Finance Committee members, "Can you guarantee there will never be another increase?" How can anyone tell future ALWMC members they will never be allowed to revisit the question of contribution? Would the Department guarantee the districts and posts in our state that it will never raise its portion of the membership dues? The representatives of the ALWMC agreed with the Committee that they should do its due diligence and look into other options. Thinking the Committee will discuss or negotiate with ALWMC further once they explored other options, the representatives of the ALWMC left.

At the Department's Department Executive Committee (DEC) meeting held on March 14, 2015, there was no listing of any proposal to purchase and or move the Department to a new location on the agenda. Yet, the mayor of Sanger, along with other city officials were present at the meeting. Each of the officials, five (5) in all, were allowed three minutes each, one closer to 10 minutes (eight pages of transcripts) to present their case for why the Department should move to Sanger. None of the representatives of the ALWMC were notified or offered an opportunity to speak before the impending decision. Finance Committee Chair Lennox spoke determinedly in favor of the purchase and move. Judge Advocate Bart, who happens to be the former Chief of Police in Sanger, spoke at length, 10 pages worth of transcripts about the merits of moving to Sanger.

Acting Commander Ramirez of District 8, who did not know ahead of time that the issue of this purchase

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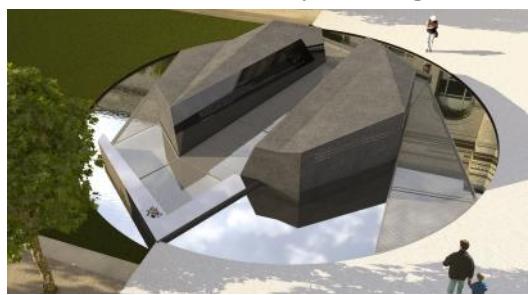
Dissenting Voice, Continued

(Continued from page 8)

and move was going to be discussed at this meeting, was given three (3) minutes to speak against the move. Commander Ramirez was at a complete disadvantage since he was not familiar with the issues dealing with the WMVB. Only the ALWMC has the authority and knowledge regarding any dealings involving the WMVB. Commander Ramirez was warned about the time limit, after speaking about two (2) pages worth of transcripts into his response. While delegates to the meeting voted for what they opined to be in the best interest of the Department, they cast their vote based upon being told only one-sided information and not all of it true or accurate. Some delegates felt they were rushed to judgement and were not accorded sufficient time to ruminate on such an impactful decision and possible ramifications.

The American Legion founded in 1919, has a very significant role in our nation's history. The housing of the Department's headquarters in the WMVB adds a tremendous amount of

prestige and glamour to the Legion. There simply is no way to compare the building in Sanger to the majestic structure of the WMVB. Over \$200 million dollars was spent to upgrade the seismic support, renovate, modernize all the interior facilities, and meticulously replicate its historical forms and shapes. There is no question the cost of doing business in the city and county of San Francisco is higher than the city of Sanger. However, would our legionnaires prefer to visit the WMVB in San Francisco where they can witness this crown jewel of architecture along with enjoying the thousands of activities that can only be found in San Francisco or visit an old bank in the city of Sanger with



Passage of Remembrance at Veteran's Court of the San Francisco War Memorial Complex between the Opera House and the War Memorial Veterans Building to honor all veterans of all wars that sacrificed their lives for our nation, 2014.

MAY — Mark Your Calendars / Save The Date

May is packed full of events. Take out your smartphones, open up your calendar, and start entering these dates. More details to come.

~ Asian Heritage Month & Poppy Program (American Legion Auxiliary) ~

May 9 Cathay Post No. 384 meeting, election of new 2015-16 officers
SFUSD JROTC Spring Drill Competition 10 a.m. at Lincoln High School

MEMORIAL DAY REMEMBRANCE EVENTS

May 24 USS San Francisco Memorial at noon, Lands End, Ft. Miley
St. Mary's Square WWI & WWII Memorial
May 25 San Francisco National Cemetery, Presidio Memorial Day Ceremony
May 29 Cathay Post 84th Anniversary Banquet Honoring First Responders



USS San Francisco Memorial Ceremony By Stan Ellexson Jr.



USS San Francisco Memorial at Lands End.

Photo by www.sanfranciscosentinel.com

The annual USS San Francisco (CA-38) Memorial Ceremony will be at Lands End, Ft. Miley, Sunday, 24 May 2015, starting at 1200. It will last 1 to 1 & 1/2 hours. It is the site of the USS San Francisco's damaged bridge that was dedicated by the then Mayor of San Francisco, in 1950.

The Memorial Ceremony honors the

100 Sailors and 7 Marines Killed In Action during the Naval Battle Of Guadalcanal 12/13 November 1942. We also honor the 112 Sailors and 17 Marines Wounded In Action.

The local DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) will have home-made cakes and cookies, and complimentary coffee by 1130 or earlier. Arrive early to get a good parking place. We will have chairs for 350 attendees.

The weather varies a lot, so you may wish to wear layers and bring an umbrella in case it gets hot. I have experienced all types of weather, hot and rather cold during my 18 years as the master of ceremony.



Nomination Time, 2015-16 Officers By Clara Pon

There is only one more monthly meeting to make nominations and two more meetings until the election. If you were at last month's meeting, then you will recall that we are in the process of updating certain sections of the post's by-laws. The changes that affect elections have already been read once. In April, they would be read a second time, be adopted, and sent to the Department of California for approval. All members current on 2015 dues are eligible for making nominations as well as accepting a nomination.

Our post by-laws describes the duties and responsibilities for each of the elected positions are as follows:

Post Commander: The Post Commander shall preside at all meetings of the Post and has general supervision over the business affairs of the Post. Such officer shall be the chief executive officer of the Post and shall perform such other duties as directed by the Post.

First Vice Commander: The 1st Vice Commander shall assume and discharge the duties of the office of Commander in the absence or disability of, or when called upon by the Post Commander.

Second Vice Commander: The 2nd Vice Commander shall assume and discharge the duties of the office of 1st Vice Commander in the absence of or disability of such officer and shall perform such other duties as directed by this Post.

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Officer Nominations, Continued

(Continued from page 10)

Third Vice Commander: The 3rd Vice Commander shall assume and discharge the duties of the office of 2nd Vice Commander in the absence of or disability of such officer and shall perform such other duties as directed by this Post.

Adjutant: The Adjutant shall have charge of (1) membership and (2) supporting/maintaining Post events. Duties include the transportation of colors, equipment (chairs/tables/banners/prizes...), and supplies to and from the Post for external events. The Post Adjutant is the building/facility manager.

Finance Officer: The Finance Officer shall be charged with the custody of the funds of the Post. He or she shall keep its accounts and report thereon at regular meetings of the Post. He or she shall receive all funds of the Post and pay all bills approved by the Post and Finance Committee. He or she shall be bonded under a blanket bond to be procured from the Department Headquarters and paid for by the Post.

Secretary: The Secretary shall have charge of and keep a full and correct record of all proceedings of all meetings and under the direction of the Commander handle all correspondence of the Post.

Judge Advocate: The duties of the Judge Advocate shall be to advise the Post Officers on the construction and interpretation of the Post Constitution and By-Laws; and to perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office.

Historian: The Historian shall, be charged with the individual records and incidents of the Post and Post members, and shall perform such other duties as directed by the Post or Executive Committee. The Post Historian is also charged with photographing and documenting Post Events.

Sergeant-at-Arms: The Sergeant-at-Arms shall preserve order at all meetings and shall perform such other duties as may be from time to time assigned to him by the Post.

Chaplain: The Chaplain shall be charged with the spiritual welfare of the Post comrades and will offer divine but nonsectarian service in the event of dedications, funerals, public functions, and adhere to such ceremonial rituals as are recommended by the National or Department Headquarters from time to time.

Service Officer: The duties of the Service Officer shall be generally that of prosecuting claims and protecting the rights and privileges of all veterans, their dependents and survivors and to handle such other matters as may properly be considered service work.

Quartermaster: The Quartermaster shall supply and purchase all goods and materials necessary for Post operations.

Cathay Post No. 384 representative at the War Memorial Commission.

Future Community Leaders By Clara Pon



CYC Lion Dance Team.

Young men in tuxedos and suits, young ladies decked out in ball gowns and dresses, costumed lion dancers, and a few 2015 crowned Asian pageant winners greeted the many guests that attended Community Youth Center's (CYC) 45th Anniversary Purple Sapphire & Emerald Gala Ball on Friday, March 20, 2015 at the Hilton San Francisco Financial District. CYC's mission is to provide programs and services to at-risk, low income, high need youths and their families in San Francisco. Six (6) members of Cathay Post led by Commander Pon attended this event.



L-R: George Tsang (Cathay Post), Alvin Louie (SFPD), Jaynry Mak (CYC Board Chair), Nelson Lum (CYC Board & Cathay Post 1st Vice Commander), Clara Pon (Cathay Post) and Jay Pon (Cathay Post Commander).

The gala dinner started off with a bang, literally. The drummers from the CYC Lion Dance Team kicked off the event with a skillfully choreographed performance with the beautiful and LED light enhanced lions. Mistress of ceremonies Jan Yanehiro welcomed all and introduced Mayor Ed Lee to say a few words. Along with Mayor Lee, a few members of the Board of Supervisors and other city officials were in attendance to celebrate the achievements of six (6) youths who were honored.

Outstanding CYC Youth – NanthawanAmornnophakhun

Outstanding CYC Youth – Maple Feng

Most Inspirational CYC Alumnus Youth – Tammy Vuong

Chris Yeo Community Service Award – Vicky Ye

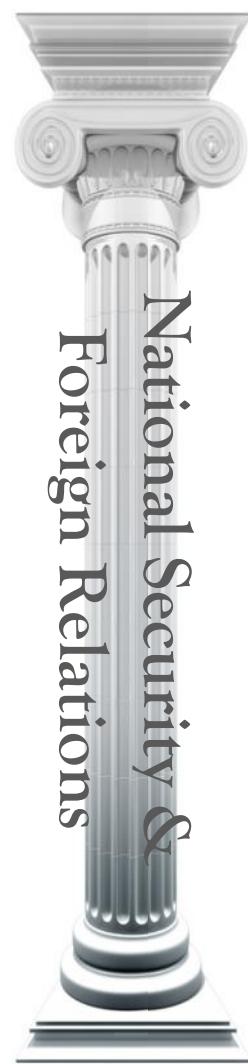
Academy of Art University Presidential Scholar – Ya Ling Li

SCORES Poetry Slam Winner – Eric Mai

After the awardees were honored, we were treated to some lively entertainment from the CYC Yellow River Junior Drummers, poem recitation from Eric Mai, and singing and dancing skits from the youths of CYC. Congratulations to all the young accomplished honorees. Keep up the great work and positive attitude.

Disclaimer

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VPB0215

2015 Asian American Engineer of the Year By Roger Dong



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On February 28, 2015, the Chinese Institute of Engineers (CIE) USA, founded in 1917 held its annual banquet to honor the major contributions to America by Asian American engineers and scientists throughout the nation. The CIE has held its annual Asian American Engineer of the Year (AAEOY) banquet (which began in 2002), joined by over 600 guests representing both the private and the government sectors to recognize the best-of-the-best among the thousands of Asian American engineers and scientists who were selected by their peers and supervisors.

Representing only about six percent (6%) of our population, Asian Americans have contributed more than their fair

share to our nation's engineering and scientific prowess. Among the total of 16 awardees honored this year for their contributions, 11 were immigrants from India, China, Japan, or Taiwan. Historically, in our country, 60% of all inventions and discoveries have been produced by 1st and 2nd generation immigrants.

To further enhance the immigration of these talented people, congress and our immigration authorities should make special provisions that will encourage more of the best and brightest to come to America to study, reside, and contribute their brainpower as residents and citizens. When you review the contributions our honored professionals have achieved to earn their

recognitions, their contributions have not been for just improving the mouse trap. Their novel and significant contributions have been in advanced medicine, macro-energy efficiency, and national defense.

The standout engineer and scientist this year is Dr. Shuji Nakamura of University of California, San Barbara's invention of the LED. It impacts the life of every living creature on this planet. The whole world has been benefiting from the power of LED lighting that provides much more brightness for less energy while reducing cost. Everything from our cell phone screens to brilliant screen displays on road signs and in our homes have been improved by LED

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2015 AAEOY, Continued

(Continued from page 14)

technology. This is a sterling example of how the creativity of one human being has impacted the lives of not just all of mankind, but high efficient lighting reduces the need for previously planned polluting power along with nuclear power plants, thus benefiting all life on earth.

The following is a list of a few of this year's best Asian American engineers and scientists and their extraordinary accomplishments that benefited our military.

1. Ms. Tina Lim was presented the *Asian American Most Promising Engineer of the Year Award*. Ms. Lim is an Electronics Engineer Associate Manager at Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, who has made major engineering contributions in several Lockheed Martin companies. Her accomplishments were realized in Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) communications satellite program, the space-based analysis of solar flares, and critical components used by the U.S. Navy in the Fleet Ballistic Missiles Program (FBM).

2. Commander George C. S. Chan was presented the *2015 Asian American Engineer of the Year Award*. Commander Chan, born in Hong Kong serves in dual capacities; one role is Project Manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, responsible for the \$10.7 billion reorganization of U.S. Army facilities in South Korea; and second as a Navy Commander, successfully completed many projects while deployed to Afghanistan, and managed a \$5.5 billion infrastructure construction project.

3. Dr. Paul Shang was presented the *2015 Asian American Executive of the Year Award*. Dr. Shang is the Director for Ship Signatures at the U.S. Naval Surface Warfare Center. This senior Navy Program Director is responsible for more than 525 scientists, engineers, and staff who are conducting multi-disciplinary research on all electronic emissions and related technologies, for protecting all current and future ships and submarines of our Navy Fleet.

4. Dr. Y. C. Yiu was presented the *Asian American Engineer of the Year Award*. Dr. Yiu

is a Lockheed Martin Fellow and is in the Space Systems Company, who is a recognized expert in designing complex systems that operate dependably in extreme environments. Dr. Yiu's expertise in shock, vibration, and space dynamics have been a prime contribution to projects, including the International Space Station, the Lunar Prospector, and military communications systems such as Iridium and Milstar.

It is obvious that the contributions of Asian American engineers and scientists have fulfilled a very critical part of the overall scientific and engineering accomplishments of America. We are all very proud of their achievements.

American Legion Cathay Post No. 384 heartily congratulates all the accomplished engineers and scientists, especially those honored at the 2015 AAEOY banquet and wish them continued success and rewarding careers.

Next year's AAEOY celebration will be in the Big Apple on March 12, 2016. Please join me there to honor these outstanding engineers and scientists.



Connie Tseng By Vic Lum

2007 Back stateside on R&R.

At Cathay Post, you notice her immediately. She is young, vibrant, dynamic and is one of the newest members of the post. She was recently elected as Cathay Post's new adjutant. Growing up, she was a competitive gymnast, played the piano and cello, and sang in the Crystal Children's Choir. She also participated in team events like basketball and volleyball in school. She was also part of her school's dance team. Her name is Connie Tseng and formerly an Army Combat Medic in Iraq.



High school dance team the Equestriettes.

Connie was born and raised in Santa Clara County. She attended the local public schools from elementary to high

school. Her parents and older sister emigrated from Taiwan, settling first in San Jose, then later moved to the Lakewood neighborhood of Sunnyvale. Her father made his living as a handyman restoring and fixing up old homes and looked to Connie as his "helper." Growing up beside her father "fixing" things is perhaps the reason why Connie went on to being an Army medic.

Connie was unsure which direction she wanted to take in life after graduating from high school and while a junior in high school, entered the Delayed Enlistment Program (DEP). Her mother signed parental approval forms thinking that she would never go through with it, but much to her mother's surprise, Connie did. In addition, Connie wanted to leave California and experience life in other parts of the United States.

After completing high school, she went to a recruiting station to decide which branch of the military she was interested in enlisting. Connie spoke with a Marine recruiter but felt they really didn't have anything to offer regard-

ing jobs. She felt they would be too "psychologically" demanding and too "hard core." Next, she spoke with a female Navy recruiter whom she felt was not very approachable and didn't really talk much about jobs that they had to offer. There was no Air Force recruiter there so Connie finally spoke to an Army recruiter.

The Army recruiters were 'outgoing and happy' and were 'very involved and interested' in her. They suggested different occupations with her, but one of the recruiters who was a medic indicated that because she was so personable and had a caring nature that she would be perfect as a medic. Connie decided then that the Army had a lot to offer and enlisted with that military branch.

Connie attended basic training at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO and AIT (Advanced Individual Training) at Ft. Sam Houston, TX. After completing training, she was stationed at Ft. Hood, TX. Connie was assigned to the 566th ASMC (Area Support Medical Company). At Ft. Hood, she received an extensive

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MEMBER PROFILE

Connie Tseng, Continued

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amount of training in different areas such as nuclear, biological, and chemical contaminants which would be applied to patient care.



Connie was subsequently deployed to Iraq for a fifteen-month tour. While there, she dealt with numerous mass causalities, saved many lives under combat situations, which she found exciting and tragic as it was, and tested her medical skills. She loved the “adrenaline rush” and the “power because whatever the medic says, goes!”



On a C-130 plane going from Kuwait to Iraq.

Upon her discharge, Connie attended De Anza College where she met her boyfriend, Daniel Marquez, whom she has been dating ever since. She also served out her reserve time as well.



Connie and Daniel attended a special graduation ceremony for friends from VETS@SFSU in 2014.

She was employed at Best Buy for about a year and then got a job with NASA Ames Research Center. Currently, Connie is employed with the VA Palo Alto Health Care System and attends San Francisco State University (SFSU) majoring in cell and molecular biology and hopes to receive her B.S. in that field. She is entertaining the possibility of entering medical school upon receiving her degree because she loves helping people.

When she's not busy attending class or going

to work, some of her hobbies include baking, sewing, scrapbooking, photography, crocheting, and painting to name a few. She also likes shooting, hunting, and butchering her own meat but it is rather cost prohibitive due to the ammunition factor. So, archery got her attention because she can reuse the arrows.

While at SFSU, Connie got involved with VETS@SFSU and became very good friends with the people in that group. She was recruited to join Cathay Post and felt this would be a good way to maintain these friendships upon graduating from college. She felt that Cathay Post would be the place to tether everyone together. Connie researched the history of the post and felt it possessed a unique quality that no other post had. Although she resides in the south bay, she gladly takes the time to attend the monthly Cathay Post meetings and plans to help organize many of the post's fund raising events.

As a Cathay Post member, we appreciate and honor your commitment as a “woman warrior” in the military community!





Department of Veteran Affairs By Jay Pon

This month we take a look at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This governmental agency is appointed to take care of us after our service to the United States. Their motto is "Serving those that served," which in recent years, doesn't seem to be completely true. The media has reported long wait times, deaths, and cases of VA employees being uncompassionate towards veterans and their condition. Per Wikipedia and the [VA](#), the VA is requesting a budget of \$163 billion dollars for 2015/2016, up from \$88 billion dollars spent in 2009. The VA has 280,000 employees and approximately 1250 locations throughout the US. Established in 1930 to consolidate and coordinate government actives affecting war veterans from the different federal agencies administering veteran benefits, the VA is now divided into three (3) components that handle health care, benefits, and cemetery administration.

Health Care—Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is responsible for providing health care in all forms: With approximately 1250 locations, the VA provides a wide range of medical services addressing both physical as well as mental issues such as PTSD or addictions. Besides hospitals and clinics, the VA runs many nursing homes around the country. Here in San Francisco, the VHA operates the VA Medical Center at Fort Miley on Clement Street (415) 221-4810 and the Medical Clinic at 3rd and Harrison (415) 281-5100. There are also Bay Area VA facilities in San Bruno, Oakland, Concord, Fairfield, Livermore, Martinez, Oakland, Palo Alto, Vallejo, and San Jose. The [Veterans Health Benefits Handbook](#) can be downloaded by clicking the link and has much

more information.

Benefits—Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) is responsible for administering VA programs that provide financial and other forms of assistance to veterans and their dependents. In 1944, the GI Bill of Rights was passed to give GI low cost mortgages, business loans, college and vocational school benefits, and one year of unemployment compensation. Today, the Post 9/11 GI Bill main benefits include four (4) years of educational tuition, a monthly stipend, and benefit eligibility for 15 years leaving active duty. This arm of the VA is also responsible for compensation, pensions, rehabilitation, employment, and educational assistance. The VBA is also the agency running the VA loan guaranty programs and life insurance such as SGLI for the military and VGLI for veterans. The Vet Center in San Francisco is located at 505 Polk Street (415) 441-5051. There are Vet Centers also in Oakland, San Jose, Sacramento, Redwood City, and Rohnert Park. There are also VA Counselors at San Francisco State (415) 338-2336, USF (415-422-2789 or veterans@usfca.edu), and San Francisco City College (415-239-3486 or veterans@ccsf.edu). Comrade Li Huang works for the Vet Center in San Francisco and Comrade Ben Yang is the Veterans Certifying Specialist at San Francisco State.

Cemetery—National Cemetery Administration operates 131 of the 147 national cemeteries (Army operates two and the National Park Service 14). Military and veterans are eligible to be buried at National Cemeteries and are entitled to receive a military head stone at public or private cemeteries.

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Department of VA, Continued

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There are three (3) local National Cemeteries: Presidio in San Francisco (650) 589-7737, Golden Gate in San Bruno, and Sacramento Valley in Dixon (near Sacramento). The VA and [Benefits](#)

[and Services](#) maintains a website for Benefits and Services.

The American Legion is your champion and voice in the US Government. This is exactly one of the many reasons why we joined The American Legion. Our collective

voice ensures we have a say that matters in government and in the community. It is our sincere hope that reforms in the VA system will continue to improve because [22 veterans commit suicide each day](#)—a totally unacceptable number.

GI Bill Then and Post 9/11 GI Bill Now By Lisa Roellig

[Editor's Note: This story will be published in 2 parts.]

They were promised \$1.25 to be paid for each day served overseas or \$1.00 for each day served in the United States. The catch was, the payment would not be received until 1945. And so it goes that by May of 1932, in the midst of the Great Depression, 17,000 World War I veterans, who only had unemployment and homelessness to show for their service, set up camp in front of the Capitol in Washington D.C. Their demand was immediate payment of the monies promised by Congress. They called themselves the Bonus Expeditionary Force but would become popularly known as the Bonus Army. It took an order of the Attorney General William D. Mitchell to clear the veteran encampment from all government properties. By brutal force, then Army

Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur commanded his infantry, cavalry, and six tanks to invade the camp and attack the beleaguered veterans and their families.

Several veterans were shot and later died. The hospitals were full of the injured and their camps were burned to the ground as they were driven out, but the heroic resistance of those veterans would live on to influence how men and women would be treated when they returned from service for decades to come.

First brought to the American people in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's fireside chat of July 28, 1943, the proposition that returning men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces would receive for their sacrifice,

a compensation. "We are, today, laying plans for the return to civilian life of our gallant men and women in the armed services. They must not be demobilized into an environment of inflation and unemployment, to a place on a bread line, or on a corner selling apples." Of course, no one wanted a repeat of WWI veterans Bonus Army. What later became known as *The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944* or GI Bill of Rights first drafted by the former American Legion National Commander Harry W. Colmery and finally signed into law on June 22, 1944 by President Roosevelt, it would undergo a series of revisions through the years and decades to meet the changing needs of returning veterans.

(Continued on page 20)



GI Bill, Continued



President Franklin D. Roosevelt signing the GI Bill of Rights in 1944. Photo AP File.

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Credited by many historians with the creation of the middle class, the GI Bill would allow for low-cost mortgages, low interest loans to start businesses, cash payments of tuition, living expenses to attend college, high school or vocational education, and one year of unemployment compensation available to every veteran who had served at least 90 days and had not been dishonorably discharged; combat not a requirement. Low cost mortgages made it possible for families to become homeowners for the first time. Millions of Americans moved out of urban cities and the suburbs were born. In total, 2.4 million homes were purchased between

1944 until 1952. A whole generation of servicemen and women were able to attend a college or university, who had prior to WWII been locked out of higher education. Businesses were started, factories were producing. Less than twenty percent of the unemployment benefits allocated in the bill were used by veterans who were either not working or in school. The whole country was for the most part, thriving. The GI Bill of 1944 proved to be the most sweeping progressive legislation fueling the largest economic expansion since the New Deal.

In the following years and decades, the government would revise, adjust, and then readjust again the GI Bill of 1944. None of the subsequent

bills were able to match the success of the original bill. Despite the low percentage of participation in the early years of the Veteran's Readjustment Act of 1966, due to too low reimbursements, subsequent revisions allowed for increase in funding. As a result, larger numbers of Vietnam era veterans were able to participate in colleges and universities. Clearly there is a correlation on funding and success of veterans post service. In 1976, the highest number of Vietnam era veterans were enrolled in colleges and universities. By the end of the program, proportionally more Vietnam era veterans had used their benefits for higher education, more than any previous generation of veterans. A limited educational assistance program, the Post Vietnam Veteran's Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) was created in 1977, mostly in an attempt to bring up the enlistment numbers that had been steadily declining in a post draft period.

[Note: We hope you enjoyed Part 1. The conclusion, Post 9/11 GI Bill will be published in the next issue.]

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The Passing of Superman, Lee Kuan Yew

By Roger Dong
Final-Part 2

[Note: As reported last month, former Premier Harry Lee was admitted into Singapore General Hospital on Feb 5 with severe pneumonia. We are sad to report that on March 23, 2015, the founding father of modern Singapore passed away.]



Last month I introduced you to Harry Lee aka: Lee Kuan Yew, whom I called a Superman, but even though he was super, Lee Kuan Yew is human and we know that all human beings come to an end.

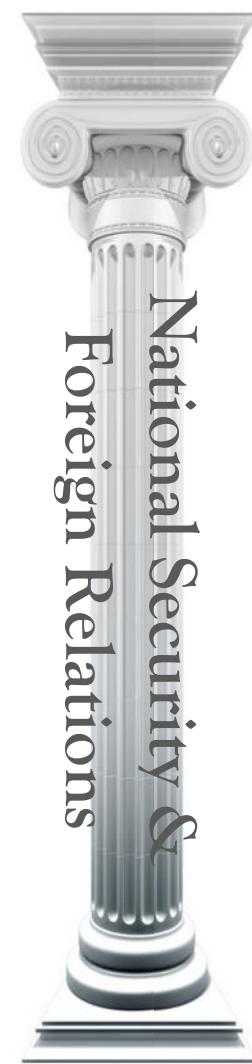
On March 23, 2015 Superman Lee Kuan Yew left us. He was admitted into Singapore General hospital for several weeks, but at 91 succumbed to one of the greatest killer of seniors, the lung disease - pneumonia. In honor of this very unique international leader, here is a recap of his life as the father of Singapore.

Why do we consider Lee Kuan Yew a Superman? He is not like any other national leader because of his enormous success. He is admired by national leaders of all political genre. Prior to his passing, Lee Kwan Yew was well known as a world class leader who had performed a political and economic miracle on the island nation of Singapore. Even among world class leaders, Lee was a Superman. Who else could have transformed 228 square miles of a barren island with no natural resources, no infrastructure, no established government, a polyglot population speaking more than three languages and multiple cultural heritages into a modern nation in a 20 years? As a start-up nation, he had no military to defend the nascent nation if attacked. Its importance at the strategic position at the mouth of the Strait of Malacca and its deep water channel were not yet appreciated by her neighbors, or there might have been an attack to seize Singapore. Lee had time to create a stable island nation. In 1965 there were no models for Singapore to emulate, and so Lee had to develop his own game plan.

And, a few days after his passing, we learn that he was a hero to the Russian Daimyo Vladimir Putin, a true strong armed dictator and several other Russian confederation leaders. On the opposite spectrum, the Chiefs of State and Foreign Ministers of the United States, Britain, France, and Germany for the past three decades have unanimously praised Lee for his extraordinary success.

For many liberal Westerners, Lee represents the ultimate tyrant who denied citizens of free speech and assembly and shut down all political opposition with a steel glove. However, Lee the dictator was not a typical dictator, he was a very rare enlightened authoritarian, aka: benevolent dictator who established stability, a strong work ethic, and a crime free society was the foundation for national success.

Lee was an ardent anti-Communist. Yet, he was studied intensively by the
(Continued on page 23)



Lee Kuan Yew, Continued

Communist leaders in Vietnam and China, all hoping to get his secret recipe for his unparalleled political and economic success. The Chinese government during the period of 1990 - 2011 sent 22,000 officials to Singapore to figure out their recipe for success.

Perhaps, Lee's greatest achievement was the establishment of a government without corruption. In the world we live in today, that is most unusual. Even in America, corrupt government officials are a common phenomena. Singapore pays its government officials very well, and thus eliminates a lot of temptation to be vulnerable to bribes. The government of Singapore is rated the least corrupt government in the world.

Today, Singapore is one of the most modern and efficient countries in the world. The public transportation is well maintained, works well, and is very efficient. The number of automobiles is controlled to manage traffic. Tap water is potable. Citizens live in a crime free environment. Singapore has the highest ranking as a business friendly country. As a result, foreign investment dollars pour into Singapore daily. More than 7,000 multi-national companies have offices in Singapore and many use this location as their business hub in Asia, even though most of their business is elsewhere.

How wealthy are the Singaporeans? Their cash reserves is the 5th largest in the world with \$256 billion in T-bills which is double that of the United States.

And how have the citizens of Singapore fared in all this national grandeur? In 1965 the average annual salary for Singaporeans was \$512. Today, that average is \$56,000. Sixteen percent of the population, due to real estate appreciation have net worth of over \$1,000,000. And everyone gets along. There is no sign of ethnic friction in Singapore.

Lee Kuan Yew could not shut the sweltering heat of tropical Singapore, but today, most people go from air conditioned quarters via air conditioned public transportation/cars, to air conditioned hotels, restaurants, and businesses. There are only brief moments of broiling heat between conveyances.

Now that Lee has passed on, the world waits with baited breath to see if the miracle of Singapore can continue. Lee made sure that his government was trained to continue his march, so don't expect Singapore to fall apart any time soon.

Lee Kuan Yew, the world thanks you for your enlightened and strong leadership which served the people of Singapore brilliantly. Those leaders and countries that are trying to emulate Singapore must learn that they if they do not eliminate corruption, just emulating the other parts of the Singapore, will be very insufficient.

(Chief Reporter Roger Dong has done extensive research into the life-time achievements of Harry Lee, aka Lee Kuan Yew. Due to space limitations, the Cathay Dispatch is unable to publish his story in its entirety. Those who are interested may contact Roger at: rogerdong@hotmail.com and he will be glad to provide you with the entire story.)





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April 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 April Fool's Day	2	3 Good Friday	4
5 Easter	6	7 ALWMC Meeting, 5:30	8 Traveling Vietnam Veterans Wall GGNC	9 Dist. 8 Mtg, 5:30 Traveling Vietnam Wall	10 Traveling Vietnam Veterans Wall GGNC	11 Post Meeting Traveling Vietnam Wall
12 Traveling Vietnam Veterans Wall GGNC	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 May CD story deadline	24 Marine Recruit Training	25
26	27	28	29 Legislative Day, State Capitol	30 CALPA 2015 deadline		

May 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5 ALWMC Meeting, 5:30 p.m.	6	7	8	9 Post Meeting & Election, SF JROTC Comp
10 Mother's Day	11	12	13	14 Dist. 8 Meeting 5:30 p.m.	15	16 Armed Forces Day
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 USS SF & St. Mary's Sq.	25 Memorial Day & SF Nat'l cemetery	26	27	28 June CD story deadline	29 Cathay Post Annual Dinner	30
31						

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Desert Shield/Desert Storm/OEF/
OIF
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Panama—Operation Just Cause
12/20/1989 – 1/31/1990

Lebanon/Grenada
Lebanon War/Operation Urgent Fury
8/24/1982 – 7/31/1984

Vietnam War
2/28/1961 – 5/7/1975

Korean War
6/25/1950 – 1/31/1955

World War II
12/7/1941 – 12/31/1946

World War I
4/6/1917 – 11/11/1918

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