



* * * * * Serving the 300,000 veterans living in greater Los Angeles * * * * *

\$3.2 BILLION IN VETERANS AFFAIRS BUDGET FOR HOMELESS VETS

BY TERENCE LYONS

Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki's promise to "end homelessness among veterans within the next five years" [*Strawberry Gazette*, February 2010] has gotten a substantial boost from the allocation of \$3.2 billion for assistance to homeless veterans in Fiscal Year 2010 appropriations to the Department of Veterans Affairs. An additional \$50 million will go toward the renovation of vacant buildings on Veterans Administration (VA) campuses to be used as supportive housing for homeless veterans, according to the joint Congressional Committees on Appropriations.

Overall VA Budget

The total VA budget allocation, contained in the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act signed by President Obama, was good news for veterans—\$109.6 billion, which is \$15.3 billion more than 2009 and \$747 million more than the President's request.

In addition to the \$3.2 billion for homeless services is another \$1.9 billion for VA construction programs, \$103 million more than the request and \$232 million more than 2009. This includes \$1.2 billion for major construction, including hospitals and clinics, to enable the VA to implement the recommendations made by the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) commission, which was established to look at facilities and determine their construction needs. It also contains \$703 million for so-called minor construction, including \$50 million for the renovation of vacant buildings on VA properties to be used as housing with supportive services for homeless veterans. Also, for the first time in history, the law includes advance VA appropriations to provide a stable and uninterrupted source of funding for vet-

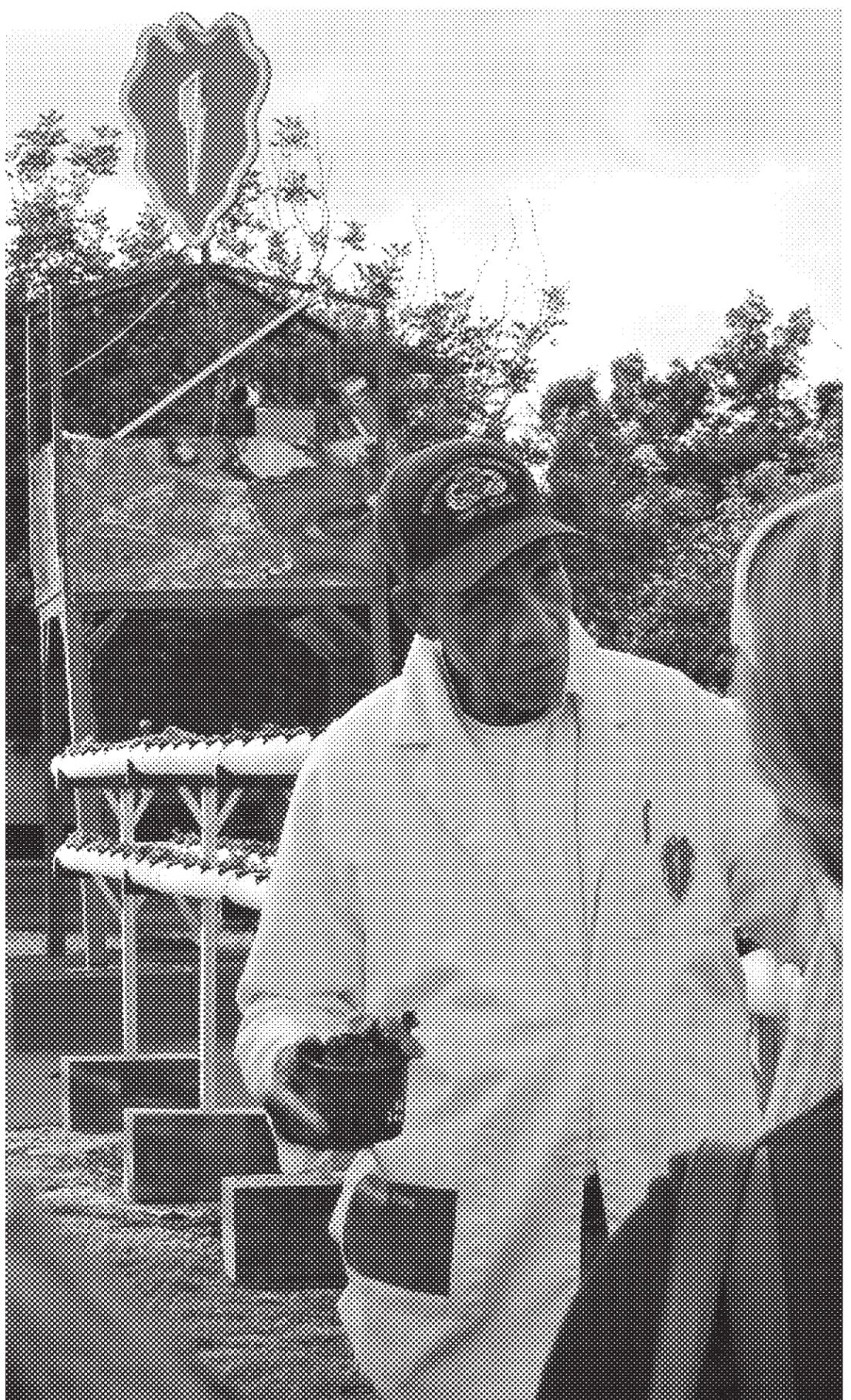
erans' medical care; \$48.2 billion is included for VA medical programs in Fiscal Year 2011. Such a step toward stable funding is something that veterans groups have long been advocating, and it was a major plank in the platform advocated by the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA). The joint Congressional Committees on Appropriations called this sensible but first-ever feature of the bill "a major victory for America's veterans."

Homeless Vets Budget

The \$3.2 billion for healthcare and support services for homeless veterans matched the President's request and exceeded 2009 funding by \$421 million. It includes \$26 million for a presidential initiative to combat homelessness, \$150 million for the Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD), \$20 million for supportive services for low-income veterans and families, and \$21 million to hire additional personnel for the HUD-VA Supportive Housing program (commonly known as VASH).

It is not yet known how these funds will be used in more specific and practical terms, but the IAVA 2010 Legislative Agenda suggests that the VA address homelessness and housing issues among veterans in a variety of ways, including calls to expand the VASH voucher program to include the funding of 30,000 additional housing vouchers, extend the availability of VASH vouchers to all homeless veterans regardless of medical condition, appropriate funding for a VA outreach and advertising campaign directed at homeless veterans and those at risk of becoming homeless, and implement a pilot program to test preventative strategies, including emergency cash assistance, help with utilities, and short-term rental subsidies.

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Adoption of strawberries at Strawberry Flag. CWT worker Bobby presents a strawberry from stripe 6.

Miami VA Meeting Summary

BY CYNTHIA KENNARD**February 12, 2010**

This meeting was purely designed as a fact-finding meeting to visit and educate myself regarding the Miami system and its needs in the Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) Program.

Participants: Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist and a Clinical Case Manager, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs — Miami Veterans Administration Healthcare System.

Overview

The meeting was held "off-campus" in Fort Lauderdale with the Miami

staff to speak about the Veterans Administration (VA) Healthcare System campus status in Miami, and its need for "projects" for the veterans being treated there. Competitive employment is the goal for the patients. The focus is jobs—part time or full time—that pay minimum wage. The program is therapeutic. The program is utilized to return veterans with disabilities to the highest functioning and work.

The Miami VA Healthcare System serves veterans in three south Florida counties—Miami-Dade, Broward, and Monroe—home to an estimated veteran's population of 285,000. The parent facility—the Bruce W. Carter Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center—is located on 26.3 acres with an

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WHEN CINÉMA VÉRITÉ ISN'T

BY PAUL RIECKHOFF**Newsweek Web Exclusive****February 24, 2010**

The Hurt Locker has dazzled cinephiles and critics alike, and is a favorite for best picture and best director at March 7's Oscars. But a crucial group remains less than enchanted with the film about the Iraq War: veterans.

At first glance, *The Hurt Locker* looks all right. The setting seems accurate, the acting is solid, and it is one of the few war movies to rightly do away with the tacky combat music. Yet a closer look reveals that Hollywood's latest attempt to define the Iraq War and the Ameri-

can troops who have fought in it is just as disappointing as all the others produced so far, but with better window dressing and an Oscar nomination.

I'm not a professional film critic, but almost every movie about Iraq and Afghanistan comes across my desk. I feel an obligation as an Iraq veteran, and as the leader of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), the first and largest nonprofit for veterans of those wars, to comment on films that attempt to define our experiences, especially those in the running to win the most prestigious award in the film industry. As a voice of the

new veterans' movement, and of thousands of IAVA members across the country, I have a responsibility to serve as pop-culture watchdog, and to help the American public understand what accurately depicts the military's experience in Iraq and what doesn't. Especially because with less than 1 percent of American citizens now serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, films are one of the few ways to connect the other 99 percent of Americans to the reality of modern combat. Even today, if you ask most Americans about Vietnam, they base their opinion largely on popular movies like *Apocalypse Now*, *Platoon* (written

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Madame Tallien, a prominent figure at the court of the Emperor Napoleon, was famous for bathing in the juice of fresh strawberries. She used 22 pounds per basin. Needless to say, she did not bathe daily.

Respondents to a recent national survey labeled strawberry lovers as "health conscious, fun loving, intelligent and happy." Non-strawberry lovers, on the other hand, were described as "weird, boring, stuffy and fussy eaters"

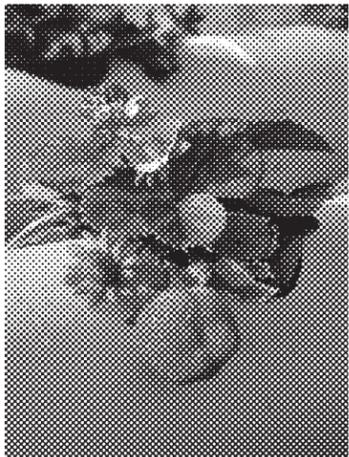
... HOMELESS VETS CONTINUED »

California and Los Angeles

The allocation of the funds among the VA facilities around the country is still being worked out, but California is expected to receive a major portion of the money. According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, California has 49,724 of the nation's 195,827 homeless vets, more than twenty-five percent of the total. The closest state in the count of homeless veterans is New York with 21,147, less than half the California figure.

California Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs J. P. Tremblay told the *Gazette* that because the state has the largest number of veterans and the largest number of homeless veterans, he believes California "should get its proportionate share" of funding. But he hastened to add that his principal concern is getting the money and assistance to the vets on the street no matter whose budget it comes through.

Tremblay pointed to Governor Schwarzenegger's new "California's Operation Welcome Home" initiative as an example of the state's efforts to work with the VA, community nonprofits, and veterans service organizations to assist vets with a database of information



Strawberries responding well to the new balance in the Ph of the aquaponic system.

on resources from all providers. It's something the state can do even though it's struggling with a deficit of several billion dollars, he said.

William L. Daniels, chief of the Mental Health Care Line at the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, said, "We don't yet have a [Fiscal Year 2010] allocation. Hopefully we will get word soon. We do expect to get more, we just don't know how many [referring to VASH vouchers]."

Of particular interest to veterans at the West Los Angeles VA campus is what impact all of this might have on the property's several vacant or underutilized buildings. In August 2007, then-Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson announced that he had designated Buildings 205, 208, and 209 near the north end of the campus for use in housing homeless veterans. After that announcement, a non-VA homeless care provider, Common Ground, attempted to devel-

op a project for Building 209 but without success, and none of the three buildings have yet been put to use housing homeless veterans. With the \$50 million set aside in the 2010 budget specifically for renovation of vacant buildings on VA campuses, in addition to the \$3.2 billion for more general assistance to homeless veterans, it is hoped that the quadrangle of Buildings 205, 208, and 209 may now be put to use for housing homeless veterans, and for the therapeutic and recreational activities they could provide.

DoD Visits Strawberry Flag

BY TERENCE LYONS

Deputy Undersecretary of Defense Noel Cook paid a visit to *Strawberry Flag* on the quad in front of Buildings 205, 208, and 209 on Saturday, February 13, 2010, and he told his staff that he wanted to recommend the program as a best practice to Washington, D.C.

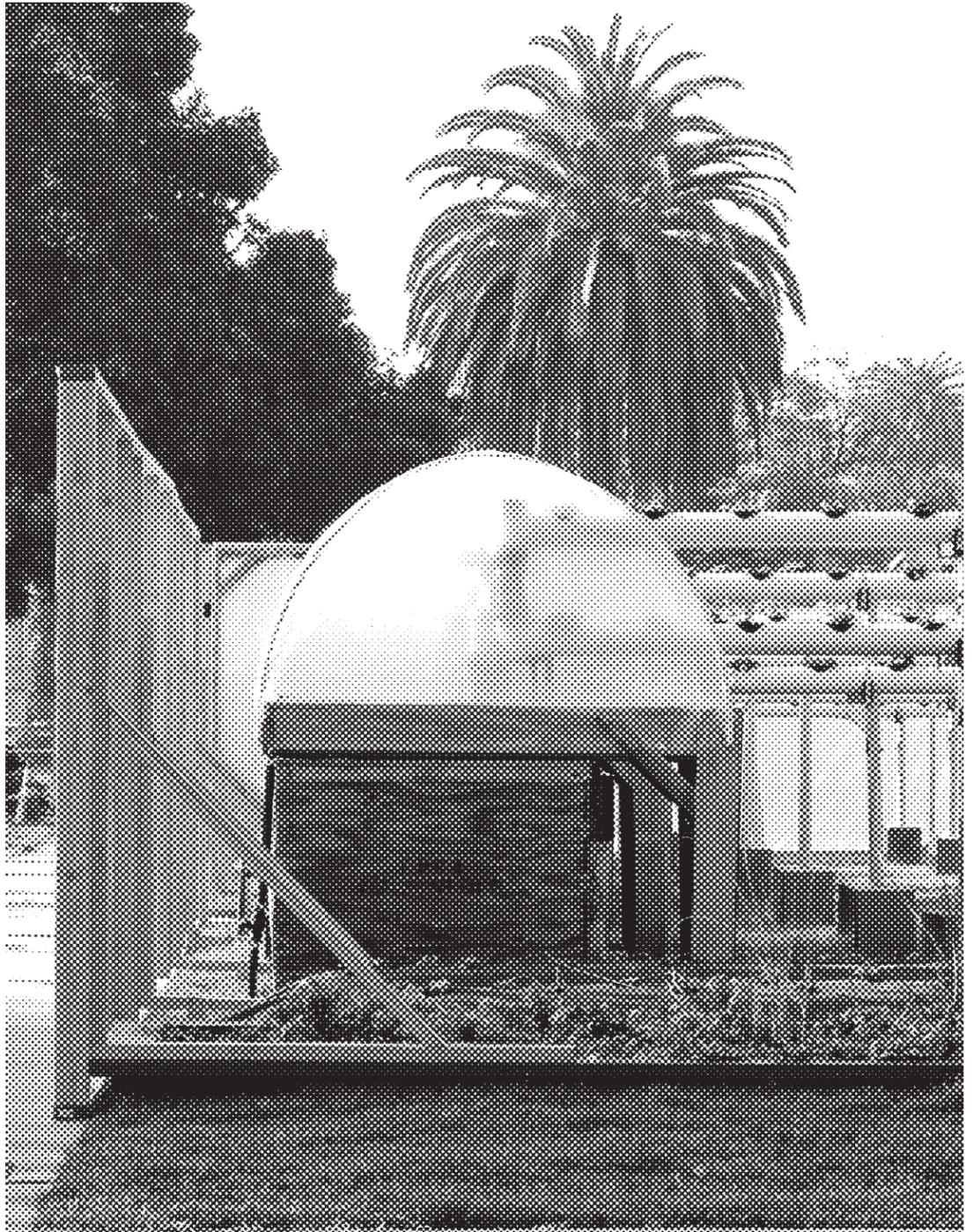
Koch was appointed by President Obama in May 2009 to the newly created post of Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for the Office of Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy.

The Department of Defense describes the position as being "responsible for policy and programs related to disability systems, service member transitions to veteran status, separation from the Armed Forces, and wounded warrior care coordination." In that position, Koch works closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

During his visit to *Strawberry Flag*, Koch told the *Gazette* that all wounded warriors were not headed straight for a transition to veteran status. He made a strong point of the fact that there are many active duty military jobs for soldiers, sailors, and other personnel who may have lost a limb or suffered another disability. Such injuries do not have to mean separation from active duty in this day and age, he said, and he views finding active duty assignments for such wounded warriors to be an important part of his job.

On February 13, Koch got a tour and overview of the *Strawberry Flag* project from onsite workers and from Dr. Jonathan Sherin, associate chief of mental health at the West Los Angeles Veterans Administration. After pedaling one of the stationary bicycles used to generate electricity for the water pumps that irrigate the strawberries, Koch said the project was "one of the best things I have ever seen in taking care of veterans."

STRAWBERRYFLAG.ORG



Thermodynamic lids keep temperatures stable and limit particulate matter from entering water supply.

ROTC at Harvard College Lacks Appeal: A Student's Perspective

BY KATARZYNA BALUG
Harvard Graduate School of Design
Candidate for Master in Urban
Planning, 2011

The Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) does not have a strong presence on the Harvard College campus; last year eight graduating students were commissioned. Is that a surprise? In thinking about the reasons behind the Harvard student body's shared disinterest in military training, several factors emerged as to why we might not miss the bands of sweaty camouflaged teenagers running and shouting through campus.

The three primary advertising points that the ROTC offers at Harvard are leadership training, dollars, and service to our country. A cost-benefit analysis quickly demonstrates that the commitments required of ROTC graduates outweigh the proposed benefits.

First, there are countless ways to gain leadership training at the university. Most Harvard schools offer departmental leadership courses

directly related to a student's chosen area of interest. ROTC leadership promises are vague, and the ROTC leadership curriculum includes twice as many physical training hours as classroom hours. Students who were ambitious enough in high school to be admitted to Harvard College may understandably not be inclined to focus on a program that emphasizes their physical fitness over their mental skills.

Secondly, the financial offer is less obviously irrelevant to the student body. According to the Harvard admissions page, average undergraduate student financial aid packages for the current school year covered all but \$5,000 of tuition and living expenses. With this degree of financial assistance, the modest monthly ROTC stipend and tuition remission is less competitive with the four-year service requirement post-graduation. Again, no surprise there.

Finally, the appeal of service to our country. The ROTC was banned at Harvard in 1969 because of the

Vietnam War. Students from then on would have to travel to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) for their training, and in 1993, the school stopped covering the costs associated with training, which are now covered by private donors (Harvard Magazine, May-June 2002). The school's mission promotes values such as self-expression and the removal of restraints on students' full participation; values in conflict with ROTC regulation. Harvard has gone as far as to issue a statement reflecting its reluctance toward the ROTC. It includes a warning to students that the ROTC discriminates based on sexual orientation, and that it may limit students' rights to free speech. The ROTC, in fact, encourages a "don't ask, don't tell" policy regarding homosexuality based on it supposedly posing an "...unacceptable risk to the high standards of morale, good order and discipline, and unit cohesion that are the essence of military capability" (US Code Title 10, Subtitle G, Section 654).

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Rapper Ice-T wore the **Electric Strawberry**, as did director Oliver Stone in Vietnam. In Stone's film *Platoon*, the fictional military unit is shown by its shoulder patches to be part of the 25th Infantry Division. Likewise, James Jones's 1962 novel *The Thin Red Line* features a company with the **Electric Strawberry** fighting on Guadalcanal in World War II.

Strawberry yogurt has, generally, the highest sugar content of any fruited yogurt because of the extraordinary natural sweetness of the fruit.



Consumer Council Speaks for Vets

Calls for More New Members

BY TERENCE LYONS

The word "consumer" may not readily come to mind when people think about the relationship of veterans to the Veterans Administration (VA), perhaps because vets are something of a captive audience without the range of choices one usually associates with consumer behavior. But veterans and their families are in fact the *consumers* of the services provided by the VA. And although the VA may be the only practical vendor to which vets may go for medical treatment, therapy, and related services, the vets can nevertheless behave like the consumers they are to obtain the quality they want and deserve.

Enter the Greater Los Angeles (GLA) VA Mental Health Consumer Council—a group of veterans, family members, and caregivers that meets monthly to consider subjects that bear upon the services the VA provides.

Don't let the "mental health" put you off: around the GLA VA it seems that

Among the subjects under discussion was why the VA golf course at the north end of the grounds had been virtually closed since late

March of last year, the impact of this closure on vets who had used the course as part of their recovery therapy, news reports that day of legal proceedings against former golf course workers, and consideration of the facility's future.

The Council also had a visit from Dannion Brinkley, cofounder and board chairman of The Twilight Brigade, a service organization that offers reassurance and human companionship to veterans in their last hours.

Also among the subjects of that February 16 meeting was the need to involve more veterans, family members, and caregivers in the work of the Consumer Council to provide the consumers' point of view and help improve care for veterans and their families. All are welcome, said Brown.

Enter the Greater Los Angeles (GLA) VA Mental Health Consumer Council—a group of veterans, family members, and caregivers that meets monthly to consider subjects that bear upon the services the VA provides.

just about everyone who qualifies for treatment beyond doctor visits is a "mental health" patient. So just think of it as the Consumer Council.

Acting Chairman Roy Brown called the Council to order on Tuesday, February 16, 2010, and the seven veterans in attendance (two by way of conference telephone) took up a number of consumer-related issues. Also present was Tom Fletcher, the GLA recovery coordinator who serves as VA liaison to the Council.

The Consumer Council meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 2:00 p.m. in the sixth floor conference room of Building 500, the Wadsworth Hospital.

The next meeting is Tuesday, March 16. Anyone interested can just show up or direct inquiries to

Thomas T. Fletcher, LCSW, at 310.478.3711, extension 48626.

NO GO GODOT

BY LAURA SANDERSON HEALY

Samuel Beckett's play *Krapp's Last Tape* was performed for veterans and friends on January 28, 2010, at the evolving *Strawberry Flag* artwork on the campus of the Veteran's Administration West Los Angeles Healthcare Center. It was a stirring experience starring Rick Cluchey, whom Beckett personally directed in this role. Cluchey worked with the Irish playwright in Europe after being released from the San Quentin penitentiary where he formed a theatre ensemble; he has since championed his plays by taking them to schools, prisons and now veterans here in the United States. The unique performance was pulled together in record time

by the Metabolic Studio and came off as flawlessly as any of Beckett's work performed on the finest of London's West End stages; afterwards Cluchey answered questions along with Berlin director Walter D. Asmus, Beckett's former assistant.

Just four days later across the city, the haunting words and images of Beckett's powerful creations were *again* being heard—quite a coincidence here on the West Coast—and projected, respectively, in a presentation by New York-based multimedia artist/activist Paul Chan at REDCAT, the black box theater adjacent to the behemoth Disney Hall in Downtown Los Angeles (REDCAT being the short name for the Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater). *Waiting for Godot* in New Orleans: An Illustrated



Representatives from key West Los Angeles political offices of Joel Waxman, Bobby Shriver and Zev Yaroslavsky meeting during a "jam session" in *Strawberry Flag's* kitchen

CWT UPDATE

Computer Room Opens in Trial Stages

BY TERENCE LYONS

Behind the door of Room 207 in the southwest corner of Building 208, there are 18 computer terminals online, together with a printer, a fax machine, and four telephones—all the communications equipment a veteran might need to research job opportunities and submit applications. The setup, which also includes an adjacent furnished classroom, is the Veterans Employment and Training Services (V.E.T.S.) Worksource Center, a partnership between the Veterans Administration (VA) Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) program and the nonprofit Managed Care Solutions.

The center is now operating only "in trial stages," says CWT Vocation

Rehabilitation Specialist David Fierro, and so is available only to vets who are referred by their VA vocation specialists, and then only during the hours arranged by those vocation specialists.

This is the only facility of its kind on the West Los Angeles VA campus, says Fierro, who is trying to "staff up" so that its limited hours can be expanded and so that the center can offer instruction in computer skills and other programs that could be provided with equipment.

At the present time, the V.E.T.S. Worksource Center uses the classroom for orientation sessions, and then the eligible veterans participate in "job club" activities, after which they can use the computers to look for work during the arranged hours.

Worksource Centers are often located adjacent to California unemployment offices (EDD), but they are usually operated by community nonprofit firms. Managed Care

Solutions, which provided the computers in Building 208, manages the Hollywood Worksource Center. The VA set up the phone center at the V.E.T.S. operation for outbound calls to employers, but veterans will need their own cell phones or other arrangements to get callbacks.

CWT (officially, Veteran Community Employment Development [VCED]), a program of the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, is staffing the V.E.T.S. operation.

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cut swaths through them. It was a grand if questionable gesture—how exactly would this help?—but Chan began pulling the strings for the avant-garde installation.

The project came to fruition with the help of the public arts group Creative Time and philanthropic backers. For his performers, Chan corralled the Classical Theatre of Harlem, which had recently put on the play that, it will be remembered, is subtitled in its English version as "a tragicomedy in two acts." Chan had previously made news by going to Iraq with the anti-war group *Voices in the Wilderness*, bringing aid and medicine before and during the second Gulf War (against U.S. law), and merrily distributing a "Free Guide to the Republican

National Convention" in New York for protestors. He is known for his studio artwork as well as for his "big numbers." Chan's dream of *Godot* in New Orleans would highlight the waste of the former homes and tragedy of lost lives, with the metaphor of waiting for

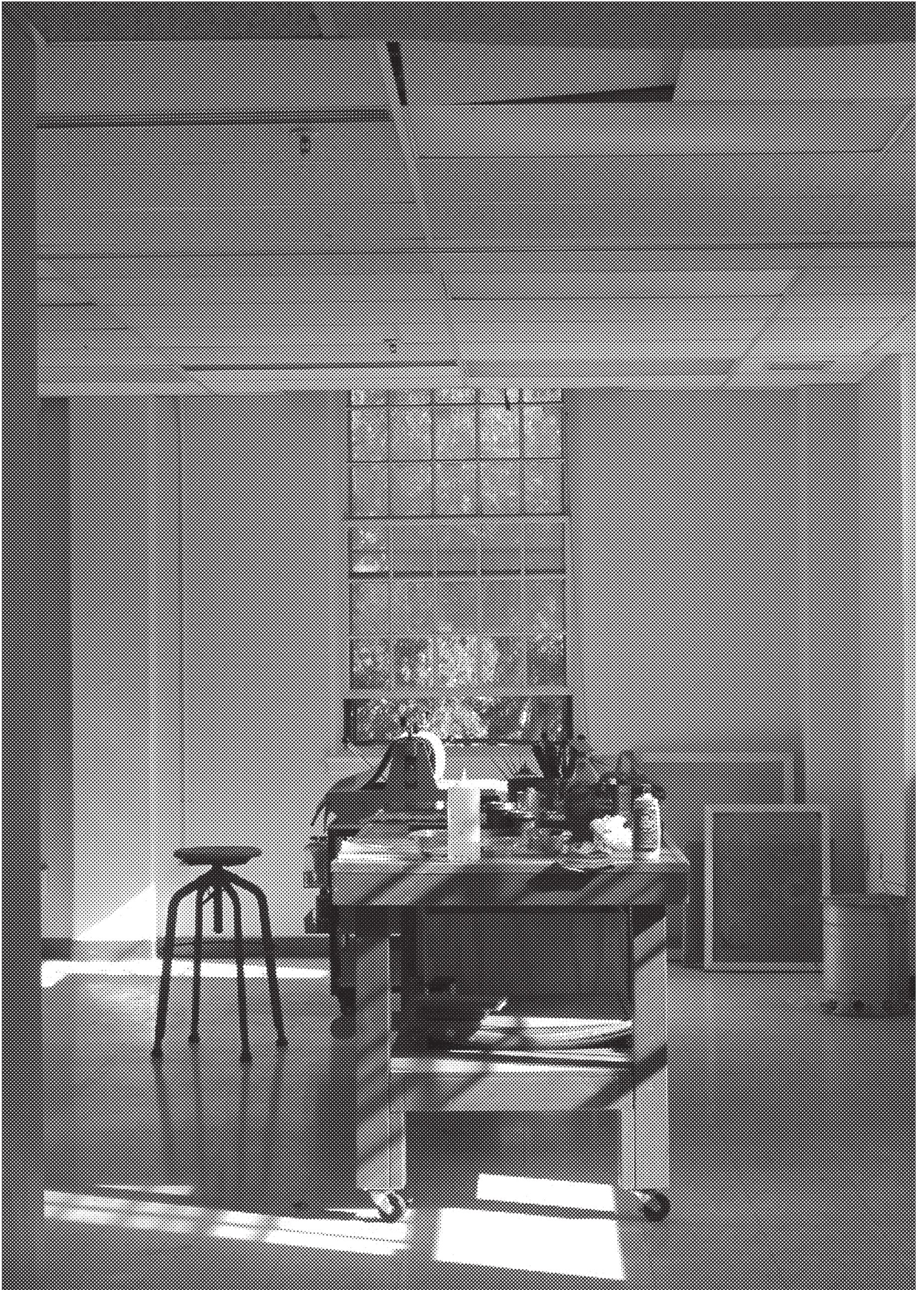
FEMA and its inept handling of help for the distressed city. As an adjunct to the enterprise, Chan also brought his knowledge to New Orleans by putting together conversations and free arts programs (Kara Walker was featured in one), and taking classes himself as professor. He called his installation *A Play in Two Acts. A Project in Three Parts*, and a "shadow fund" was meant to help rebuilding efforts.

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Actually, **strawberries are not fruits**. They are enlarged receptacles of the flowers of the plant and are hence known as a secondary fruit. The plants are of the rose family, belonging to order Rosales, family Rosaceae, and genus *Fragaria*. The word *fragaria* comes from the Latin word meaning fragrant.

Strawberry, Arizona is a census-designated place in Gila County, Arizona, United States, with a population of 1,028 at the 2000 census. The racial makeup of this particular Strawberry was 96.69% White, 0.10% Black or African American, 0.58% Native American, 0.68% Asian, 0.97% from other races, and 0.97% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 3.11% of the population.



Workshops lead by veterans working with Strawberry Flag's team are successfully adding vocational training to the compensated work therapy candidates options.

The U.S. Army 25th Infantry Division wears a shoulder patch nicknamed “The Electric Strawberry,” a version of which is rendered in neon above the Metabolic Studio’s *Strawberry Flag* project.

The 25th was activated October 1, 1941 at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, and the image on its patch is actually a taro leaf, taken from the unit’s Hawaiian origin and its “Tropic Lightning” nickname. But strawberries are much more recognizable.



The U.S. Navy Aided In The Fight To Mitigate Owens Lake Dust Over The Years

BY CHRIS LANGLEY

Owens Valley Growers Community

A U.S. Navy installation in the California desert at first thought challenges common expectations. But the Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS) at China Lake makes sense when you realize one of its major assignments is to design and test air-to-air weapons for the navy.

A lake that once supported two steamships that became an enormous source of blowing dust also challenges everyday common sense until you realize it was an unexpected consequence of the City of Los Angeles building an aqueduct to quell the water thirst of the growing city. By the mid 1920s, the more than seventy-five square miles of water had dried out because the Owens River that fed the lake had been diverted to the two hundred miles of aqueduct that started to bring water to Los Angeles.

The citizens of the Owens Valley, besides dealing with dropping water tables and land that was drying out, had to deal with huge storms of dust that rose over the lake bed and swept north, creating what was nicknamed “Keeler fog.” When the winds stopped blowing after a storm, the air was still so heavy with particulate matter (M-10) that the magnificent landscape could be obscured for days. Breathing was ambiguous at best.

Protests, discussion, and negotiation did little to resolve the problem, but when the navy took an interest and began to actively gather empirical data about the dust associated with the dry lake, a plan of action began to form that included a reluctant Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP).

How the U.S. Navy became a very special community helping the

local community groups force the City of Los Angeles to address the problem is a unique story. Although just part of the many organizations and entities that cooperated to create the \$500,000,000 Owens Lake Dust Mitigation Project, the navy scientists were one of the first groups to lead the way.

In her book *Left in the Dust: How Race and Politics Created a Human and Environmental Tragedy in L.A.*, author Karen Piper wrote, “The U.S. Navy, which owns a weapons testing facility in the area, began to study the health effects of the dust long before the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).”

In a report entitled *Owens Valley, CA Particulate Matter Plan: History*, the EPA Region 9 reiterated the point: “The navy has been concerned about Owens Lake dust since 1975, because the dust affects

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Strawberry Flag repositions the American flag as a self-sustaining system. Fish retrieved from a dying lake nearby are now adding nutrients amending the water that feeds our thriving berries.

CINÉMA VÉRITÉ... CONTINUED »

and directed by Vietnam vet Oliver Stone), *Full Metal Jacket*, or Stone’s *Born on the Fourth of July*.

The Hurt Locker tries to articulate that experience, but those of us who have served in the military couldn’t help but be distracted by a litany of inaccuracies that reveal not only a lack of research, but ultimately respect for the American military.

In the military, precision is critical. Take, for instance, the role of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) units, a heroic and prestigious group, and the focus of the film. EOD is a specialized job in the military that does one thing exceptionally well: disposing of bombs. Members do not generally patrol looking for bad guys, kick in doors, or execute sniper missions. Yet there is a whole scene in *The Hurt Locker* when the two EOD characters clear a building to find a bomb inside a kid. Securing the area for the EOD specialists to come in is usually the role of infantry or military-police units. As Tom Tarantino, a former cavalry officer who led patrols in Baghdad told me, “EOD arriving on an unsecured scene alone to find ground forces huddled and hiding together in a courtyard stretched my suspension of disbelief to the breaking point. The portrayal of the ground forces was outright insulting.”

Tom’s frustration is not unique. Many of our members around the country have noted the flawed portrayal of EOD and the other (to the civilian eye) seemingly minor mistakes, such as soldiers in the wrong uniforms, using poor tactics, and ranks that don’t accurately correspond to the leadership being shown. This equates to something larger than just a series of careless errors: it is disrespectful. The scene with Jeremy Renner’s character sneaking off base to chase a boy he is worried about is as fictional as Jason Bourne and is not representative of the real military experience in Iraq. I know this is a dramatization, and films take liberties to create good storylines, but this is not indicative of those of us who served there. The men in my platoon fol-

lowed rules and orders, and they stuck with their fellow soldiers. The military takes great pride in their training and their mission. Service members train for years to perform the job that they do in combat and highly value each other’s role in this environment. They don’t run around on their own unless they want to be court-martialed—or killed. *The Hurt Locker* strains credulity further when it shows that soldier reentering the base with no identification. Here is the reality: this soldier would likely be shot by a guard on duty while sneaking around the perimeter—but, then again, that probably wouldn’t make for a good plot addition.

Some may argue that on balance, the film does a good job of articulating the challenges returning troops face when they are coming home and trying to assimilate back to normal life. On this point, the film hits closer to the mark. I can tell you it isn’t easy. One minute you are maneuvering your platoon through an ambush, the next you are maneuvering through the laundromat on the Lower East Side. It can be a challenging transition.

Yet Hollywood and the media must find a way to address these challenges while balancing the reality of the combat experience. Service members need to see Hollywood commit to getting it right, and not portray cheap generalizations and made-for-TV sensationalism. Films like HBO’s *Taking Chance* and the documentary *The War Tapes* have walked that fine line extremely well.

Americans want to think they know what the ground truth is in Iraq, but until Hollywood and the media give them the right information, our experience will continue to be lost in translation. So someone, do us a favor and tell our story properly. Or maybe Hollywood will help one of us tell it ourselves.

Rieckhoff is the executive director and founder of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA).

Article reprinted with the permission of the author from an article recently published in Newsweek.

Landscape Painting, Printmaking at the Flag

BY TERENCE LYONS

The arts of plein air landscape painting and printmaking are now being practiced by veterans at the site of the *Strawberry Flag* art project at the north end of the West Los Angeles Veterans Administration (VA) campus. The Metabolic Studio, which sponsors artist Lauren Bon’s living sculpture of the *Strawberry Flag*, is offering instruction in these visual arts to interested vets.

The painting classes began on Saturday, February 13, 2010, and will continue on Saturday afternoons from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. through the end of March. Ronald Petrosky, an accomplished painter and art teacher at Cal State Northridge and other schools, is the instructor for the series. The Metabolic Studio’s Janet Owen Driggs, who organized the program, says that all needed supplies are furnished to the veterans, and she welcomes new students as the classes continue.

The classes concentrate on landscape painting in the *plein air* tradition—a French term meaning “open air” (in Italian, it would be *alfresco*)—in which the painter works outdoors to capture landscapes and natural features in the “available light” of the sun.

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Veteran to veteran training on best practices of an aquaponic garden. Bobby tutors Ray on adding soil amendment from our new worm farm on site.

The printmaking project of the Metabolic Studio at *Strawberry Flag* began as a means of producing handmade labels for the Veterans Preserves to be made from the strawberries grown at the site.







The statement that student opinions about university administrative decisions had no more importance than if the students had said they liked the taste of strawberries was attributed to Columbia University administrator Herbert Deane during student protests in April 1968.

It became a rallying cry known as The **Strawberry Statement**, which was taken as the title of student James Simon Kunen's nonfiction book about the protests and a later fictionalized movie.

U.S. NAVY AIDED... CONTINUED »

their ability to conduct tests at the China Lake Naval Weapons Station." In fact, when the navy recognized how deleterious the periodic dust storms were to its testing program, it inquired about anecdotal reports from the public regarding parallel health issues.

Piper reported the statements made by Captain William Ostag of NAWS. "Local public health officials have stated that compared to the rest of Kern County and California as a whole, an unusually high percentage of deaths that occur in the Ridgecrest area are the result of acute respiratory conditions." Piper wrote that when they solicited e-mail descriptions of illnesses associated with the dust, hundreds of replies came in immediately complaining of "allergy-like symptoms, sinus infections, migraine headaches, asthma attacks, and other respiratory ailments." Ostag commented, "We were especially distressed to learn of the asthma and other impacts on the thousands of children of the civilian employees."

What first concerned the navy back in 1975, however, was how the dust storms were affecting their testing program. It was then that the navy began financially supporting scientific studies of the problem.

Back in 1979 after the Inyo County Resolution, the APCD had formed the Owens Dry Lake Task Force. It consisted of representatives from the LADWP, the Great Basin APCD, NAWS, appointees by the County of Inyo Supervisors, and other members of various agencies and the public.

After receiving many public complaints, the Inyo County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution 79-43, requesting that the district "take whatever steps are necessary to abate said hazards." It fell to the Great Basin Air Pollution Control District (APCD) to address the problem and find or force solutions. In 1982 the APCD ordered the LADWP to apply for an air quality permit because it was their diversion of the water feeding the lake to the city that had caused the problem. Of course, the City of Los Angeles saw this as a direct attack on the livelihood of its residences, and taking sides continued to intensify.

While the LADWP filed to stop the action, a compromise was reached by which the agency would help fund studies of the problem with an agreement with the APCD. Ironically, the LADWP became increasingly responsible for the salaries of the environmental staff working scientifically to address the dust problem.

Back in 1979 after the Inyo County Resolution, the APCD had formed the Owens Dry Lake Task Force. It consisted of representatives from the LADWP, the Great Basin APCD,

NAWS, appointees by the County of Inyo Supervisors, and other members of various agencies and the public. (Note: The writer served on this committee as an appointee of the Inland Counties Health Systems Agency at that time.) The committee met to discuss how to deal with the immense challenge of the problem because of the size of the lake surface. In 1983, testing of various solutions was started with the building of sand fences. But the EPA was not accustomed to dealing with pollution caused by dust at this time and it failed to declare Owens Lake a violator. When Bill Cos and Ellen Hardebeck of the APCD testified that the dust was as great a threat to health as ozone, the EPA declared the lake a "non-attainment" area. There was not an enforceable "deadline" to fix the problem, however.

In 1983 the City of Los Angeles began funding the research, but each year the amount had to be negotiated. In 1984 Assemblyman Wyman introduced AB3762, which appropriated \$150,000 from the Environmental License Plate fund for continued research under the auspices of the task force. The City of Los Angeles and the Naval Weapons Center each contributed \$75,000. The work continued for more than a decade with many meetings and public hearings on various versions

of the Owens Valley State Implementation Plans (SIP). After the hearing on thirteen measures to mitigate the dust in 1988, SIP was committed to further study. The groups that wanted action saw this as a delaying tactic on the part of the City of Los Angeles.

Many papers appeared that demonstrated with rigorous scientific method the nature of the problem. The navy had been funding its share of studies. One among many was *Dust Storms from Owens and Mono Lakes* (Naval Weapons Center Technical Publications No. 6731). Summarizing the various report results, the APCD stated, "The artificial desiccation of the Owens Lake has created the single largest source of PM-10 dust in the United States. Dust storms from the dry lake bed are a significant health hazard to residents of Owens Valley and nearby areas, and impact air quality in a large region around the lake bed." The summary concluded, "Owens Lake is an extreme example of the potentially destabilizing effect on land surfaces and vegetation by the extraction of surface and ground water in desert

Continued on page 10

ROTC... CONTINUED »

With the inclusion of women in ... the military, one has to wonder about the perception of what exactly triggers risky behavior, and how much of this policy is based on an "ewwww" factor toward homosexuality. Without the true support of the school, students must wonder whether the ROTC attitude reflects a nation that today's Harvard undergraduate would want to serve.

Overall, the missions of the ROTC are in conflict with goals shared by students who attend quality higher learning institutions. Students come to Harvard to expand their intellect, not to follow questionable rules. In light of the thoughtful atmosphere and flood of innovative

activity, the ROTC appears as an old-fashioned institution for crafting followers, not future leaders.

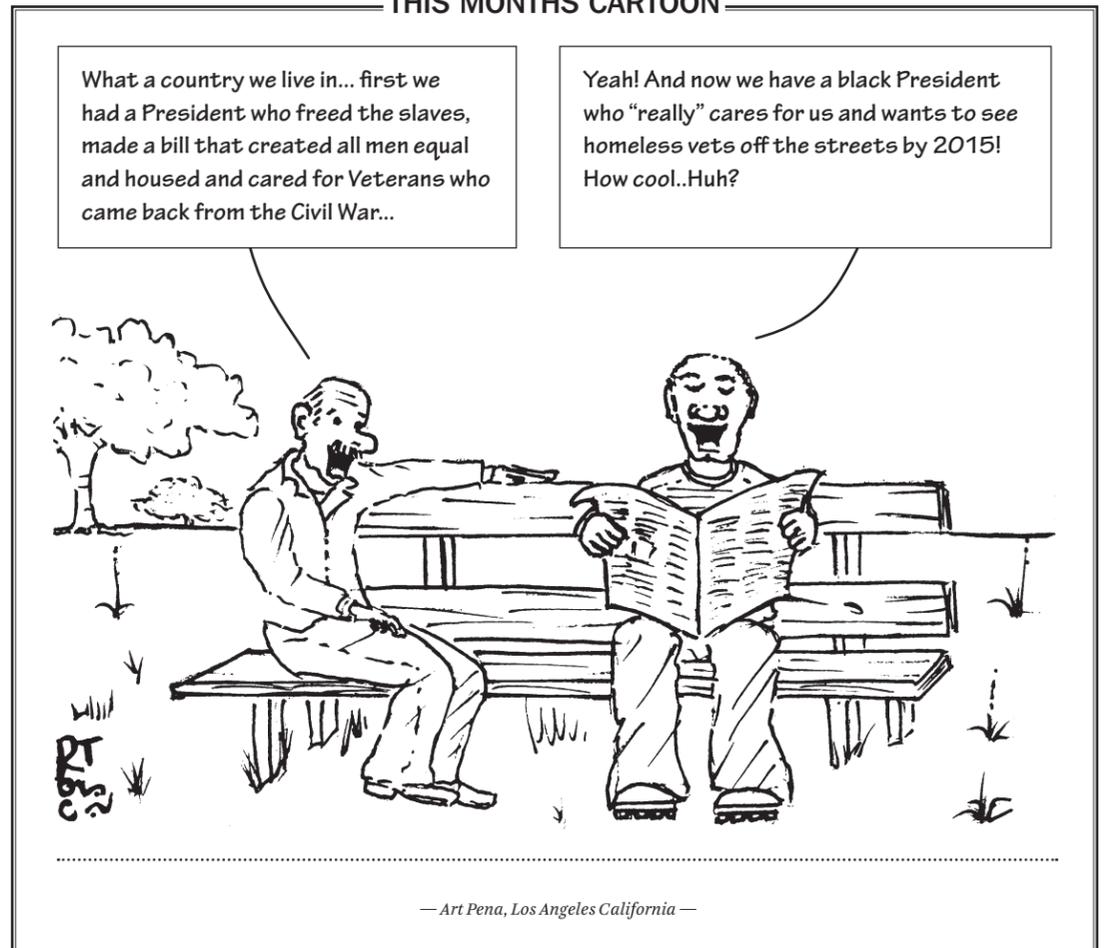
Just for fun, let us briefly explore what it would be like if more Harvard, MIT, or other intellectual institutions trained our soldiers. We could have existential debates with foreign enemies about the boyish stubbornness that leads to war; we could allow brains not guns to drive negotiations with intelligent leaders; and finally, we could stop suppressing demonstrations of critical thinking and begin to value them as ways to improve existing paradigms. On the other hand, there would be a lot less sexy muscle in those uniforms. Perhaps in order to recruit more Harvard cadets, the ROTC should

rethink its marketing strategy. Or perhaps they should continue to focus their attention where it is likely to yield better results.



Bruce Eskovitz plays "Oh Beautiful" to guests at the fourth high tea at Strawberry Flag.

THIS MONTHS CARTOON



WHERE ARE THEY NOW

Billy Clark Is Giving Back

BY TERENCE LYONS

In 1974, Billy Clark was a patient living in Building 205, diagnosed with a "personality disorder" after his service in Vietnam. He participated in a job training program in Building 206 in which veterans fixed old stereos and electrical equipment, then sold the repaired items to other vets and Veterans Administration (VA) employees, with the working vets receiving a percentage of the sales.

In those days, Buildings 208 and 209 as well as 205 were occupied with vets who went to entertainment programs at the Brentwood Theater, bowled in the alleys next to the canteen, and swam in the pool in the basement of 205, remembers Clark.

He got a pass to attend classes at Los Angeles Trade Technical College, and went on to be a sheet metal aircraft mechanic who worked locally in manufacturing for McDonnell Douglas, Northrop, and Hughes Helicopter, and then in repair work all over the United States.

Now retired from that work and seven years sober after a program at The Haven, Billy Clark works in Disabled Vets Still Fighting for Freedom, a three-year-old nonprofit that assists veterans with housing, food, and what he calls "filling out paperwork."

This last task should not be dismissed lightly. "Many vets don't know their benefits," said Clark.

He makes it his job to "connect" veterans with the people and programs that can assist them. Although it is true that there are many programs to benefit vets,

it is also true that access to these programs can be a challenge, and that is where Clark comes in.

He operates a four-bed housing facility in Lancaster and has access to housing facilities in the Los Angeles area for residents who are sober through a program. He also connects vets with food bank resources. But it is the "paperwork" that often yields the greatest results, he says. Clark operates out of a mobile home and goes where the vets are.

Disabled Vets Still Fighting for Freedom, of which Clark is treasurer, is a 501(c)(3) with a board of directors of fifteen disabled vets, Clark says. Notwithstanding its name, it offers assistance to all vets. While Clark looks for a more permanent home base, he can be found in the headquarters tent at *Strawberry Flag* on the quad in front of Buildings 208, 209, and 205 on Wednesdays from about 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., or can be reached on his phone at 424.675.1533.

The ancient Romans believed that strawberries alleviated symptoms of melancholy, fainting, all inflammations, fevers, throat infections, kidney stones, bad breath, attacks of gout, and diseases of the blood, liver, and spleen.

Today, we know that strawberries are low fat, low calorie, and high in vitamin C, fiber, folic acid, and potassium; as part of a five-a-day fruit and vegetable program, strawberries can help reduce the risk of cancer and heart attacks. All according to the London Strawberry Festival in London, Ohio.



Iconic remainder of an earlier time, the chapel, long closed now, was divided into two separate halls of worship with a designated entrance on opposite sides of the building for Catholic or Protestant worshippers. The underpass of Wilshire Blvd. is the defacto gateway to and from the working hospital.

CHAPEL: IT'S AN INTRICATE LITTLE JEWEL BOX, AND IT'S FALLEN ON HARD TIMES¹

BY JANET OWEN DRIGGS

A Victorian clapboard delight that has been locked since 1971, the Veterans Administration (VA) chapel in West Los Angeles seems suspended somewhere between “then” and “now.”

Then

“Then” is 1900. McKinley is the U.S. President. Wilshire Boulevard is as yet an unpaved two-lane street, and residents of the “Old Soldiers Home,” who have prayed in a multipurpose assembly hall since the Home opened in 1888, finally have a dedicated place of worship.

Unlike most of the Home's early structures, which are designed by well-known architect, ladies man, and soon-to-be high-profile murder victim Stanford White, J. Lee Burton designs this \$14,000 chapel. An obscure local architect whose only other known building is the VA trolley stop, Burton creates an ingenious—possibly unique—design.

Doing Double Duty inside...

Taking on the challenge of accommodating both Catholic and Protestant congregants, Burton's 7,500-square-foot chapel offers dual areas of worship under one roof. Its northern half is a Catholic chapel, complete with organ. Its southern side is a Protestant church, also with its own organ. Muffling any possible “dueling organ” effect, a double brick wall divides the otherwise-wooden building in two.

In regard to the Protestant organ, “It frequently happens that appropriation of funds for the furnishing of a new building leaves some important article unprovided for. In this instance it was a new organ... Hatch took a furlough...and he stopped over at Chicago, where he purchased the organ and arranged for its transportation.... This would

all seem a trifle to one possessed of means...but Hatch had been for years saving his pension money and little extra-duty pay with a view to paying a long visit to his old home in Springfield.² Compounding his generosity, three months later Leonidas Hatch will extend a similar \$200-value gift to the Catholic chapel.³

...and Out

Reflecting the divided interior, the outside of the building boasts two architectural styles: Romanesque for the Catholic side, and Gothic Revival for the Protestant. Similarly, of the rooftop crosses that signal the building's function, two are Latin and two Celtic. The multiplicity also extends to the windows of the building, which has twenty-one different types, including narrow pointed lancets, round-arched casements, mullions, and a broad fanlight.

Although it will be whitewashed in 1941, the Chapel is made of red-wood clapboard siding. For its dedications—one led by Father Patrick Hawes, one led by Chaplain F. H. Bek—that happen on separate days, the large crowds see a stained wood structure. With its crisp white trim, the dark wood is a pleasing contrast to the spring flowers and foliage that Old Soldiers Home officials, or rather their wives, organize to adorn the building inside and out.

A Tasteful and Beautiful⁴

As soon as the pews were installed on both sides of the brick wall, Will G. Hartsell, a resident of the Home, began work with his corps of assistants. On the Protestant side the ceiling is “a very light German Buff; the walls complementary in color, of a grayish-blue. Along the line of conjunction with the ceiling and wall a broad stencil of elaborate design; over the wainscoting is a deep and

Continued on page 10

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21–April 19)

Don't be surprised if you have feelings that push you toward change, Aries. You might want to return to school, return to an old relationship—romantic or otherwise—or even revive some old family traditions. You might also find yourself revisiting locations in the world where you had amazing experiences. Friendships are much appreciated this month—especially those people who remain in your life from long ago. Those of you with kids might find this month a bit difficult in the parenting realm—don't worry, it won't last forever! Some advice: Try to cultivate a sense of harmony within yourself and remember those sacrifices that others made for you throughout your life.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20)

March begins with you taking a look at your old resources. Desires spring up that cause you to want to relocate or search for new job opportunities. Your romantic life flourishes this month, Taurus. Enjoy every minute of it! Toward the second half of March, don't be surprised if you're spending funds on your home or mode of transportation. Follow your heart when

it comes to whipping your body into great shape; the future is unknown and appears to hold the unexpected.

GEMINI (May 21–June 21)

Don't fight your urges to improve your performance in the workplace this March. You want to become more progressive this month, Gemini—follow your instincts! Support comes from those in authority in ways that help you to gain equilibrium once more. Abrupt changes in your love life might leave you in a bit of a precarious situation. Try not to listen to those around you who aren't optimistic at the moment. Make your own decisions.

CANCER (June 22–July 22)

You discover that you are incredibly insightful this month, Cancer. Make sure to use this gift to counsel close friends and family members. However, be wary of overtaxing your body this March because the creative juices are flowing, too. Recognize those individuals who helped you out in the past. People want your time in March so you must remember that responsibilities toward yourself are equally as important as your responsibilities toward others. Make sure to try to get some vacation time toward the end of the month.

LEO (July 23–Aug. 22)

Your love life is taking off, Leo! You start making the rules that allow you the gift of free time to spend with that special someone. A sudden change in the people you work with means that greater professional harmony is on the way. Close friends and family might be a source of concern—make sure to be encouraging frequently. Your luck is fantastic so don't be afraid to take risks... new opportunities are on the horizon.

VIRGO (Aug. 23–Sept. 22)

Tap into your ability to negotiate this month. Those glorious travel plans you have in store might possibly be delayed, but don't lose heart! Projects at home go swimmingly and by mid March you will be looking to immerse yourself in water to cleanse. Your energy might be a bit on the low side and you will count on your partner or a close friend to fill in where necessary. Wheel and deal because it will save you a lot of money—don't be timid when investigating monetary issues.

LIBRA (Sept. 23–Oct. 23)

Great news is on the way when it comes to your finances, Libra! March is a lucrative month for you. Projects at home might still continue to be delayed. Family will come

to the rescue if and when problems arise—make sure to take advantage of the help that is offered. You have a strong desire to be equally supportive in your love life and your professional life as well. The beginning of March is a fantastic time to rid yourself of unwanted and unnecessary possessions. Don't think twice—get rid of them!

SCORPIO (Oct. 24–Nov. 21)

Watch the lower half of your body this March, Scorpio—particularly the knees and ankles. Your loved ones really appreciate you this month—soak up the compliments and friendly gestures. The workplace is calling for much-needed adjustments and you aren't afraid to make them. Hone in on your listening skills across the board; this will prove rewarding. Your desire to travel is great but remain close to home because it will end up being your haven until the end of the month. There is always time to travel later.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22–Dec. 21)

Take that drastic measure now, Sagittarius—it will pay off. Stay true to your character of ending and beginning various things in your life. Good results are ahead. Give up smoking, drinking, and/or fatty foods. Your love life will change, much to the sur-

prise of your family and friends. Your closest comrades will support you wholeheartedly at full moon.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22–Jan. 19)

The immense pressure and stress as a result of money dissipates this month, Capricorn! You might start feeling some changes in your body so keep the exercise at a moderate level. Your professional life will take you in an independent direction instead of toward working with others—make sure to listen. Concerns over children and parents can be severe until the end of the month—keep your head up! Surround yourself with allies.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20–Feb. 18)

Take the plunge! It is your style at the end of the day, Aquarius. Career opportunities are flying at you right now so don't hesitate to take advantage. You're popular this March and as a result will desire some alone time. Go on those short trips that crop up but be careful to not spend too much money. Watch the weather if you go on any trips that involve being out on open water as well.

PISCES (Feb. 19–March 20)

Spend your time with the down and out

this March, Pisces. You have the ability to come to the rescue and will be drawn to those who are isolated physically or emotionally. Don't look for quick results—they will arrive in due time. The perfect words to diffuse conflicts will come to you throughout the month. You might want to balance your activities and diet mid-month. Opportunities of all sorts will become apparent to you. Honesty from friends and family will prove helpful.



American Red Cross

THE AMERICAN RED CROSS OF GREATER LOS ANGELES SUPPORTS ALL OF THE VETERANS AND THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL

American Red Cross
of Greater Los Angeles
11355 Ohio Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90025
310.445.9944
www.redcrossla.org



If all the **strawberries** produced in California this year were laid berry to berry, they'd wrap around the world 15 times.

During medieval times, **strawberries** were served at important functions to bring peace & prosperity.

U.S. NAVY AIDED... CONTINUED »

regions." Science had demonstrated what local residents had known first-hand all alone.

In 1991 the City of Los Angeles resolved another lawsuit with the Owens Valley by agreeing to rewater the lower Owens River, a project called the LORP, but they would return the water to the aqueduct before it flowed into the lake.

The situation had become increasingly tense when a public hearing was to be held on July 2, 1997, with the APCD Governing Board. The navy's continual involvement was heard in the testimony of NAWS Commanding Officer Captain Stan Douglas. Douglas testified that the 2,500 air-to-air tests per year at a cost of \$50,000 per test were being compromised or continually cancelled due to Owens Valley dust "events." "The dust, he explained," as quoted by Karen Piper, "affected the station's capacity to track missiles by camera, which [could] ultimately lead to a 'final increase in cost to the taxpayer if we are unable to do the mission.'" As to alternative ways to continue to get valid results, he stated, "the base is trying to find ways around the problem. We have developed infrared based systems that allow us to see through the dust and

clutter storms.... The combined cost of that program is about five million dollars." He continued to discuss the dangers to personnel. "Any reduction in visibility is a concern for the safety to us. Because our pilots fly with VFR flight rules, meaning 'see and avoid'—and you have to be able to see to avoid."

Because of all of these challenges, the navy had started its own monitoring program. Using Doppler and other methods, the captain showed the actual effects of these dust events: plumes that rose high in the air and obscured large mountain ranges. In this case for the audience, seeing was believing. In a one-year period, eleven test cycles were totally scrubbed.

Piper reported that just as things "were looking dire," here was a change of leadership at the top of the LADWP. David Freeman became the boss and as the *Daily News of Los Angeles* reported colorfully, Freeman "began unabashedly revealing 'dirty little secrets' about the sometimes Byzantine city utility." Piper wrote, "Freeman also acknowledged the LADWP's responsibility, under the Clean Air Act, to fix the dust from Owens Lake. At the time, Richard F. Harasick, assistant director of water resources for the DWP, claimed, 'We're over

the kicking and screaming. We want to be good stewards of the environment that's been given to us. It's a change in the way of our thinking.'" Freeman proved himself to be a man of principle, savvy experience, and vision. The Lake Project began to move toward implementation finally.

Freeman was recently called out of retirement to again helm the management of the utility, and he has started to champion clean energy in the form of a giant solar park to be located on the surface of the dry lake and the land north and east of Lone Pine. He held several public forums in the Owens Valley to explore the possibilities, and, most recently, at the invitation of the Metabolic Studio, lunched with Lauren Bon and her group, including two residents from the Owens Valley (including this writer) to explore future partnerships.

In the past, the navy had a significant role bringing change in the form of the LADWP Dry Lake Project to the southern Inyo area. On the horizon grows the prospect that the Metabolic Studio will have a similar impact on the quality of life for the residents around the Owens (no longer so dry and dusty) Lake.

CHAPEL... CONTINUED »

elaborately designed dado; a richly patterned center-piece sets off the chandelier in the ceiling. The face of the great arch to the rear of the pulpit and over the choir abounds in ornamental moldings and afforded Hartsell an opportunity for display of excellence in artistic ability, of which he took every advantage.⁵

The Catholic side is being decorated "in somber colors suitable to the place. When finished it will be as beautiful, if not more so in some particulars."⁶

The Quiet Haven

The tranquil center of a bustling community, the chapel serves the Home's approximately two thousand residents, who are quartered in eight veranda-trimmed barracks arranged in a horseshoe shape along Bonsall Avenue. It is surrounded by landscaped grounds and, at discreet distances, a mess hall, hospital, library, staff homes, laundry, a thriving farm, Ward Memorial Hall (with a fully equipped stage), a store and hotel, a guard house, an ice making plant, an aviary, and, since January 1895, one of L.A.'s first telephone exchanges.

Now

White against the California-blue skies and bounded by two major freeways, Building 20 on the West Los Angeles VA campus has been locked against use for almost forty years. It was initially damaged in 1955 when a fire scorched through the Protestant chapel. Although the charred timbers and structural damage went unrepaired, services continued at that time after the damage was concealed behind a purpose-built wall.

In 1971 the Sylmar Earthquake shook the area. The 6.6 quake certainly damaged the building—which is not directly anchored to its unreinforced masonry foundation—but it has remained on its foundation and standing ever since.

Post 1971, the building has been locked and has deteriorated. Fires that were likely set to keep homeless sleepers warm have burnt holes in the floors and scorched more woodwork. A swarm of bees has built a hive. The floor is strewn with detritus and fallen plaster.

The chapel was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. It is the oldest building left on Wilshire Boulevard, which is now a multilane road and one of L.A.'s primary east-west arteries. According to a 2007 *Los Angeles Times* article by Martha Groves, the bronze bell in the bell tower is still capable of ringing, and "there is a section of elaborate stenciling, probably applied by veterans, on a stucco wall behind the pipe organ console in the Catholic chapel."

The 2007 estimate for full restoration was \$11.5 million. Charles

Dorman, then the director of the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, told Groves that "the general perception is that the federal government has plenty of money, but not for something like this." Private funding, he said, is being sought, "I don't have a problem with making it the Tom Hanks Chapel."⁷

NOTES

1. Alexander, Christopher J. Getty Research Institute, quoted in *Looking for a Saving Grace*. Martha Groves. *Los Angeles Times*. April 8, 2007
2. Soldiers' Home. *Los Angeles Times*. February 25, 1900
3. Soldiers' Home. *Los Angeles Times*. May 20, 1900
4. Soldiers' Home. *Los Angeles Times*. February 25, 1900
5. *ibid.*
6. *ibid.*
7. Groves, Martha. *Looking for a Saving Grace*. *Los Angeles Times*, April 8, 2007

A man travelling across a field encountered a tiger. He fled, the tiger after him. Coming to a precipice, he caught hold of the root of a wild vine and swung himself down over the edge. The tiger sniffed at him from above. Trembling, the man looked down to where, far below, another tiger was waiting to eat him. Only the vine sustained him. Two mice, one white and one black, little by little started to gnaw away the vine. The man saw a luscious strawberry near him. Grasping the vine with one hand, he plucked the strawberry with the other. How sweet it tasted!

From *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*, compiled by Paul Repts, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971 (first published in 1957), p. 32.

BLOOD ORANGE MARMALADE

RECIPE COURTESY OF KEVIN WEST
From the demo *Saving the Season, Winter Citrus*

2 pounds blood oranges
(about 10 small fruits)

1 pound Meyer lemons
(about 3 large fruits)

1/2 pound sour Eureka lemons
(about 2 small fruits)

3.5 cups white granulated sugar

3/4 cup sage honey
(or any other pale, floral honey)

3 cups water

Remember that marmalade uses the fruit peel, so please use unsprayed, organic (or backyard) fruit if at all possible. Also note that store-bought citrus is often coated with wax to extend shelf life, so if that's what you're using, first rinse the fruit with boiling water to remove all traces of wax, then scrub well in cold water.

Peels

Using a vegetable peeler, remove the peel from all the citrus in wide strips, taking only the colored exterior zest and leaving behind the albedo (the bitter white pith). Slice the peel into quarter-inch threads (or wider, confetti-like pieces if you prefer a more textured marmalade). Put the prepared peels in a preserving pan.

Pulp

First remove all the albedo. The technique requires slicing a round



Red Arm band allow veterans and dancers to create the image of the red stripes of the American Flag in human flag photo shoot at Strawberry Flag.

off both ends of the peeled fruit, deep enough to reveal the pulp beneath the albedo. Then stand the fruit on one of its flat ends and slice downward along the fruit's outside edge to cut away the albedo. Work your way around the perimeter of the entire fruit until you're left with the beautiful "heart" of the fruit. Cut the heart crosswise into round, half-inch slices, and, lastly, quarter each slice. Remove whatever seeds you find. Put chunked pulp in the preserving pan with the peel.

Add water to the preserving pan with peel and pulp, bring to a boil, and add sugar and honey. Return to a moderate boil and stir constantly until the mixture has reduced by as much as half to reach the jell point.

When a jell set has been achieved, turn off heat and allow the hot marmalade to cool for 5 minutes before ladling into prepared jars. If desired, process the sealed jars in a hot-water bath for 10 minutes (for half-pint size) to pasteurize for long storage.

Notes

You can use any combination of citrus fruits in this recipe, but be sure to achieve a balance of sweet (navel oranges, tangerines, Meyer lemons, etc.) and sour (Seville oranges, Eureka lemons, grapefruits, etc.).

Feel free to add flavorings. For example: add 1 split vanilla bean to the preserving pot midway through the reduction. Or: Take a 4-inch branch of rosemary, crush it to release its fragrance, and swish it through the finished marmalade just before ladling into jars. Or: Add 2 tablespoons of alcohol (Grand Marnier, citron-flavored vodka) toward the end of reduction.

LA CASA DEL TUNEL ART CENTER

A transnational arts organization dedicated to the understanding of border, community and environment issues through the arts

www.lacasadelartcenter.org

Eating **strawberries**, which are rich in nitrate, can increase the flow of blood & oxygen to the muscles by 7%. This prevents muscle fatigue, making exercise easier.

Strawberry juice combined with honey will reduce inflammation or sunburn. Rub the mixture thoroughly into the skin before rinsing off with warm water and lemon juice.



MIAMI VA... CONTINUED »

attached four-story nursing home. The medical center opened in 1968. It provides medical, surgical, and psychiatric services, and houses a prosthetic treatment center, an AIDS/HIV center, a spinal cord injury rehabilitative center, and the Geriatric, Education and Clinical Center. It is recognized as a center for excellence in spinal cord injury research, substance abuse treatment, and chest pain.

The Bruce W. Carter Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center operates 191 hospital beds. Extended geriatric care is provided in a 120-bed nursing home care unit, and there are an additional 58 psychiatric rehab beds. Miami is also responsible for two major satellite outpatient clinics located in Sunrise (Broward County) and Key West (Monroe County). Five community-based outpatient clinics are located in Homestead, Key Largo, Pembroke Pines, Hollywood Deerfield Beach, and Coral Spring (Broward County). The Outpatient Substance Abuse Clinic and Healthcare for Homeless Veterans facility is located approximately one mile from the medical center in downtown Miami.

Strawberry Flag and Miami

There is no question—according to the staff I met with—of the immediate need at the medical center campus for projects like *Strawberry Flag* for the Compensated Work Therapy program. In the last year the Director at the Miami facility created and funded three new positions in the vocational arena that includes one in particular that bolsters the CWT program. It is important to note that the staff I met with are foot soldiers in vocational rehab therapy and not decision makers when it comes to clearing the way for a *Strawberry Flag*-type initiative.

It was exciting to see that from the moment I sat down, they kept asking me if there was a way we could set up a *Strawberry Flag* in Miami. I told them that I was just there to fact-find and talk to them about

what exists at Miami and how things work. It is important to note that the Miami campus does not have an onsite area to raise the *Strawberry Flag* (according to what the staff say, but perhaps the director could feel differently and find a place).

Instead, they suggested that *Strawberry Flag* could lease a space in nearby Homestead (they both seemed to have contacts and knows people) where *Strawberry Flag* could be constructed and to which Miami-based veterans could be bused. They both admitted that Tampa (Bay Pines VA facility) is likely better able to host *Strawberry Flag* at its site.

Both of the staff I met with are employed through the VA's Mental Health Intensive Case Management (MHICM) program, and both work with veterans trying to transition back into society. The step-down program works with an estimated 144 veterans at a time. According to the staff, there are currently only a limited amount of paid jobs for CWT veterans in Miami. These are in areas such as housekeeping, grounds-keeping, delivery for the supply department, and greeters at the reception desk. The veterans are paid minimum wage for these jobs and they are similar to the CWT program at the Greater Los Angeles VA Healthcare campus.

Some of the volunteer opportunities that the Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist is working on include Habitat for Humanity, Fishing with the Lions Club, and Pelican Rescue (which fixes pelican wings and feeds the animals, generating a sense of pride for the veterans taking care of the endangered birds). This staffer also works with veterans from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan). There is an estimated six-month to a year waiting list for veterans to get CWT jobs, according to the staffers. Recreational and Vocational Rehab are the key to their recovery and the most immediate need is to broaden their opportunities.

The Miami VA has added three new positions in the mental health area

in the last two years, and the Clinical Case worker I met with is one of them. She was hired to help expand CWT opportunities.

There is a horticultural therapy program at the nursing home on the Miami campus because of its small, working garden where veterans tend to garden and sell plants.

A Couple of Thoughts

Strawberry Flag is becoming well known in the VA CWT system—and with the foot soldiers at VA campuses across the country. Again, from the moment my meeting in South Florida started, the Miami Staff wanted me to know that they would love to have *Strawberry Flag* come to Miami and that there is a need for a project like this. They seem very interested in having a creative project for the veterans in Miami, again, they are not the decision makers but they seem very attracted to the idea of having some innovative project start up for the Veterans in Miami immediately. And at this point it appears that there really is no location in Miami to put *Strawberry Flag*; however, after the session with the director of the Miami facility—who was once the assistant director of the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare campus—I believed

that if asked, she might be able find a place on the Miami campus. This staff, who thinks highly of their Miami Director, said they thought she would likely be open to something like this.

Overall, the art of *Strawberry Flag* and the various kinds of jobs and culture created around the piece are exciting and useful to the Veterans. The article on the National Veterans Website's success stories page—www.cwt.va.gov/success.asp—may have contributed to the growing knowledge of the art work, however there is also word of mouth communication apparently happening from campus to campus.

The veterans working on *Strawberry Flag* in Los Angeles can acquire skill sets not currently available to them in other locations. This is preparing them to transition more easily into the workforce. That is appealing to vocational and recreational rehab specialists who work with vets—the idea of building a skill set and having those skills transfer into the workplace.



The Honorable Noel Koch, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy visited the Greater Los Angeles VA Health System and discovered something unexpected; a *Strawberry Flag*.

PRINTMAKING AT THE FLAG... CONTINUED »

Because sunlight is always shifting, painters must “paint quickly before the light changes,” Petrosky told the nine students he had on February 13.

The initial students included (among others) patients from the Domiciliary, a woman who works at New Directions, and a 1953–1955 Army vet who does not live on the VA grounds. Petrosky taught them to “squint” so as to see “the impression of the thing” they were looking at, so that, for example, a tree became a shape rather than “a trunk and a million leaves.”

The printmaking project of the Metabolic Studio at *Strawberry Flag* began as a means of producing handmade labels for the Veterans Preserves to be made from the strawberries grown at the site. It evolved into an exercise in the traditional printmaking arts of monoprinting, etching, drypoint, and silk screening. And then it evolved again into a more production/commercial-oriented endeavor to accommodate a larger volume of labels.

But each evolution has survived, and the printmaking studio now introduces veterans to both the traditional “handmade” arts and the more commercial modern technology. Richard Nielsen from the Metabolic Studio and veteran Ray Rodgers from the Domiciliary are generally on hand at least between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. weekdays to talk with interested vets.

The Metabolic Studio is a direct charitable activity of the Annenberg Foundation.

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NO GO GODOT... CONTINUED »

While the Cluchey-Asmus Krapp's at the VA encapsulated simplicity and celebrated Beckett, Chan's *Godot*, as described by the artist in his REDCAT lecture, felt like it must have been something of a circus. Disappointingly, throughout his lecture an unhidden arrogance escaped from Chan like steam jets. “I don't think I like people that much,” Chan told his rapt REDCAT audience—a curious statement for one whose mission statement in New Orleans was to assist and enlighten. More than once during the evening Chan said he had never wanted to “do anything” (i.e., on a grand scale) in New York City, the disaster-hit metropolis he calls home. Was Chan using Beckett's *Godot* for grandstanding? One had

to wonder. In Chan's hands—and he admitted he had never directed a play before—the whole idea reeked of an elaborate stunt, meant to rattle the political powers while emptying coffers of philanthropic funds that might have better aided the dispossessed of the Crescent City. The project ended up hugely over budget, which Chan seemed to dismiss and almost laughed off.

Comparisons aside, the event Chan created was a fashionable place to be—except if you were the mayor of New Orleans. When the mayor's office asked if the mayor could say a few words and address the crowd before the show started, Chan said no. The REDCAT audience laughed when Chan showed a slide of the empty mayor's chair at one of the performances and said the evening

could also have been dubbed Waiting for the Mayor, who never showed.

The hopelessness of *Waiting for Godot* certainly speaks of human desperation and meaninglessness, which is obviously why Chan picked it for New Orleans. It is bleak and nihilistic, and Chan was primed to add to the long “history of unorthodox versions” of Beckett's work, he said. When the production was going up, Chan said, a drunk man who happened by saw the signs and told him, “I'm waiting too.” Chan found the area to be the perfect backdrop for the play, and spoke to the ineptness of the rescue and recovery work in the Lower Ninth Ward (which still looks bombed out with trees leaning over and houses washed away, all affected with an unearthly quiet). With nothing there, it was

“such a spectacular symbol of destruction.” He said the operation was expected to “leave drywall and money behind.”

There was a contempt and disregard for certain stage directions that rankled Beckett purists in Chan's well-publicized version of *Godot*. The two main characters Vladimir and Estragon, who spend the entire play waiting on the road for a person named Godot (who never shows up), walk off together, heading for the levee. Chan said this drove the crowd wild, they loved it. But Beckett never wrote that; when they say they will “go,” after all that waiting around, Beckett wrote, clearly, “*They do not move.*”

The idea for *Waiting for Godot* in New Orleans was a clever one, but

after listening to Chan, something just didn't ring true. There was a hollowness there, and even Chan admitted “it was always more than a play. It was an artist's statement.” There's nothing wrong with that. Artists can make a difference, a big one. But I'm not sure what Chan's main point was, and I'd like to visit New Orleans myself now to see what kind of difference the whole thing made.

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"Who stole the strawberries?" was Captain Queeg's obsessive and paranoid cry that led to his downfall in Herman Wouk's best-selling novel, *The Caine Mutiny*. If you were a sailor breaking into the ship's stores, wouldn't it be the strawberries that you'd steal? After all, it is reported that 94 percent of U.S. households consume strawberries.

Of course the Beatles recorded the psychedelic-sounding "Strawberry Fields Forever," but there's more. That recording is said to have inspired the name taken in 1967 by the psychedelic-looking Strawberry Alarm Clock, the Los Angeles rock band best known for its hit "Incense and Peppermints."

Alexander M. Haig Jr. Dies at 85; Was Forceful Aide to Two Presidents

Alexander M. Haig Jr., the four star general who served as a confrontational secretary of state under President Ronald Reagan and a commanding White House chief of staff as the Nixon Administration crumbled, died Saturday at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, according to a hospital spokesman. He was 85.

A section of the full article from *The New York Times* February 20, 2010

Mr. Haig was a rare American breed: a political general. His bids for the presidency quickly came undone. But his ambition to be president was thinly veiled, and that was his undoing. He knew, Reagan aide Lyn Nofziger once said, that "the third paragraph of his obit" would detail his conduct in the hours after President Reagan was shot, on March 30, 1981.

That day, Secretary of State Haig wrongly declared himself the acting president. "The helm is right here," he told members of the Reagan cabinet in the White House Situation Room, "and that means right in this chair for now, constitutionally, until the vice president gets here." His words were taped by Richard V. Allen, then the national security adviser.

His colleagues knew better. "There were three others ahead of Mr. Haig in the constitutional succession," Allen wrote in 2001. "But Mr. Haig's demeanor signaled that he might be ready for a quarrel, and there was no point in provoking one."

Haig then asked, "How do you get to the press room?" He raced up

stairs and went directly to the lectern before a television audience of millions. His knuckles whitening, his arms shaking, Haig declared to the world, "I am in control here, in the White House." He did not give that appearance. Seven years before, Haig really had been in control. He was widely perceived as the acting president during the final months of the Nixon Administration.

He kept the White House running as the distraught and despondent commander in chief was driven from power by the threat of impeachment in 1974. "He was the president toward the end," William B. Saxbe, the United States attorney general in 1974, was quoted as saying in *Nixon: An Oral History of His Presidency*. "He held that office together." Henry A. Kissinger, his mentor and master in the Nixon White House, also said the nation owed Haig its gratitude for steering the ship of state through dangerous waters in the final days of the Nixon era. "By sheer willpower, dedication and self-discipline, he held the government together," Kissinger wrote in the memoir *Years of Upheaval*.

Haig took pride in his cool handling of a constitutional crisis without precedent. "There were no tanks," he said during a hearing on his nomination as secretary of state in 1981. "There were not any sandbags outside the White House." Serving the Nixon White House from 1969 to 1974, Haig went from colonel to four star general without holding a major battlefield command, an extraordinary rise with few if any precedents in American military history. But the White House was its own battlefield in those years. He won his stars

through his tireless service to President Nixon and Nixon's national security adviser, Kissinger.

Haig never lost his will. But he frequently lost his composure as Reagan's secretary of state. As a consequence, he lost both his job and his standing in the American government. Nixon had privately suggested to the Reagan transition team that Haig would make a great secretary of state. Upon his appointment, Haig declared himself "the vicar of foreign policy"—in the Roman Catholic Church, to which he belonged, the pope is the "vicar of Christ"—but he soon became an apostate in the new administration. He alienated his affable commander in chief and the vice president, George H. W. Bush, whose national security aide, Donald P. Gregg, described Haig as "a cobra among garter snakes."

Haig served for 17 months before Reagan dismissed him with a one-page letter on June 24, 1982. Those months were marked by a largely covert paramilitary campaign against Central American leftists, a heightening of nuclear tensions with the Soviet Union, and dismay among American allies about the lurching course of American foreign policy. Sixteen months after his departure came the deaths of 241 U.S. Marines, sailors, and soldiers in a terrorist bombing in Beirut, and, two days later, the American invasion of the Caribbean nation of Grenada.

"His tenure as secretary of state was very traumatic," John M. Poindexter, later Reagan's national security adviser, recalled in the oral history *Reagan: The Man and His Presidency*. "As a result of this constant tension that existed between the White House and the State Department about who was going to be responsible for national security and foreign policy, we got very little done."

Haig said the president had assured him that he "would be the spokesman for the U.S. government." But he came to believe—with reason—that the White House staff had banded together against him. He



Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General Alexander M. Haig, Jr. (US) appointed June 1974–June 1979. (NATO Photo 536Kb Ref. no: 8394)

blamed in particular the so-called troika of James A. Baker III, Edwin Meese III, and Michael K. Deaver.

"Reagan was a cipher," Haig said with evident bitterness. "These men were running the government."

He reflected: "Having been a White House chief of staff, and having lived in the White House under great tension, you know that the White House attracts extremely ambitious people. Those who get to the top are usually prepared to go to extraordinary lengths to get there."

Haig briefly considered running for president in 1980 and became a candidate in 1988, but his campaign attracted virtually no popular support. A spokesman for Johns Hopkins, Gary Stephenson, said Haig's death was caused by a staphylococcal infection that he had before his admission to the hospital. Haig is survived by his wife, the former Patricia Fox, 81; their three children, Alexander Patrick Haig Sr., and Barbara Haig,

both of Washington, and Brian Haig of Hopewell, New Jersey; and eight grandchildren, according to the Reverend Frank Haig, 81, his brother and a professor emeritus of physics at Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore.

Father Haig said the army was coordinating a mass at Fort Myer in Washington and an interment at Arlington National Cemetery, but that both would be delayed by about two weeks due to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Alexander Meigs Haig Jr. was born in Philadelphia on December 2, 1924, the son of a lawyer and a homemaker. At 22, he graduated from West Point, ranking 214th of 310 members of the class of 1947. As a young lieutenant, he went to Japan to serve as an aide to General Alonzo P. Fox, deputy chief of staff to General Douglas MacArthur, the supreme allied commander and American viceroy of the Far East. In 1950, Haig married the general's daughter.

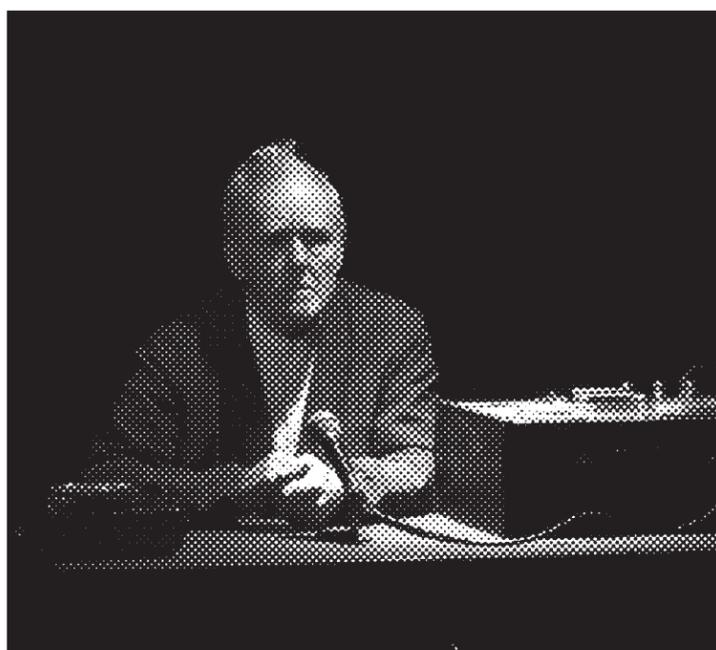
CORRECTIONS FROM ISSUE I

From "Krapp's Last Tape Performance Review" by Laura Sanderson Healy

"*Krapp's Last Tape*, directed by Samuel Beckett, was given a special performance by Rick Cluchey, staged by Walter Asmus, as a tribute to L.A. veterans' *Strawberry Flag* community." Both Asmus and Cluchey worked closely with Nobel Prize-winning playwright Samuel Beckett prior to his death in 1989.

From "Strawberry Flag Project Greater Los Angeles Veterans Administration Healthcare Campus"

This article was not from the January 6, 2010, issue of the *Washington Post*. The article is posted on the United States Department of Veterans Affairs web page for Compensated Work Therapy success stories at www.cwt.va.gov/strawberryflag.asp



World class performance by Rick Cluchey of *Krapp's Last Tape* offered to the vets.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Strawberry Flag Teas
Mon–Fri, 3PM

Jam Sessions
Wed, 3PM

Wadsworth Theatre
Spring 2010 Season begins March 15:
Reel talk with Stephen Farber

Brentwood Theatre
No performances for March 2010

Farmer's Market
Thurs, 12-6PM

Barber of Dreamers
Open daily,
9AM–7PM

Parrot Sanctuary
Thurs, 7AM-dusk

Vet's Garden
Thursdays,
7AM-dusk

Golf Course
Closed

Japanese Garden
Closed

Canteen/Restaurant
Mon–Fri, 7AM-2PM

THE STRAWBERRY GAZETTE

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