



# LINCOLN HILLS VETERANS GROUP BULLETIN

April 2026

Lest We Forget

Volume 26, No. 4

## President's Corner

### Committed Directors Contribute to Veterans Group Success

Starting this month, I want to share some information about our board members, regarding both their military service and their duties on the board.



#### Frank Furr



First, I want to thank and introduce our newest board member, Frank Furr. Frank, better known as Fuzzy, is a retired Air Force colonel who served over 27 years in various operational, senior staff and leadership positions in the Air Force, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Defense Intelligence Agency, and

Office of the Secretary of Defense. He is a most welcome addition to the board and fills out our 7-member complement.

#### Jeff Davis



Jeff Davis has held many positions in the Veterans Group, including president in 2024 and 2025. He is currently our vice president.

According to Jeff, "I became a second lieutenant through the ROTC program in 1965. The most difficult thing I did in the Army was run a mile in my combat boots in under 8-1/2 minutes. It nearly killed me. The second most difficult thing was to go through the escape and evasion course in the combat platoon leader's course at Ft. Benning, Ga. Half the men in my class had orders for Vietnam, but I had orders for Shemya, Alaska. It took me three months to locate it on a map.



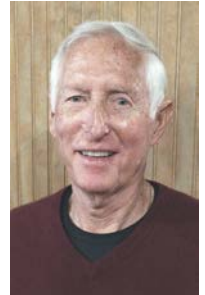
Please turn to page 3, column 1

## Next Meeting

### Huey Pilot to Relate Vietnam Wartime Experiences April 16

**Learn about helicopter operations in Vietnam and a life-changing year in the life of Veterans Group member Lew Hudspeth.**

Lincoln Hills resident and retired Army LTC Lew Hudspeth will be the featured speaker at the April 16 general membership meeting at 1:00 p.m. in the Kilaga Springs Presentation Hall. This coming-of-age story features 21-year-old Lew's one-year tour of duty in Vietnam in 1967.



It chronicles the highly intense experience of learning to fly and becoming a UH-1D "Huey" helicopter pilot, serving in combat, making instant life-and-death decisions, sustaining major injuries, and developing his own personal life in one of the most challenging times in our nation's history.



Having grown up as a small-town American boy, Lew quickly became a man with a purpose as a helicopter pilot who survived the ravages of war, earned a

Purple Heart for combat wounds, and changed his life forever.

His wartime experiences are recorded in his book, *Bug Pilot*, authored by Lew's younger sister, Cindy Utter. With her background in newspaper reporting, Cindy worked closely with Lew to ensure his story remained true, accurate, motivational and inspiring for everyone who reads it.



**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:* Bauke Van Oosbree 559-307-5577  
*Director:* Phillip Cameron 916-705-4310  
*Director:* Dick Parry 425-240-1098  
*Director:* Frank Furr 435-659-6218

**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](mailto:switmer@ymail.com)  
 916-521-3587

**Question for “Old Dogfaces”**

This firearm was a popular weapon in WWII and Korea because it was very reliable and offered an excellent combination of rapid fire and penetrating power. The Army infantry squad of nine men was tactically organized around a single one of these weapons. Its only serious drawbacks were its lack of a quick-change barrel and its weight. Can you name the weapon?

The answer appears on page 4.

**— In Memoriam —**

**Michael Cramer**

Veteran of the U.S. Army




*The Veterans Group extends its deepest condolences to Michael's family and friends.*

Calendar of Events

**April**

- 14** Directors' Meeting
- 16** General Membership Meeting

**May**

- 8** VE Day (1945)\* 
  - 16** Armed Forces Day\* 
  - 19** Directors' Meeting
  - 25** Memorial Day\* 
- Ceremony at 9 a.m., Orchard Creek Amphitheater*

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

Treasurer's Report

On February 28, 2026, the group's bank accounts totaled:

**Checking:** \$ 3,444.41  
**Savings:** \$ 4,002.71  
**Total Assets:** \$ 7,447.12

Membership Report

The group's membership on February 28, 2026 totaled:

Life Members: 88  
 Annual Paid: 57  
**Total Voting Membership: 145**

**Welcome, New Members**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Service</b>
Terry Cannon	U.S. Air Force
Hal Carroll	U.S. Air Force
John Connor	U.S. Army
Roy Deeble	U.S. Army
Fenton Frederick	U.S. Army
Frank Furr	U.S. Air Force
Bill Laube	U.S. Air Force
Don Schultze	U.S. Coast Guard
Frank Silva	U.S. Air Force
Joel Vernon	U.S. Marine Corps
Roald Waraas	U.S. Army

**Need a New Flag?**

The Veterans Group sells bright new flags in the Orchard Creek lobby on the 15th of every month. Stop by and pick up a fresh new flag. Flags are \$20.



*President's Corner, continued from page 1*

“Shemya is at the far end of the Aleutian Islands. It’s a 2-mile by 4-mile island with a beautiful woman behind every tree. Every day we sent out search parties, but to no avail. All we could find was tundra.

“My MOS was 7601, Electronics Engineer. To my amazement that was exactly what I did for my one-year tour at Shemya. I am forever grateful to the Army for providing me this assignment. I soon learned the government did secret electronics work that was not only interesting, but directly contributed on a daily basis to quality intelligence that was provided to the highest-level decision makers in the country. When my two-year Army tour was up, I continued to do secret electronics work most of my working life.”

**Phil Cameron**



In addition to his work as a board member, Phil manages our membership function and serves as the group’s social chairman.

Phil writes, “I served in the USAF from 1963 to 1991, 28 years. All my service was aircraft engine maintenance, from C-47s to Air Force One. Aircraft I maintained included the C-54, C-118, C-123, EC-121, T-28, T-29, KC-97, KC-135, F-105, F-4, and F111.

“I was stationed in the states at Barksdale AFB, La.; Grissom AFB, Ind.; Scott AFB, Ill.; Nellis AFB, Nev. and Andrews AFB, Md. Plus, I had a lot of overseas service, including Clark AB, Philippines; Korat and Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Bases: Pakse, Laos; Aviano AB, Italy; Ankara, Turkey, and RAF Lakenheath and Upper Hayford in England.

“I got to maintain some famous planes, including:

- C-123 “White Whale,” General Westmoreland’s aircraft,
- C-123 “Patches,” a Ranch Hand aircraft (*right*) that sprayed Agent Orange and had seven Purple Hearts for wounded crew members and a target painted on its nose because of all the bullet holes in the aircraft. It is now in the Air Force Museum,
- VC-137 26000, the aircraft President Kennedy flew into Dallas, and
- VC-25 28000, present-day Air Force One.”



– Peter Gilbert, President

[Items of Interest to Veterans](#)

**VA May Contact You by Email and SMS Text About Your Claim**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) began using email and SMS text to let you know if more information is needed for your benefits claim.



These messages will include a link to the Claim Assist Portal—a fast, secure way to respond without mailing, scanning, or searching through VA.gov. On the portal, you will be able to quickly respond to questions and sign forms electronically.

**What is the Claim Assist Portal?**

The Claim Assist Portal is a secure online tool that makes it faster and easier for you to respond when VA needs more information for your claim. You can securely provide the requested details, complete short forms, or verify information online—no printing, mailing, or scanning needed.

**What to know:**

- The link is safe and secure
- Messages will clearly show they’re from the Department of Veterans Affairs (**do-not-reply@notifications.va.gov**)
- These are official VA messages—not spam or third-party solicitations

Using the portal is not a requirement; however, responding quickly helps keep your claim moving

- Dept. of Veterans Affairs

**The Military Has a Complicated History with Tobacco**



For decades, cigarettes were as common in uniform as a canteen and a helmet liner.

In World War II, tobacco was not treated as a vice; it was a comfort item. Cigarettes were packed into rations as morale boosters, something that could steady nerves between missions, the Imperial War Museums note. The image of a soldier lighting up in a muddy trench or on the deck of a ship became inseparable from the mythology of the American warfighter. The phrase “smoke ‘em if you got ‘em” became a broader cultural idiom, according to the Army Historical Foundation.

That normalization lasted for generations. Smoking was woven into daily military life. A cigarette break punctuated patrols and long nights on guard duty. The smoke pit became a place where rank blurred slightly, and information flowed freely. For young troops far from home, nicotine offered routine in environments defined by uncertainty.

But the same institution that once distributed cigarettes eventually had to reckon with the consequences.

As medical research sharpened the link between tobacco use and long-term health problems, the Department of Defense shifted its posture. Smoking inside military facilities was banned in 1994, and in 2016, the Pentagon moved to eliminate discounted tobacco sales in on-base exchanges.

Still, anyone who has served knows the smoke pit has not vanished. It remains a gathering place, a bond that only those who don the uniform can truly understand.

The military's relationship with tobacco reflects a broader evolution. What began as a morale staple, packed alongside rations, has become a regulated health concern measured against mission impact. The products may look different in 2026 than they did in 1945, but the underlying tension remains.

- Clay Beyersdorfer | *Military Times*

### [Lest We Forget](#)

## **World War II Drama 'Pressure' Coming to Theaters May 29**

On June 6, 1944, over 160,000 Allied troops were sent across the English Channel onto the beaches of Normandy, France, marking the assault on Western Europe. Yet the operation, dubbed Operation Overlord, almost ended in disaster before it even began.

Now, the upcoming film "Pressure" is set to relive those angst-filled 72 hours leading up to D-Day.



The film stars Academy Award winner Brendan Fraser as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces Dwight D. Eisenhower and Andrew Scott as Group Captain James Stagg, the chief meteorologist who predicted the storms over Western Europe in the days leading up to the invasion.

The lanky Brit, alongside a team of forecasters from the Royal Navy, British Meteorological Office and U.S. Strategic and Tactical Air Force, knew the Allies only had a small window — nine days in May and June — that were suitable for the invasion.

Eisenhower set the date for the invasion to be June 5, but in the wee hours of June 4, 1944, Stagg recommended



halting the 7,000 naval vessels — including battleships, destroyers, minesweepers, escorts and assault craft — carrying more than 160,000 troops.

The aptly titled "Pressure" depicts an anguished Eisenhower on the eve of the invasion, with the weight of the free world and the largest, most dangerous seaborne invasion in history all hinging on weather report.

Stagg's intel proved correct and a storm broke over the English Channel on June 5. However, Stagg believed there would be a small break in the storm and, just before dawn 24 hours prior, Eisenhower made the decision to go on June 6. "I thank the Gods of War we went when we did," Eisenhower wrote.

- *Military Times*

## **Answer for "Old Dogfaces"**

The M1918A2 Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) is a gas-operated, .30-06 caliber automatic rifle/light machine gun designed by John Browning in 1917. It features a 20-round detachable magazine, a rate of



fire up to 650 rounds per minute (with settings of 350-550 rpm in later models), and saw extensive use from WWI through Vietnam. The BAR was a popular weapon in WWII

and Korea because it was very reliable and offered an excellent combination of rapid fire and penetrating power.

The BAR's only serious drawbacks were its lack of a quick-change barrel (to reduce the chance of overheating), and its weight (a BAR, with bipod and a loaded bandoleer, came to about 25 pounds).

The weapon mounted a folding bipod on a special flash hider near the end of the barrel. The bipod was very effective in defensive positions. The flash hider blocked the muzzle flash from the vision of the shooter, enabling the soldier to maintain his night vision.