

Harding-Blaine Post 321

"Flagship of the Fourth District"

Member of TEXALPA and NALPA

American Legion to Supreme Court: Terrorists Ruling endangers U.S. Military



June 12, 2008 - The nation's leading veterans organization reacted to today's Supreme Court ruling that foreign terrorist have U.S. constitutional rights. The ruling came as the result of a challenge by detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, who want hearings in U.S. civilian courts.

"To suggest that foreign terrorists, who have never set foot in this country and respect no civilized laws should enjoy the same rights under our Constitution as U.S. citizens," American Legion National Commander Marty Conatser said of today's 5-4 ruling, "must make America's founding fathers turn over in their graves."

Conatser pointed out that The American Legion has sent delegations to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. "Two American Legion past national commanders have visited Camp Delta. They found that the detainees were humanely treated, well-fed and provided with medical care that surpasses what many veterans receive. We currently have a distinguished Legionnaire viewing hearings down at Guantanamo. As the deputy commanding general of Guantanamo told our Washington Legislative Conference, if the situation were reversed these

terrorists would define mercy as a knife blade on the back of the neck instead of the front." Chief Justice John Roberts dissented from the ruling. He wrote that the United States enacted "the most generous set of procedural protections ever afforded aliens detained by this country as enemy combatants." Justice Antonin Scalia joined the dissent, writing that the majority's decision "will make the war harder on us. It will almost certainly cause more Americans to be killed".

"The Supreme Court has made its ruling," Conatser said. "It seems that terrorists taken on foreign battlefields will now be entitled to lawyers at taxpayers' expense and all the other rights that American citizens enjoy. It would have been wonderful if the terrorists had treated Matt Maupin, the U.S. soldier captured and brutally murdered in Iraq, with the same respect. In fact, one of the men on trial, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed is not only the alleged mastermind of 9/11 but is widely believed to have personally beheaded journalist Daniel Pearl." Conatser said that The American Legion will look at various ways to protect America within the confines of the latest Supreme Court decision.

www.legion.org

Charlie's Chatter

This year has been one that I will never forget, in more ways than one! I have just completed a year serving as Department (State) President for the American Legion Auxiliary. What an experience!

It will be really nice to be home to participate in the many programs that our American Legion family promotes. This past year I have logged in excess of 30,000 miles. That is a lot of traveling. Thank you for your support.

I received this information this morning that President Bush signed the "**National Defense Authorization Act of 2008**", which modifies Flag Protocol. President Bush signed this bill on Jan. 28 which modifies flag protocol during hoisting, lowering, and passing of the United States flag. Section 594 of this act allows members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are out of uniform to render the military salute during hoisting, lowering or passing of the United States flag. All others in attendance will still be asked to face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart.

Also in the information I received this morning was; The Senate passed S.2162, the Veterans Mental Health and Other

Care Improvements Act of 2008, by Unanimous consent. This bill introduced by Daniel Akaka (D-HI), provides provisions on mental health care, suicide prevention, care for substance use disorders, prevention of homelessness, pain and epilepsy care and other health care matters. "I am pleased that the Senate passed this vital legislation to help both veterans and their families deal with the trauma of war," said Akaka. No individual is immune to mental health problems, The RAND Corp. released a report earlier this year titled, "Invisible Wounds of War: Psychological and Cognitive Injuries, Their Consequences, and Services to Assist Recovery". The report explained that nearly 20 percent of the 300,000 OEF/OIF veterans who are receiving care from the VA report suffering from PYSD or major depression, this bill would create a PTSD and substance use disorder research program, in cooperation with the National Center for PTSD, to help the VA develop state of the art treatments for veterans suffering from these disorders. Also, the bill would fully authorize the VA to provide mental health services to families of veterans and would set up a program to help veterans and families transition to civilian life.

It is reported that on any given night 154,000 veterans sleep on the streets. The bill focuses on prevention of homelessness among veterans targeting low income veteran families with assistance programs. It would also increase financial assis-

tance to people and organizations that provide supportive services and housing to homeless veterans. It would also require facilities that assist homeless veterans be able to meet the needs of women veterans. The American Legion Family is in support of S.2162. Please contact your Congressman or Congresswoman today. Let them know to vote in favor on HR 4053, S. 2162's companion bill in the House. Our veterans deserve the necessary tools to combat the invisible wounds that follow them home from war. In my opinion, this is long overdue. This should have been addressed many, many years ago. I had the opportunity to meet with the Under-Secretary of the Veterans Affairs Administration. He reported to us that there are so many areas that need improvement concerning the care of our veterans. This is why we should stress mandatory funding for the VA. So when you contact your Congressman or woman, please also stress to them the need for mandatory funding.

*For God, Country and Veterans,
Charlie Dew, Editor*

Trivia

What former presidential candidate was Monica Lewinsky's next-door neighbor at the Watergate?

(See Bartender for answer)

Elected Officers 2008-2009

American Legion

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Commander | Steve Cockerham |
| 1st Vice | Bob Price |
| 2nd Vice | |
| Adjutant | Jim Williamson |
| Asst. Adjutant | Terry Cloninger |
| Finance Officer | Reagan Heine |
| Chaplain | Miguel Romeu |
| Judge Advocate | Fletcher Sharp |
| Historian | Charles Kessler |
| Service Officer | Jim Labelle |
| Sgt-at-Arms | Jeff Armstrong |
| Exec. Committeeman | Reggie Gutierrez |
| Exec. Committeeman | |
| Past Commander | Ernie Rivard |

American Legion Auxiliary

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| President | Judy Reyna |
| 1st Vice | Renee May |
| 2nd Vice | Lynn Marie Johnson |
| Recording Sec. | Charlie Dew |
| Treasurer | Lavada Newell |
| Chaplain | Bernadine Smith |
| Correspond. Sec | Tamme Scholander |
| Historian | Sue Mains |
| Sgt-at-Arms | Phyllis Price |
| Asst. Sgt-at-Arms | Linda Wilmuth |
| Executive Comm. | Cindy Oldroyd |
| | Jan Kelly |
| | Cheryl Styers |

Sons Of The American Legion

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Commander | Bryan Vinson |
| 1st Vice | Eddie Olivera Jr. |
| 2nd Vice | Jimmy Gray |
| Finance Officer | Ray Hartline |
| Adjutant | Abel Silva, Jr. |
| Judge Advocate | David Dew |
| Chaplain | Jeff Saul |
| Historian | Danny Johnson |
| Sgt-at-Arms | Jimmy Jackson |
| Asst. Sgt-at-Arms | Mark Hamilton |
| Liaison | John Maguire |
| Past Commander | BR Evans |

American Legion Riders

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Director | Larry Lawson |
| Assistant Director | Phillip Durant |
| Secretary | Sue Lawson |
| Treasurer | Kimberly Potter |
| Chaplain | Michael Horak |
| Historian | Jorja Morgan |
| Sgt-At-Arms/Run Coord. | Randy Rouse |
| Membership | Becca Dees |
| Communication Chair | Wendy Rouse |
| Ride Captain | Dave Loba |

Membership

| Org. | Goal | Paid | % |
|------|------|------|-------|
| AL | 1116 | 977 | 87.5 |
| ALA | 285 | 252 | 88.42 |
| SAL | 210 | 211 | 100.4 |



Commander's Corner

Hello, hope everyone's doing well. This is going to be a short article.

Here we are, starting a new year at the Post. I want to welcome all the new Officers of our Family. I know this is going to be a great year. The out-going Officers did a wonderful job. Yes, we had a few bumps in the road, but isn't that typical of American Families?

I don't know if this newsletter will get to you before the 4th of July. If it does, make sure to come to our picnic. Sausages galore, brisket, pulled pig, etc. If the newsletter comes after the 4th, was the food any good? Ha, Ha.

We plan to have the Awards and Installation Ceremony and Dinner on Sat the 26th at 6:30. Please plan on attending. Yea, it's free and guys, you don't have to wear a tie. Ladies, ties are optional for you, also.

There were no suggestions in the box this month, so I have one for all of us. Please don't believe all the gossip you may hear. We have an Executive Board meeting the 1st Sat. of every month at 10:00 a.m. Please feel free to attend and hear the real scoop. Any and all are welcome and you may ask questions or state your opinion. There are NO CLOSED MEET-

INGS in our Post. I understand that a little gossip seems harmless, but somebody always seems to get hurt. Ok, enough from the soapbox!

Well, enough blather from me! See you soon, take care..

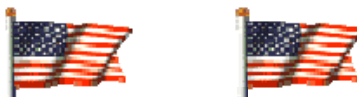
*For God and Country,
Steve Cockerham*

SERVICE OFFICER

I want to thank you for your confidence in making me your Service Officer. I will attempt to keep the members of the post updated on changes that affect members of the American Legion. If you have any question on benefits, please email me the questions and I will get back with you as soon as possible. If you do not have email please just leave me a note. Among other things I will try to work with Social Security. This may be harder but I will try. I need to find out what my limitations will be before I stick my foot in my mouth. My email address is mrjimlabelle@yahoo.com and my mobile number is 972-835-0919.

*For God, Country & Veterans,
Jim Labelle, Service Officer*

**Our Canteen Is
Now
WI-FI**



**INDEPENDENCE DAY
PICNIC
POST HOME
12 NOON**

To my Fellow American Legion Family

I want to send along my gratitude for you gracious contribution in helping Thomas and I rebuild our life. We lost everything precious to us in the fire and have nothing left. My most prized possession is all the mementos from my precious baby Ryan that I lost 2 years ago. To say the least I am devastated. We do however have our lives so that is a blessing in itself. You have always been there for us and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for that. I miss you all and hopefully will be home soon to see you all.

Much Love and Gratitude

Jessica Garner-Gittens and Thomas Gittens

TINGE

Lord, thank you for all the yesterdays
That I thought would be tomorrows.

So many joys I had
Tinged with a little sorrow.
I would have never known true joy

Without a tinge of sorrow.
O, Lord, I thank you for all the yesterdays
That became my tomorrows.

Now, all my yesterdays are gone
And all that is left is sorrow.
Lord, could you give me a tinge of joy
To get me through tomorrow?

Submitted by Mr. William Wick



UNIT 321

Hello Ladies,
 Sorry there was not an article in last month's newsletter. We were so busy with family matters. I want to thank everybody for all the cards and prayers. Congratulations to all the new officers. Installation of officers will be on July 26th at 6:30p.m. There will be a picnic at the post on July 4th everyone welcome. I hope we can get some good things done this year
*For God and Country,
 Judy Reyna President*



Squadron 321

Welcome Legion family. As our new officers take office, I look forward to working with you as the SAL commander. I would like to thank Commander Hartline for his 5 years of service. I am happy he will remain a part of our board. Membership goal was reached at 211 members. Our 2009 cards will arrive later in the month. Please try to renew early. We need you and would like to see you in our meetings. They are the 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 6pm
*For God and Country,
 Bryan Vinson, SAL Commander*

The Secret's Out at Post 321



(Left to right) Debbie Martin, Steve Cockerham, Larry Cobden

The best kept secret in Plano is no longer secret. The Post had its largest turn out for Sunday brunch on Fathers Day. In case you missed it please join us the 3rd Sunday (usually) each month from 10:00 to 12:00. Check the newsletter calendar to verify the date. The menu has grown; the price hasn't, so fuel up for only a \$5.00 donation, just about the price of a gallon of gas. We just introduced Belgian Waffles and corn beef hash to our list of made to order omelets or eggs to your liking, pancakes, French toast, bacon, sausage, hash browns, biscuits and gravy, toast, fresh fruit, coffee, juice and milk. You can use the canteen afterwards; we have wireless Internet available now. Come see what you are missing.



**WE
 ARE
 FAMILY**

Chaplain's Thoughts

I recently read that nowadays "We're all trying to get a Master's Degree and so often we forget the Master". As we move on in life we need to understand that we are all in a journey since we are not home yet. We move through life so fast that at this very moment, as you read this, you are not the person you were a minute ago. We must continue to do little things since only through them can we do big things. We all need to have a zest for life without forgetting that the ultimate goal is eternal life. We must continue to ask ourselves, what does the Lord want us to do? And when dealing with that question just remember that we were not created for this life but for the next. Most of you, by now know that our brother Chuck Scholander has been ill; all your prayers are needed. There is no greater power than the prayer of many. To him who I consider my dearest friend I want to say.... "CHUCK; God Love you and I love you". May the Lord bless all of you and your families.

Miguel Romeu, Chaplain

Pop's Points to Ponder

This month has a great day we call Independence Day. Our forefathers felt it was so important that they got into a big fight with a big country about it. From that humble beginning we have over the years become a big

country ourselves, maybe the greatest country. During my life I was asked to reinforce the belief that freedom for all people is important, they called it World War II. I shot at the enemy, as did millions of others, and the result was we were successful in defending that freedom was maintained. Millions of soldiers before and since, have been called to the same task and also have defended freedom. I would like to tell you that it was an easy task, it wasn't and I would like to thank them from the bottom of my heart. I know the sacrifice and dedication it took, God Bless you all! It should also be significant to note that this task was not accomplished alone, the home front also worked in sync and as we worked together we succeeded. I bring this to your attention because I think it is time to do it again. We are beginning to feel the economic crunch we have all heard about for so long. Fuel prices are going up so we all must work together again be that car pools or public transportation. Workers and management must recognize this and adjust to this new world If we do this we also send a message to the faceless people that are taking unfair advantage of us. Tell them that we the American people have had enough and that our pockets do have bottoms. There are many other issues that have been put off too long, among these food

Members Birthday's July 2008

1. James Chinn, Meagan Morris
2. Edward Emerson, Felix Hull
3. Karen Guinn, Tori Rodosta, Roy Rogers
4. John Nevarez, Robert Stallard, Philip Tutton, Joseph Seremet
5. Dwaine Moore
6. Reece Carter, Billy Gray, Jim Guthrie, Christopher Hamilton
7. David Brown, G Goodman, Roy Jones Jr, Ralph Sleeter
8. Arthur Ball, Jace Crider, Suzi Fike, Pauline Wingate
9. Charles Hawes
10. Lewis Bruno III, Walter Woolery
11. Jennifer Cherry, E Pechar, Sandy Reed, Larry Spinn
12. Bruce Ferguson, Mark Hamilton
13. James Harper Jr, Harlan Irrgang, Brandon Melton, Dakota Melton, Cheryl Schneider, Thomas Violett
14. Tom Baylor, Darrell Durbin, Natalie Fears
15. Jerry Arnold, John Fusaro, Terry McGowin, John Mullins, Christopher Russell, Richard Wilson
16. Valerie Fusaro, Donna Bruno, Alma Padron
17. Wallace Hibbard, Leon Perekslis
18. Todd Drummond
19. Maurice Foster, Patrick Powers
20. Richard Scheider
21. Cindy Scholander, Albert Silva
22. Melissa Davis, Lynn Stine, Jan Martin
23. Arthur Bowen
24. John Fredrick, John Kunkle, Brandon Mcneil, Joann Szabo
25. William Alderman, Gerald Emerson, Sammy Phillips, Jason Smith
26. Charles Ake, Charles Oldroyd
27. Bobby Price
28. Wilford Dobbs, Wayne Morgan, Carye Vinson
29. Robert Wocholz
30. Vinnie Fulginiti, Harold Henson, Jeffrey Pratt
31. Donovan Groszek, Pat Healy, Tim Jolliffe, Jason Saldana

If you see any error on this list, contact : Adjutant at 972-423-5423

prices, medicine prices and the whole medical/insurance industry. We must change our political representation to realize the importance of these issues. These are complex issues I realize but if it was your kid ignoring important issues wouldn't tell him or her you have to face your problems, they don't go away? So with that being said I think it is time for us to act together again. The democracy we all fought so hard for says we can as long as we do it peacefully and within the law. I know I've said this before but Congress and the Senate seemed to have lost site of "We the People". Our forefathers in their wisdom saw to it that dramatic turns in the government cannot happen over night, that's why there are alternating termination dates for Representatives and Senators. I agree with that wisdom. We need to complete a change in philosophy however, and that takes two election cycles. We must be concerned for our own well being so "We the People" must vote for responsible change. Send the message that not everyone in the world is going to like us so stop giving our money away, give it back to "We the People" so that we can solve some of our own issues.

*Thank You and God Bless,
Gene "Pop" Fattig*

Support Our Troops

VA Reaches Out to Women Veterans Department Hosts 4th Quadrennial Summit

The Fourth National Summit on Women Veterans' Issues will take place at the Westin Washington, D.C., City Center from June 20-22. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake said the three-day meeting would help ensure that women veterans know about the benefits and health care they have earned.

"With more women than ever serving in our armed forces, this public forum will bring visibility to the issues important to women veterans of all eras," Peake said. "Today, women are important contributors to the military and valued members of the veteran's community."

Recognizing the valor, service and sacrifice of America's 1.7 million women veterans, VA has created a comprehensive array of benefits and programs.

Women veterans are entitled to the same benefits and medical care as their male counterparts, including health care, disability compensation, education assistance, work-study allowance, vocational rehabilitation, employment and counseling services, insurance, home loan benefits, nursing home care, survivor benefits and various burial benefits.

In addition, VA also has a multitude of services and programs that respond to the unique needs of women veterans, including pap smears, mammography, and general reproductive health care, substance abuse counseling, counseling for sexual trauma, evaluation and

treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Today, over 200,000 women are serving in the armed forces. About 11 percent of the U.S. forces currently serving in Afghanistan and Iraq are women. According to a recent "hospital report card" by VA, the Department's screening for breast and cervical cancer for women in VA facilities exceeds screening in private-sector facilities, but women veterans lag behind their male counterparts in some quality measurements.

VA has already launched an aggressive program to ensure women veterans receive the highest quality of care, including \$32.5 million to purchase additional equipment to meet the health care needs of women. This includes full field digital mammography equipment, stereo tactic imaging technology, specialized ultrasound and biopsy equipment and DEXA scanners for bone density measurements. The status of health care for women veterans will be a major topic at the summit.

There is a women veterans program manager at every VA medical center, a women's liaison at every community based outpatient clinic and a women veterans coordinator at every VA regional office.

www.va.gov

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WEBSITE**

www.al321tx.org