



LINCOLN HILLS VETERANS GROUP

BULLETIN

February 2026

Lest We Forget

Volume 26, No. 2

President's Corner

Future Success Involves Us All

As we start the New Year, I would like to share with you the important direction your board of directors has outlined for this year.

First is membership. As you are all aware, we have a much smaller fighting force defending our country. New technology, the elimination of the draft and other issues has dictated the need for a much smaller military. As a result, there are fewer veterans moving into our community. It therefore requires us to be very vigilant identifying prospects that can become members of our group. If we don't react to this reality, our membership will drop to a point where we may not be a viable group. Many of the programs we offer need enough members to continue in the future.



That means we all, and I stress *all*, need to find opportunities to identify veterans that are not in our group and work to help them understand who we are and what they can do to enjoy and enhance our Veterans Group.

A new neighbor, a new member of your church, a person you meet at the Meridians or one of our gyms or at a meeting or event of one of our many clubs offer an opportunity to share our story and offer them a wonderful group where they can socialize with other veterans.

But it will only work if everyone takes it upon themselves to talk to them about our group.

I will offer my time to meet with any prospective member and help them understand if the Lincoln Hills Veterans Group should become part of their way of life here in our community.

Please turn to page 3, column 1

Next Meeting

The U-2 Dragon Lady: Vital Reconnaissance Asset for Decades

Retired Air Force Colonel and Lincoln Hills resident Frank "Fuzzy" Furr flew the U-2 Dragon Lady and will provide firsthand insights on this amazing aircraft at the February 19 general membership meeting at 1:00 p.m. in the Kilaga Springs Presentation Hall.

He will discuss how the U-2 delivers vital imagery and signals intelligence to decision makers throughout all phases of conflict, including peacetime indications and



warnings, low-intensity conflict, and large-scale hostilities. His overview will highlight why it remains in constant use today, flying critical intelligence-gathering missions around the world.

Fuzzy's operational military assignments started with flying F-102 interceptors in Germany, followed by a tour in Vietnam flying the OV-10 Bronco as a forward air controller. Returning from Vietnam, he was selected into the U-2 program. He has flown over 3500 hours, including over 1300 in the U-2 and over 1200 hours of combat.

Fuzzy commanded U-2 Operations in Cyprus and subsequently led the 99th Reconnaissance Squadron at Beale AFB, home of worldwide U-2 operations.

Save the Date

The Veterans Group's popular St. Patrick's Luncheon is coming up on March 17. Reservation forms will be available at the general membership meeting on February 19 and in next month's *Bulletin*.

**Lincoln Hills Veterans Group
2026 Officers and Directors**

President: Peter Gilbert 650-759-5584
Vice President: Jeff Davis 408-483-2860
Treasurer: Dave Taylor 559-281-0868
Secretary: Phillip Cameron 916-705-4310
Director: Bauke Van Oosbree 559-307-5577
Director: Dick Parry 425-240-1098
Director: temporarily vacant

Past Presidents: Jeff Davis, 2024-2025; Dave Taylor, 2023; Bill Lewis, 2022; Joan MacAdams, 2020-2021; Mike Schultz, 2019; Wayne Gallant, 2018; Fred Buhler, 2017; Bob Ringo*, 2016; Jack Everett, 2015; Malcolm Singer*, 2014; Roger Espiritu, 2013; Joey Chisesi*, 2012; Rich Williams, 2011; Jon Hodson, 2010; Doug Cooper, 2009; Steve Witmer, 2008; Vern Luke, 2007; Wayne Ford, 2006; Dick Schultz*, 2005; Mark Dentinger*, 2004; Dick Meyer*, 2003; Ed Foley, 2002; Mickey Haggard*, 2001
 *Deceased

Advisors and Committee Chairs

Membership: Phillip Cameron 916-705-4310
Programs: Dick Parry 425-240-1098
Vets Resource: Doug Cooper 916-408-7173
Social Events: Phillip Cameron 916-705-4310
Chaplain: Bill Lewis 916-303-0349
Flag Sales: Bauke Van Oosbree 559-307-5577
Public Relations: Steve Witmer 916-521-3587

Meetings

General membership meetings normally are held the third Thursday of the month at 1:00 p.m. in the Kilaga Springs Presentation Hall, except for March, June, October and December, when social events are held.

Membership

The purpose of the Veterans Group is to bring together resident veterans who have served honorably in any uniformed service of the United States or its allies during war or peace. Dues are \$20 a year. Life membership is \$200. For further information, please contact Phillip Cameron at 916-705-4310.

Bulletin Contributions

Contributions to the monthly *Bulletin* are appreciated. Please send material for consideration to:

Steve Witmer, Editor
 1582 Summerhill Lane, Lincoln, CA 95648
switmer@ymail.com
 916-521-3587

Question for “Old Salts”

“After its christening in 1923,” according to the Air and Space Museum, this aircraft “went out on a series of short training flights to test its utility as a reconnaissance aircraft. It flew to the West Coast in September 1924, where it joined the battle fleet in military exercises off San Pedro, Calif. On Sept. 3, 1925, its crash in a thunderstorm in Ohio presaged the demise of this type of aircraft. Can you identify the aircraft? The answer appears on page 4.

— In Memoriam —

Rene M. Lopez

Veteran of the U.S. Air Force

The Veterans Group extends its deepest condolences to Rene’s family and friends.

Calendar of Events

February

- 16** Presidents’ Day* 
- 17** Directors’ Meeting
- 19** General Membership Meeting

March

- 17** Directors’ Meeting
- 17** St. Patrick’s Day Luncheon
 12:00 noon, Orchard Creek Ballroom

* National Holiday or Observance. Proudly fly the American flag.

Treasurer’s Report

On December 31, 2025, the group’s bank accounts totaled:

Checking: \$ 1,336.80
Savings: \$ 5,002.64
Total Assets: \$ 6,339.44

Membership Report

The group’s membership on December 31, 2025 totaled:

Life Members: 89
 Annual Paid: 58
Total Voting Membership: 147

Lend Your Vets Group a Hand

Sell Flags and Meet Friendly People

Dedicated members of the Veterans Group man our flag-sales table in the Orchard Creek lobby on the 15th day of every month. They get to meet and talk with friendly residents, many of them veterans with interesting stories to tell.



To sign up for a two-hour shift on the 15th of a future month, phone Van Oosbree at 559-307-5577 or reach him by email at bvanoosbree41@gmail.com.

LHVG Logo Shirts and Jackets

Order direct at the following link:

<https://stores.inksoft.com/lhvg>



Premier Graph-x
 8413 Washington Blvd., Ste. 115
 Roseville, CA 95678
 Tel: 916-787-0603.

President's Corner, continued from page 1

Who will be the first to call me with a prospective member? I will buy coffee for you and your prospect!

There are many ways you can help us make our Veterans Group successful.

1. Volunteer to work a shift with other vets selling American Flags once each month in the lodge.
2. Help us to identify a valuable program that our membership should enjoy. Do you have an experience you can share with our membership?
3. Offer to help plan one of our luncheon events during the year.
4. Volunteer to join our board of directors and help guide the future of our group.
5. Help plan our Veterans Day and other events along with the board.

Please contact me if you would like additional details about any of these opportunities. Give me a call at 650-759-5584 or email peter-gilbert@sbcglobal.net.

– Peter Gilbert, President

Of Interest to Veterans

Flags of the Revolution and Holiday Luncheon Highlighted 2025 Year End

Vets Group members and guests were treated to a fascinating presentation on November 20 when the Sons of the American Revolution provided the histories of the flags used during the War of Independence by the colonists. Dressed in colonial military attire, the presenters displayed each of the flags and discussed their provenance.



The annual holiday luncheon was enjoyed by scores



of appreciative diners in the Orchard Creek Ballroom on December 18. All members of the Lincoln

Hills Veterans Group and their significant others attended the luncheon at no cost. Sincere thanks go to Claire Luke, who orchestrated the event.

Navy Announces New Frigate to be Based on Coast Guard Cutter Design

The Navy announced on December 17 that it plans to build a replacement FF(X) frigate based on a Coast Guard cutter already in service. The Navy said in a statement, “The FF(X) will be a smaller, more agile surface combatant designed to complement the fleet’s larger, multi-mission warships and enhance operational flexibility around the globe.”



◀ U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Calhoun, a Legend-class National Security Cutter..

Using the Coast Guard cutter design for the new Navy frigates would fast-track getting hulls into the water by 2028, Navy Secretary John Phelan said. The new construction program will replace the troubled *Constellation*-class frigate program, which has been plagued by cost overruns, delays, worker shortages, and dozens of design changes. A Navy report last year said the project was 36 months behind schedule on its \$22 billion contract.

Adm. Daryl Caudle, Chief of Naval Operations, said the new frigate program was an attempt to build ships that were smaller than modern destroyers, which have increasingly taken on the role formerly played by cruisers in the “high-end fight” of naval warfare. “The FF(X) is a highly adaptable vessel. While its primary mission will be surface warfare, it has the ability to carry modular payloads and command unmanned systems,” the Navy said. The ships would be augmented by uncrewed ships for the defense of major warships. “Our small surface combatant inventory is a third of what we need,” Caudle said. “We need more capable blue-water small combatants to close the gap.”

- Stars and Stripes

USAF Thunderbirds Return to Sacramento in October

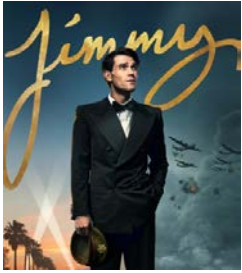
On October 10-11, 2026 at Sacramento County’s Mather Airport, the Air Force Thunderbirds will highlight the California Capital Airshow in celebration of America’s 250th Birthday. Watch for details on this always-thrilling event in future



Bulletins.

Jimmy Stewart Biopic on the Way

'Jimmy' is set to hit theaters in November. The movie will chronicle James Stewart's rise in Hollywood — including his Academy Award-winning performance in "The Philadelphia Story" — before his shock enlistment in the U.S. Army Air Corps in March 1941.



Stewart's fight began long before he entered the war. The 6-foot-3-inch Stewart weighed only 138 pounds, and the Army initially turned him down.

According to historian Richard L. Hayes, Stewart began eating "spaghetti twice a day, supplemented with steaks and milkshakes." At a second physical in March 1941, he still had not gained enough weight to be eligible but he talked the Army doctors into adding an ounce or two so he could qualify.

Not satisfied to simply sit stateside selling war bonds, Stewart fought for active duty and served as a combat pilot, flying 20 missions in Europe in a B-24 Liberator.

► Lt. Gen. Valin, Chief of Staff, French Air Force, awards the Croix De Guerre with Palm to Col. Jimmy Stewart for exceptional services in the liberation of France during World War II.



"Jimmy Stewart was an American hero," according to KJ Apa, who plays him in the film. "He was among a certain breed of men who understood the true meaning of sacrifice by fighting for our freedom. He was also among the greatest actors of all time. His story portrays the absolute best of what one human has to offer his country."

— *Military Times*

Answer for "Old Salts"

During the First World War, America and its allies had taken notice of the Germans' terrifying use of bomb-dropping Zeppelins over England. Seen at the time as the future of aviation, these airships inspired interest among other military organizations, including the U.S. Navy.

In the early hours of Oct. 20, 1917, French aviators managed to force down the German Zeppelin L-49. Landing relatively intact, "the capture," according to the Air and Space Museum, "of an intact Zeppelin provided an incredible wealth of information regarding the construction of the craft."

As a result of the study of this information and that received from various other sources it was concluded that the surest method of constructing a successful airship would be to copy as closely as possible the L-49. It was accordingly recommended to the Secretary of the Navy that the construction of one rigid airship, a copy of the L-49, be approved.

This recommendation was approved and arrangements began for the construction of what would be the USS *Shenandoah*.



Her maiden September 1923 flight marked the first airship to carry an American crew, and the first to use non-flammable helium.

The *Shenandoah* made a transcontinental flight to the West Coast in September 1924 and joined a battle fleet in military exercises off San Pedro, Calif. The aircraft made a successful flight back home to Lakehurst, N.J., only to find out it was being sent out on publicity tours.

Under Navy orders, the *Shenandoah* headed west into a threatening sky — and to its demise. While passing through an area of thunderstorms and turbulence the *Shenandoah* was caught in a violent updraft that carried the ship beyond the pressure



limits of its gas bags. The turbulence tore the airship apart, and it crashed in three main pieces near Caldwell, Ohio.

Fourteen of the *Shenandoah's* 45 airmen died. Despite

this unfolding tragedy, it was, miraculously, a number far fewer than the fate that would meet its sister ships. The other four crashed not long after they were commissioned, marking the end of the Navy's rigid airship aspirations.

Help Wanted

Member, Board of Directors - Represent the group's membership in the formulation and execution of all activities of the Lincoln Hills Veterans Group.

Contact Peter Gilbert, 650-759-5584

peter-gilbert@sbcglobal.net