



BRANCH 163

MAY

NEWS & NOTES



SIR LUNCHEON MEETING APRIL 19, 2024

We had another great turnout at Hodel's again this month. Great food, great community, and great speaker. All in All another Great Event. Thanks for your loyal attendance to our SIR events.

DON NORIEL – LITTLE SIR BRANCH 163

- Welcome Don and Thankyou for stepping up to the plate for Branch 163 and accepting the challenges as Little Sir. We are most grateful and will lend all the support you need to fulfill your duties. This is a fun job and one that allows you to find and meet new speakers for our Hodel's luncheon.
- Thanks also for setting a great example for many a high school athlete that crossed your path.



When the going gets tough the tough get going. We are truly lucky to have members step up to help us carry out our mission of making SIR a more enjoyable partnership. Thanks all members for the support you give.

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****DON'T FORGET SIR LUNCH-OUT, TOMORROW, 9 MAY,
HODEL'S IN THE 'SUN ROOM' WHICH IS
AT THE S.E. CORNER OF THE MAIN BLDG.**

BIG SIR JIM SHAPAZIAN



COMMENTS ON MEMORIAL DAY THIS MAY 27th

May 4, 2024

Hello SIR members. I would like to focus on a particular holiday that occurs this month, specifically on May 27. Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, has been a fixture in our country since the end of the Civil War and formalized on May 30, 1868. This day is specifically set aside to commemorate those that lost

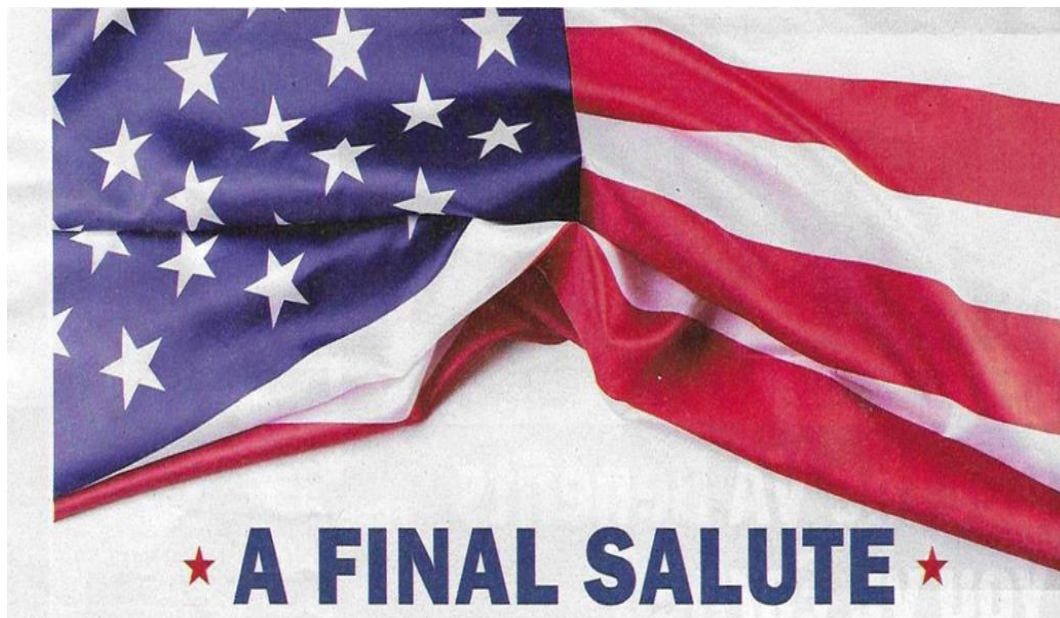
their lives in the service of their country, over 1.1 million to date.

Many don't know the meaning of Memorial Day so I thought it appropriate to set the record straight. Those that lost their lives leave behind loved ones, family and friends, that mourn their loss. It is a time for remembrance of those that made the ultimate sacrifice to maintain the freedom America enjoys today. We cannot take this freedom for granted when it cost us so dearly. Please take time this year to explain to those that may not know why we celebrate Memorial Day and to Say a prayer for those that are left behind to mourn their loss.

Though it is not a day to honor Veterans, there is never a time to not honor them and show our appreciation for the time and service they gave to our country.

Big SIR Jim Shapazian





VFW magazine presents this memorial listing in tribute to 27 US. troops who died overseas in 2023. All of the following fatalities happened in non-hostile incidents.

AUSTRALIA

MARINE CORPS

- Cpl. Spencer R. Collart, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Sqdn. 363, Marine Rotational Force — Darwin, Arlington, Va.
- Capt. Eleanor LeBeau, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Sqdn. 363, Marine Rotational Force — Darwin, Belleville, Ill.
- Maj. Tobin Lewis, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Sqdn. 363, Marine Rotational Force — Darwin, Jefferson, Colo.

GERMANY

AIR FORCE

- Tech. Sgt. Lionel Rhone Jr., 569th U.S. Forces Police Sqdn., Anderson, Ind.
- Senior Airman Christopher Rocha, 86th Security Forces, El Paso, Texas

ARMY

- Dexavion Sanders, 367th Maintenance Co., Mississippi Army National Guard, Memphis, Tenn.
- Staff Sgt. Travon Walker, 2nd Cav Regt. , Richmond, Va.

JAPAN

AIR FORCE

- Capt. Terrell K. Brayman, 21st Special Operations Sqdn., Pittsford, N.Y.
- Staff Sgt. Jake M. Galliher, 43rd Intelligence Sqdn., Pittsfield, Mass.
- Maj. Jeffrey T. Hoernemann, 21st Special Operations Sqdn., Andover, Minn.
- Senior Airman Brian K. Johnson, 21st Special Operations Sqdn., Reynoldsburg, Ohio
- Tech. Sgt. Zachary E. Lavoy, 1st Special Operations Sqdn., Oviedo, Fla.
- Maj. Eric V. Spendlove, 1st Special Operations Sqdn., St. George, Utah
- Staff Sgt. Jake M. Turnage, 21st Special Operations Sqdn., Kennesaw, Ga.
- Maj. Luke A. Unrath, 21st Special Operations Sqdn., Riverside, Calif.

NAVY

- Operations Specialist 3rd Class Romario Clennon, USS Ralph Johnson, Atlanta, Ga.

KUWAIT

AIR FORCE

- Maj. Stephen Khou, 32nd Weapons Sqdn., Philadelphia, Pa.

ARMY

- Spc. Jayson Reed Haven, B Co., 1st Bn., 118th Inf. Regt., 218th Maneuver Enhancement Bde., Aiken, S.C.

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

ARMY

- Chief Warrant Officer 2 Shane M. Barnes, 1st Bn., 160th Special Operations Aviation Regt. (Airborne), Sacramento, Calif.
- Chief Warrant Officer 3 Stephen Dwyer, 1st Bn., 160th Special Operations Aviation Regt. (Airborne), Clarksville, Tenn.
- Staff Sgt. Tanner W. Grone, 1st Bn., 160th Special Operations Aviation Regt. (Airborne), Gorham, N.H.

•Sgt. Andrew P. Southard, 1st Bn., 160th Special Operations Aviation Regt. (Airborne), Apache Junction, Ariz.

•Sgt. Cade M. Wolfe, 1st Bn., 160th Special Operations Aviation . Regt. (Airborne), Mankato, Minn.

NORTH SEA

NAVY

• Chief Gunner's Mate Caprice L. Pryor, USS Rampage (DDG-61), Chicago, Ill.

QATAR

ARMY

•Staff Sgt. Felix Berrios, 25th Signal Bn., 160th Signal Bde., Army Network Enterprise Technology Command, Houston, Texas

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

● Lance Cpl. Nicholas Maurice Dural, U.S. Embassy in Brazzaville, Lafayette, La. THAILAND

ARMY

THAILAND

*Maj. Andrew Cotter, 17th Field Arty Bde., I Corps, DuPont, Wash.

I think we too often forget that our Peace Keeping Forces are stationed around the world monitoring disturbances 24 and 7. I think we also forget that they all are in an element of danger from time to time and are subject to injury or death such as these above. No, they did not get front page news and maybe not even back page but their lives should still be a blessing to us and to those many countries who provide a home away from home fopr

We have a lot to ponder when you consider the magnitude of our global peace keeping efforts. Remember, there is a war raging somewhere every day of the year though we may only call them 'Skirmishes'!

May God continue to protect them, each and every day.

Sir Larry Sitzman

MOTHERS DAY

MAY 12TH, SUNDAY

TIME TO REMEMBER MOM'S AND WIVES

TIME TO SCOLD YOUR KIDS TO HONOR
MOM

TIME TO REFLECT ON MY PRIDE



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ANOTHER REMINDER:

HODELS BUSINESS LUNCHEON

MAY 16TH, WEEK FROM THIS THURSDAY

KERN ROOM

“BRING A GUEST”

TALK IT UP: SIRS IS THE BEST SECRET

IN BAKERSFIELD; AND THE BEST FED!

SIR JIM SMITH

- FRIEND
- PATRIOT
- CONSERVATIVE
- CHRISTIAN



IT IS MORE DIFFICULT TO WRITE ABOUT A CLOSE FRIEND THAN SOMEONE I REALLY DON'T KNOW WELL. IN THIS CASE, I FIND SIR JIM'S LIFE STORY TO BE QUITE INTERESTING ESPECIALLY WHEN I CONSIDER WHY THINGS HAPPENED THE WAY THEY DID.

JIM WAS BORN AUGUST 1940 IN A HUMBLE TOWN OF HENRYETTA, OKLAHOMA. HE WAS BIRTHED IN HIS GRANDFATHER SMITH'S HOUSE. HIS DAD WAS 20 AT THE TIME AND WORKED AS A BELLMAN AT THE LOCAL HOTEL.

IN MAY OF 1942 JIM'S DAD HITCH-HIKED TO ARVIN WITH 50 CENTS IN HIS POCKET, (TALK ABOUT HUMBLE)! GUESS WHERE HE WORKED? DIGIORGIO FARMS, OF COURSE, AS MANY CAME INTO CALIFORNIA STOPPING

TO WORK THE FIELDS EAST OF BAKERSFIELD. HIS JOB WAS PUTTING ICE INTO RAILCARS AS THEY HAD NO REFRIGERATION TO KEEP THE FRUIT, VEGETABLES, MEAT COLD DURING THE TRIP TO THE EAST COAST. FOR THOSE IN FARMING THIS IS A COMMON KNOWLEDGE STORYLINE.

SOON JIM AND HIS MOM CAME WESTWARD. THEIR FIRST HOUSE WAS THE STYLE BUILT TO HOUSE FAMILIES WORKING IN THE OIL FIELDS: USUALLY BUILT ON A RAISED PLATFORM OF WOOD FLOORING, 3 FOOT WOOD SIDES, AND A CANVAS TOP. HOT IN THE SUMMER AND COLD IN THE WINTER; SUCH COMFORT!

FOR THE MOST PART JIM GREW UP IN OILDALE WHILE HIS DAD WORKED IN OIL DRILLING RIGS AROUND THE STATE TRYING TO MAKE A LIVING. JIM WENT TO BEARDSLY ELEMENTARY AND STANDARD SCHOOL. HE GRADUATED 8TH GRADE IN 1954 AND MOVED TO SHELL BEACH WHERE HIS FATHER WORKED FOR UNION OIL. JIM GRADUATED FROM ARROYO GRANDE H.S. WHERE HE EXCELLED IN ALL THE MATH CLASSES.

DURING THE 1959-1960 PERIOD JIM WENT TO BAKERSFIELD COLLEGE, WORKED SUMMERS AT MADONNA CONSTRUCTION, SANTA MARIA SHOVELING SAND AT A GRAVEL PIT.

CONSTRUCTION DWINDLED AND JIM FOUND HIMSELF ENTERING THE U.S.AIR FORCE. DURING BASIC

AND TECH TRAINING AT SHEPHERD AFB, HE WAS TESTED FOR SKILL LEVELS AND SCORED HIGH IN ADMINISTRATION AND ANALYTICS. JIM REQUESTED ASSIGNMENT INTO ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE, BUT THE USAF SAID, 'OUR NEEDS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOUR DESIRES!'; SO, HE WAS ASSIGNED TO DATA PROCESSING (DP).

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO REMEMBER THOSE DAYS DP INVOLVED THE IBM CARD READERS AND SORTERS WHICH OFFERED FAST PROCESSING OF AN EXPANDED FIELD OF DATA. THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE COMPUTER AGE. ALSO, AT THIS TIME, 1961, THE BUILD-UP OF TROOPS AND EFFORTS IN VIETNAM WERE SUBSTANTIAL AND THERE WAS A NEED FOR A WAY TO MANAGE THAT DATA, ESPECIALLY OUT OF TRAVIS AFB. OF COURSE, THAT IS WHERE JIM WAS SHIPPED AND HE WAS TOLD YOU ARE NOT GOING ANYWHERE ELSE, THE USAF NEEDS YOU HERE.

DURING HIS TOUR JIM WAS EXPOSED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAG TAPE AND DISC'S USED IN DP AND STORAGE. FINALLY, HE 'TOURED OUT' JANUARY 1965 TO PERSUE HIS GOAL OF BEING AN ACCOUNTANT. SO HE TOOK HIS FIRST JOB AT MONTGOMERY WARDS IN OAKLAND, WHERE HE FOUND HIMSELF MANAGER OF DP CONVERSION FROM PUNCH CARD TO DISC. NOT ONLY

WERE THE MILITARY INTO CONVERSION BUT THE ENTIRE COUNTRY WAS FACING SUCH A NEED ALSO.

WHEN THAT WAS DONE, JIM FOUND A NEW JOB AT COMPUTER USAGE CORP. AS A CONSULTANT AUDITING AND MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS TO CUSTOMERS ON THEIR INFORMATION SYSTEMS. FIRST CLIENT WAS WESTERN STATES BANKCARD, A CONSORTIUM OF CROCKER BANK, SECURITY PACIFIC, AND WELLS FARGO BANK. THEY WERE CO-DEVELOPING A NEW CONCEPT: MASTER CARD. AS THIS DEVELOPED JIM WAS SENT TO MANHATTAN NEW YORK.

JIM THEN FOUND HIMSELF WORKING FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING COMPANY WHICH USED ANALYTICS TO SELECT AND TRAIN STOCK BROKERS.

HOWEVER, JIM MOVED BACK TO SAN FRANCISCO AREA WORKING FOR CONTINENTAL DATA SERVICES BUREAU WHO PROVIDED DP AND ACCOUNTING SERVICES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES. SMALL BUSINESSES COULD NOT HANDLE THE DAY TO DAY DATA MANAGEMENT FOR THEIR BUSINESSES. BY NOW JIM WAS QUITE SKILLED IN THESE SYSTEMS AND HE FOUND GOOD JOBS MORE READILY AT HAND THAN MANY APPLICANTS. THIS ALLOWED HIM TO FINISH COLLEGE WHERE HE GRADUATED WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE STATING "BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION ; option Accounting".

IN OCTOBER 1976, JIM AND HIS WIFE CHERIE MOVED TO BAKERSFIELD WHERE JIM JOINED THE KERN COUNTY WATER AGENCY WHICH AT THAT TIME WAS ACCOUNTING FOR 13 DISTRICTS AND HAD 13 FINANCE BOOKS TO MAINTAIN. GUESS WHAT? JIM HAD EXPERTISE IN DP WITH DISC AND MAG TAPE PROCESSING! HE TOOK LEAD ON CONVERSION SELECTED NCR EQUIPMENT, AND THE TYPE OF SOFTWARE THAT WOULD HANDLE THE TYPE AND AMOUNT OF DATA THEY WOULD BE PROCESSING.

JUST A SIDE NOTE THAT JIM WAS ALSO SUPPORTING A FAMILY AND ASSISTING HIS WIFE CHERIE IN HER EFFORTS TO DEVELOP A HOME FOR UNWED YOUNG GIRLS WHO WERE THROWN OUT ON THE STREETS BY THEIR DISGRUNTLED PARENTS. THIS WOULD COME TO BE KNOWN AS 'AUNT CHERIE'S HOME' AND BECAME THE SPECIAL NEEDS RECIPIENT FROM MANY LOCAL LEADERS. THIS IN ITSELF IS AN AMAZING STORY OF HOW FAITH CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS. ASK JIM HE WILL TELL YOU HOW.

JIM FINALLY GOT HIS ACCOUNTING JOB WITH BAKERSFIELD CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER, THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF BAKERSFIELD, WHERE HE WORKED FOR 19 YEARS AND RETIRED.

SHORTLY AFTER THIS JIM'S WIFE CHERIE SUCCUMED TO THE DETERIORATION OF RHEUMATOID

ARTHRITIS. JIM LATER MET AND MARRIED HIS CURRENT WIFE HELEN. THEY HAPPILY CARE FOR AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER AND A LARGE COMBINED FAMILY.

ALTHOUGH JIM REALLY ONLY WANTED TO ESTABLISH HIS OWN ACCOUNTING BUSINESS HE FOUND THAT EVERY TURN WAS FUNDED BY BUSINESSES WHO NEEDED TO CONVERT TO DP SYSTEMS. AND, ALL THIS STARTED BECAUSE OF THE USAF AND JIM'S ANALYTICAL THINKING.

JIM WILL TELL YOU THAT ALL THESE JOBS CAME AT A TIME WHEN THERE WAS A DEFINITE ECONOMIC NEED AND IT WAS NEVER BY LUCK. HE CONSIDERS THAT EACH JOB CAME BY DIVINE APPOINTMENT. JIM ALSO SAYS, "GOD IS IN CHARGE OF MY LIFE". AND, THAT'S HOW HE LIVES.

Sir Larry Sitzman

HAVE A GREAT AND WONDERFUL MAY MEN!

