



JULY 2015  
VOL 1 NO 4

## “Welcome Home” **NEWSLETTER**



### “Member Feature” **Memorial Day, 2015**

By Milt Omoto

The 69th Annual Nisei<sup>1</sup> Community Memorial Day Service was held on May 25, 2015 at the Nisei War Memorial at Fairmount Cemetery in Denver, and serves to honor the memory of all Japanese American Veterans from the Rocky Mountain Region who honorably served in the United States Armed Forces and are now at rest. The program is unique as all of the Japanese American and many Asian community organizations gather to pay tribute to the deceased veterans.



Color Guard, Denver US Army Recruiting Command

This year's guest speaker was Judge Kerry Hada, Denver County Court, Civil Division. Judge Hada was a US Army Airborne Infantry Ranger officer and is a Viet Nam combat veteran. Among his judicial duties is to run the Denver Veterans Treatment Court. Through these unique courts, those who served in our nation's Armed Forces are allowed to participate in the treatment court process with fellow

veterans, re-instilling a sense of camaraderie that they felt while in the military.

Of special honor was the presence of George “Joe” Sakato, Congressional Medal of Honor recipient. He served with the US Army 442nd Regimental Combat Team during WWII, the most highly decorated regiment in the history of the U.S. Army with 21 Medal of Honor recipients. One of these men was George “Joe” Sakato. At 94, George is still active speaking at veteran groups and participates with other Medal of Honor recipients at events across the country. It was truly an honor to meet George.



Chapter 1106 Board Member Milt Omoto with Congressional Medal of Honor awardee George “Joe” Sakato, US Army, 1944-45, 442 Regimental Combat Team

<sup>1</sup>Note: “Nisei” literally means second generation in Japanese. It is a term used to refer to second generation Japanese-Americans born in the US of immigrant parents. The Nisei were the ones to join the 442 Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion (from Hawaii). The Nisei's from the Mainland joined the 442nd even while their

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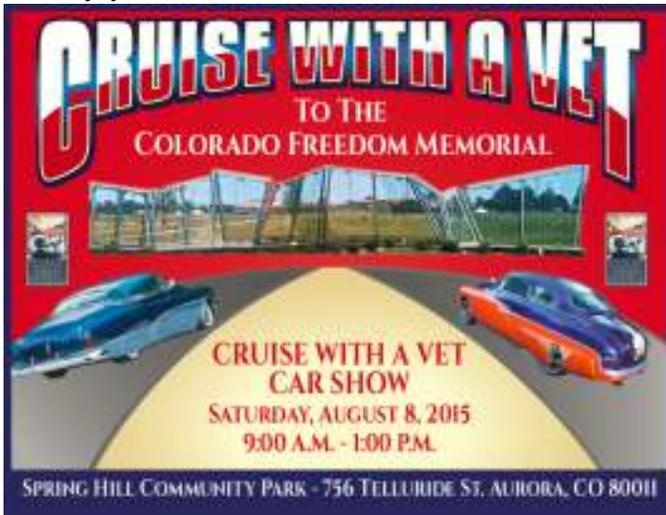
parents and families were in "internment" camps throughout the US to show their loyalty to the Country of their birth.

## Notes from the President

Lee White

What's coming up for VVA Chapter 1106?

- Region 8 & 9 Convention Conference, Reno, NV. June 27th. I will attend on behalf of Chapter 1106.
- Highlands Ranch 4th of July Parade. A first for Chapter 1106 with 10-12 members participating. (See more info below)
- "Cruise with a Vet" - A classic car show event - Enjoy a ride to the Colorado Freedom Memorial.



## Chapter 1106 "Successes"

- Participation in our first Agent Orange/PTSD Town Hall Meeting on May 9th. Over 100 veterans attended.
- Poppy Give-A-Way/Donation Drive at three local King Soopers on May 23rd.

## Chapter 1106 "Challenges"

- Increase chapter membership!
- Maintain current membership by making personal contact (phone, coffee invites).
- Continue to raise funds for scholarships, helping vets with financial support, operational costs, etc.
- Development of grant application policies and procedures.

WELCOME HOME!!

## Military Trivia

What does **Mid Rats** mean? See answer at the end of the Newsletter

## Poppy Give-A-Way Donation Drive Huge Success

On May 23, three stations were setup by several of our chapter members to present Vietnam War era colored Poppies to folks going in and out of King Soopers:

LZ-1: Buckley & Iliff... Participates: John McMaster, Mike Messenger, Linda Messenger, Pat Surrena, Wayne Richards, Milt Omoto, Chris Omoto



LtoR: Mike Messenger and Pat Surrena



LtoR: Linda Messenger, John McMaster (in wheelchair), Mike Messenger, Pat, Surrena

LZ-2 Buckley & Quincy... Participants: Hazel Simeon, Lee White, Cookie White, Wendy White, Jerry Liechti

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The people at this LZ ran off when a camera popped up!!!  
Something about the IRS looking for them!!!

LZ-3 Smokey Hill & Himalaya... Participants:  
Bob Rotruck, Barbara Rotruck, Milt Omoto,  
Chris Omoto, Joe Plant



LtoR: Joe Plant, Milt Omoto, Barbara Rotruck, Bob  
Rotruck

Donation jars were placed on the table for  
voluntary donations that totaled: \$1,900.



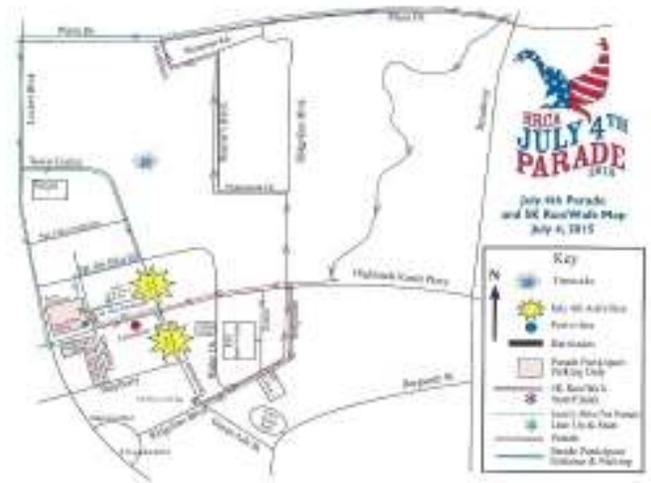
**Never Left Behind** under any conditions!

## ***Upcoming Events***

Temporary date change! The Saturday, July 4,  
2015 meeting date has been changed to  
Saturday 0900, July 11, 2015: South Metro Fire  
& Rescue Building, 9195 E. Mineral Ave.,  
Centennial!

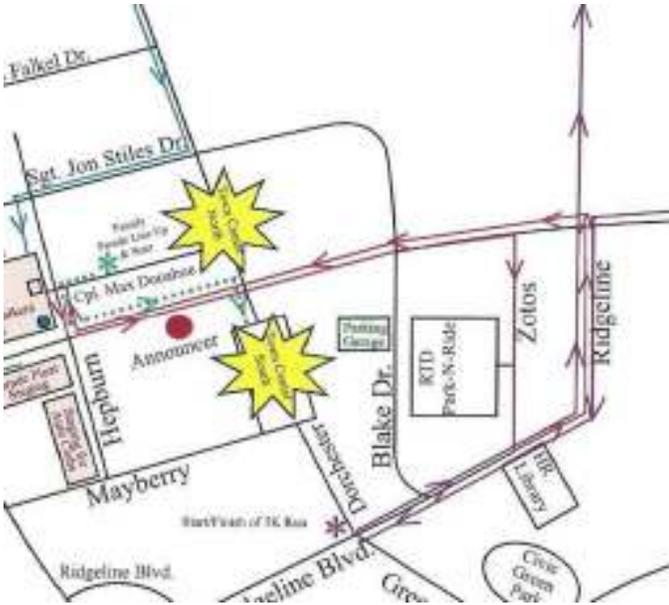
July 4, 2015 Highlands Ranch Parade starts at  
0900. See map! Participants in our chapter will  
meet at the northwest corner of the Kaiser  
Permanente building at 0800.

Parade map:



Enlargement of parade route:

# VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CHAPTER 1106 S. METRO DENVER, CO



AP / Henri Huet

Nothing better than a refreshing swim!

Dress: Chapter tee shirt, black trousers/slacks/skirt, VVA or military branch ball cap, black shoes and socks.

## **Membership Drive!**

Do you have a VVA1106 Business Card? Send an email to: [bobrotruck73@gmail.com](mailto:bobrotruck73@gmail.com) and he will send you a template to print 10 business cards. When you see some folks that look like they could be a Vietnam Vet, give them a card! Step up to the plate and ask them to become a member of VVA1106? **Do it!** The best excuse answer back so far has been, "I eat wings at Hooters for breakfast the first Saturday of the month."

Welcome new Members VVA:  
Robert Easter

Membership Total as of 6/15/2015: 38

## **Facts about the Vietnam Veteran**

US military sprayed over 20 million gallons of Agent Orange and herbicides during the Vietnam War as an aerial defoliant, destroying over 5 million acres of forests and Vietnamese food crops.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>[Agentorangerecord.com](http://Agentorangerecord.com) (AOR)

## **Board of Directors/Officers**

Lee White - President

Gary Fortner - Vice-president

Joe Plant - Treasurer

Hazel Simeon - Secretary

Board Members – Milt Omoto, Patti Ehline,  
Patrick Surrena

## **Working Committees**

(Folks are needed to fill some spots!)

Agent Orange/PTSD -

Membership - Gary Fortner, Lee White

Newsletter Editor - Bob Rotruck

Fundraising/Grants - Milt Omoto

Marketing/Media/Events - Pat Surrena

POW/MIA – Mike Messenger

Webmaster - Hazel Simeon

Women Veterans - Patti Ehline



Bob Hope Shows never let us down!!!

# VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CHAPTER 1106 S. METRO DENVER, CO

## *Book/Articles Published by Members*

(Nobody submitted anything this month so you have to put up with one of my poems – Editor)



### **Kindred Spirits**

**In the United States of America there is a  
special breed,  
It is a group of men and women that live by a  
creed.  
When they talk to each other and the past  
they discuss,  
A special bond is there, outsiders don't  
understand the fuss.  
For as these two people smile, shake hands,  
and hug,  
Others look on and with their shoulders they  
shrug.  
What they can't see between the two is a  
brotherhood,  
That for hundreds of years many have  
understood.  
They have worn a uniform that made them so  
proud,  
But they don't show it off or scream it out loud.  
They have stood tall in the face of pure hell,  
And passed the test that made them swell.  
Side by side, looking out for each other,  
Willing to take the heat for their military  
brother.  
These are the folks that defended the  
American flag,  
Did it for honor and country and that is no  
brag.  
A sense of duty is imbued in each one,  
They knew the job wasn't going to be fun.  
And when they came home and changed their  
clothes,  
They went about their business and nobody  
knows.**

**But let two veterans start to talk to each other,  
And suddenly they know that here is my  
brother.**

**They each share their story and the connection  
is made,**

**And suddenly a bond of friendship, because  
they have paid.**

**They defended the red, white, and blue,  
And given the best that each could do.**

**When you see two strangers talk on the street,  
Watch closely, you'll be in for a treat.**

**When they discover they have the kindred  
spirit,**

**Stand close and you will be able to hear it.**

**This reunion of brothers and sisters so very  
proud,**

**They look each other in the eye and don't say  
it out loud.**

**Friends now forever is understood,  
They are members of the brotherhood.**

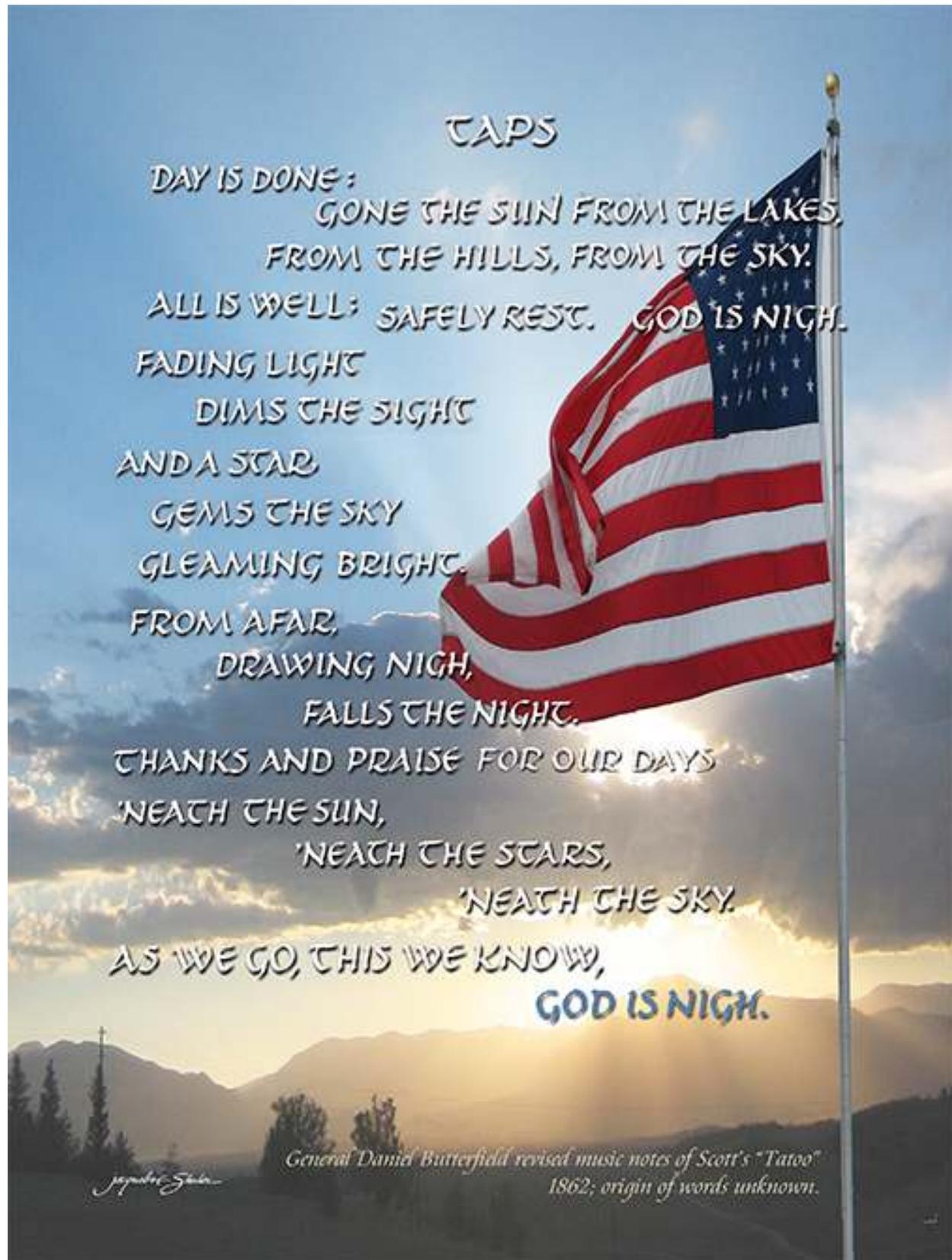
**God bless them all!**

ROTRUCK - 2014

### *Trivia Answer*

Mid Rats – Late night chow for those that can't make it to the chow hall during regular hours

*Words to TAPS*



Artwork Courtesy Jacqueline Shuler