

Tuesday, April 18, 2017

Chairman Pedro Nava,

Thank you for your time reading this letter.

What is a Veteran?

A "Veteran" - whether active duty, discharged, retired, POW, MIA, or reserve - is someone who, at one point in his life, wrote a check made payable to the "United States of America", for an amount of "up to, and including his life. Anonymous author

"That is honor, and there are way too many people in this country today, who no longer understand that fact." From the website of The Museum of the American Military Experience

Yountville Veterans Home:

Some Veterans have responded to the Little Hoover Commission Report dated March 2017. I am representing many of these same Veterans at our Home who wish to remain anonymous until they feel assured that they are safe from retaliation. Many would like to address these "issues" directly with CalVet management. We want to address some of the background issues that the Commission report identifies. Such as an analysis of present day conditions of the quality of life for the Veterans and our perspective on looking forward and reimagining the future of the campus at Yountville. In reviewing the Little Hoover Commission Report dated March 2017 and other reports dated December 2015 and 2013 we ask the following question: "How many studies, reviews, reports, commissions and recommendations, over how many more years, must it take before positive action and substantial improvements are made for the well being and quality of life of the veteran at Yountville?"

All of the reports that we have read seem to substantiate the fact that previous Yountville and CalVet administrations have failed time and again and continue to fail today.

The following examples are significant and reflect on the present day lack of quality care and the endangerment of the Veterans at Yountville.

MAINTENANCE:

Deferred maintenance is the rule rather than the exception.

ELEVATOR(S) IN THE HOSPITAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

In Chairman Nava's letter to the Governor and others dated December 8, 2015 he stated the following: "On the day the Commissionors visit, only one of the five elevators in the N.M. Holderman building - a multi-story skilled nursing facility housing 230 Veterans - was functional." According to residents, the elevators have been broken for many months. It is unconscionable that Veterans who have served our nation and now require wheelchairs, scooters and walkers for mobility, are seemingly trapped indoors waiting for the sole functioning elevator while state bureaucracy fails to move on timely repairs. It is our understanding that the department is now addressing this issue, but the length of time required for action reflects a systemic issue with facility management.

I visited the two elevators in the doctors' and nurses' offices near the lobby of the Holderman entrance in April 2017 and found one taped up and out of order. I asked a nurse whose workstation is about 15 feet away from the downed elevator how long has it been inoperable. She thought for a moment and said, "Well, I have been here close to eight years and you can say that it has been down for seven plus years at least". She went on to say, "There were men working on the elevator earlier in 2017, but they went away".

Elevator malfunctions occur almost weekly in many of the residential buildings and some can go unrepaired for weeks at a time. Veterans who are confined to or rely heavily upon their wheelchairs, scooters and walkers are greatly affected by these malfunctions.

NEGLECT

In March 2017, a 98 year old veteran, winner of the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) for more than 30 bombing and strafing missions over China in World War II, came to the Deputy veteran on duty in his building. The veteran requested help to get heat in his room. He was wearing three layers of clothing because the temporary foot heater placed in his room broke down during the night. The Deputy went to the Veterans' room and found it very cold and uncomfortable and confirmed that the heater did not work. The veteran told the Deputy that he was afraid to complain for fear that he might be punished in some way and lose his single room that he had just achieved last month with the movement of his roommate to another room. His former roommate is 88 years old and a combat veteran as well.

A work order to fix the AC and Heating in the Veterans' room has been **in place for over one year. The Administration, Section Leaders and Plant Ops management have been aware of this work order and the condition of the room but still allow it to be occupied.

SOLUTION: Due to his advanced age and the extreme changes in temperature, management, should have relocated the veteran to a comfortable room and not allowed the occupancy of the room by anyone until all was repaired. **Currently**, the veteran is still in the same room using another foot heater supplied by staff. It is believed that the portable heaters currently in use are dangerous and are not compliant with fire codes and are against home regulations.

In March 2017, a 94 year old veteran recently transferred to a new single room. He complained to the Deputy veteran on duty that his bed was assembled too high and that he could not sleep in it for fear of falling and not being able to get up. He therefore spent the previous night sleeping in his chair next to

his bed and was very tired and upset in the morning. The Deputy called Plant Ops for help but Plant Ops never responded. The Deputy then found another veteran resident and they were able to find a tool and lower the bed to a safe height for the 94 year old veteran. This veteran also indicated that he didn't want to complain for fear of losing his room or getting in trouble.

SOLUTION: Administrative staff should oversee the transfer of Veterans to rooms and inspect these rooms to insure the comfort, safety and usability of the room before turning it over to the veteran.

There are many examples like the two above and I have only highlighted these two because of the advanced ages of these Veterans to demonstrate the failure of the administration to prevent these occurrences either out of incompetence, neglect or lack of common sense.

It is truly heartbreaking to hear a warrior of the "**Greatest Generation**" **express fear about his living conditions after all that he has done for his country.**

FEAR:

Fear of the administration, staff and section leaders is prevalent with many Veterans of all ages at the Yountville campus. Many fear being kicked out or punished over complaining about living conditions, pointing out wrong doing, fee problems and the reporting of mistreatment of fellow Veterans. It is both disgraceful and unconscionable that any veteran, especially an elder veteran, to have any fear of administration member's comments, decisions or policies that threaten his living quarters, living conditions or well-being.

When Veterans from the Yountville Home travel to Palo Alto VA, San Francisco VA , Queen of the Valley Hospital in Napa, St Helena Hospital in St Helena for special or extensive medical care they are treated with respect and dignity by all of the employees of these facilities indicating strong leadership there and a healthy work ethic. When they return home to the Yountville campus the treatment by employees is not the same and can be inappropriate.

Professional leadership from the administration and staff must return to this facility.

Morale is very low for many Veterans who live here.

DANGEROUS CONDITIONS - RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

One of the largest residential buildings with a population over 100 Veterans is an example of major concerns for the safety and well being of the resident veteran. Many of the other veteran residents have the same conditions.

This building has forty-four members living on the 1st Floor, Fifty members on the 2nd Floor and 11 members live in the basement.

On the **1st Floor** the age breakdown is as follows:

95 and above = 4

90 to 94 = 3

85 to 89 = 8 (3 members at 89)

80 to 84 = 8

75 to 79 = 6

70 to 74 = 10

65 to 69 = 4

57 = 1

On the **2nd Floor** the age breakdown is as follows:

95 and above = 1 (**one member turning 100 next month**)

90 to 94 = 4

85 to 89 = 6 (1 member at 89 and 1 member at 88)

80 to 84 = 4

75 to 79 = 12 (3 members at 79, and 1 on 24 hour oxygen)

70 to 74 = 9 (1 member on 24 hour oxygen)

65 to 69 = 7

60 to 64 = 4

55 to 60 = 3

In **the basement** the age breakdown is as follows:

90 and above = 1

80 to 89 = 1 (87)

75 to 79 = 2

70 to 74 = 5

65 to 69 = 2

1st Floor: There are twelve activity rooms supporting the Veterans' needs. A Section Office, Ladies and Men's restrooms, showers, kitchen and laundry rooms, TV and reading rooms. All of these rooms do not have cranks to open the windows and all of the windows are either sealed shut or have bars that make it impossible for Veterans to escape in case of fire or earthquake.

2nd Floor: In Case of fire, there are but three escape paths. All require the veteran to use concrete stairways that prevent wheel chair or scooter bound Veterans from escaping. Many of the Veterans use their scooters to get around and they rely every day on the two elevators at the extreme ends of the building. These elevators are posted "Do not use in case of Fire" and Veterans are told to not use them in case of a fire or an earthquake event.

According to the US Geological database, Yountville, California has a very high earthquake risk, with a total of 1,240 earthquakes since 1931. The database shows that there is a 95.86% chance of a major earthquake within 30 miles of Yountville, California within the next 50 years. The largest earthquake within 30 miles of Yountville was a 6.0 in September of 2014.

Fire and fire caused by an earthquake are the real threat to the Veterans at Yountville and no one is prepared. **(A retired fire Chief has informed me that smoke is the greatist danger and that people succumb to the smoke long before the flames arrive at their location.)**

It would seem logical to have fire drills from time to time:

- 1) Without notice to Veterans or staff
- 2) With elevators turned off
- 3) With training in the use and location of Fire Extinguishers

COMMON SENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) No one 75 years and older should live on the second floor of a residential building.

(a 100 year old veteran should definitely not be living on the second floor)

2) No one limited to the use of a walker, wheelchair or scooter should live on the second floor of any resident building *** each individual owning or using a walker, wheelchair, or scooter must be able to demonstate, in monthly fire drills, that they can negotialte the stairs nearest their rooms down to the first floor and out of the building independent of any help or aid of any kind

3) No one requiring oxygen should live on the second floor of any building

4) All section leaders and deputies must be trained on a monthly basis to know the escape procedures and how to lead resident Veterans to safety

5) All windows on the 1st Floor of every building must be made to open with ease to insure possible escape routes during emergencies.

6) The local Napa county firefighters suggest that the Deputy and Section Leader in each resident building have a designated person to be trained to wear an **orange vest** indicating to the first responding fire fighters that they are the person with information on the building. The wearer of the **orange vest** would have a roster of names and locations of the veteran residents, a floor plan of every floor and basement of the building to provide to the first responders. The wearer of the **orange vest** would also be capable of organizing a roll call of residents escaping to a designated area in order to inform the firefighters of anyone still missing in the building.

SECTION LEADERS

The Section Leader is the state employee working closely with the veteran resident. They are responsible for the operation and safety of the resident building. The Section Leaders' job description includes the following:

"Provide in person orientation to new Home members assigned to the residential care unit regarding the programs, services and codes of conduct for the Veterans' Home and Medical Center; counsel and assist geriatric residents during periods of readjustments, depression, crisis, anxiety and regression; counsel geriatric members with alcohol related problems; enforce rules, regulations, policies and security measures of the Program; identify and assist Home members with potential problems; provide referral services; monitor the status of referrals; participate in training concerning treatment planning for geriatric and younger members; act as liaison for medical and dental appointments and personal and social activities; collect and collate data and prepare reports; train and supervise Home member-employees in custodial duties and clerical tasks. Supervise in a residential care unit, provide assistance in all phases of the Residential Care Service at the Veterans' Home and Medical Center. Supervises and assists in the daily living activities of the geriatric residents; organizes and manages custodial duties and clerical tasks. Identify specific needs in order to interpret, apply and explain the provisions, rules, regulations and policies pertaining to the home."

Many of the Section Leaders are very professional, with extensive experience, and they interact well with the veteran resident. A few of the Section Leaders are in need of more training or re-training to learn how to interact with the veteran resident. (ie. a Section Leader must not resort to a shouting match with any veteran and such an act with a veteran suffering from PTSD, should be cause for dismissal.)

Most Section Leaders are responsible for one or two residential buildings during the week when some of the staff is ill or absent. On the weekends it is **common** for a Section Leader to be responsible for as many as 9 residential buildings per work shift.

Being responsible for as many as 9 residential buildings is a work load that no one person can perform well or adequately.

It is unfair and irresponsible to over-tax the Section Leader with this much responsibility and work load. At the same time, these conditions are not providing the veteran resident with the proper care and safety environment.

DEPUTY VETERAN

The Deputy veteran on duty is the first line of safety and response for the veteran resident. His role is critical in that he is the first to alert residents of fire, smoke or other emergencies. He is the first to contact security and emergency help for a veteran in physical or mental distress.

Not all of the night shifts are covered by the Deputy Program, leaving veteran residents vulnerable and the building unsafe.

SOLUTION

The Administration must maintain a full compliment of Section Leaders and Deputy Veterans to cover all three work shifts in all veteran resident buildings.

Resident buildings were constructed in the following order:

BUILDINGS	DATE OF COMPLETION
Abraham Lincoln (Section A)	February 2, 1929
Woodrow Wilson (Section C)	January 13, 1931
William McKinley (Section B)	November 13, 1931
Theodore Roosevelt (Section D)	May 21, 1939
George Washington (Section E)	June 6, 1941
Franklin Roosevelt (Annex I)	June 19, 1944
Harry Truman (Section F)	September 27, 1950
John Kennedy (Section H)	September 2, 1952
James Madison (Section G)	August 23, 1953
Dwight Eisenhower (Annex II)	April 18, 1955
Lyndon Johnson (Section J)	January 12, 1971

James Polk (Section K)	July 22, 1977
Thomas Jefferson (Section L)	August 4, 1978
Nelson Holderman Hospital	1933
East Wing	1948
West Wing	1953
C.M. Medical Center	1962

In Mr Nava's "Letter from the Chair", March 2, 2017, he challenges readers to "reimagine the types of programs and services available to Veterans". We have taken his challenge a few steps further and "reimagined" how the entire 615 acre campus should be reconfigured, reconstructed and developed to meet the current needs of all of the Veterans living there now and for future Veterans considering their needs that might differ in some respect than Veterans of previous wars.

On 10 acres of Oak-covered hills in the northwest corner of the Veterans campus is the Home's cemetery where close to 5,700 Veterans are buried.

Earliest tombstones start with Veterans of the Indian Wars 1835 - 1842, Mexican War 1846 - 1848, and the Civil War 1861 - 1865. Veterans of the Spanish American War 1898, the Philippine Insurrection 1899 - 1902, the Boxer Rebellion 1900 - 1901, the First World War 1917 - 1918, the Second World War 1941 - 1945, the Korean War 1950 - 1954, and the Vietnam War 1962 - 1975 are also buried there.

Congressional Medal of Honor recipients Joseph Leonard, John Moriaty, and Julius Strickoffer are buried among the Veterans.

There are even a few Confederate Army Veterans buried in the cemetery.

The Veterans' Cemetery at Yountville is **sacred ground** to all Veterans as is Arlington National Cemetery and it should be regarded as a national monument to the Veterans of all the wars that the Veterans fought in over the last 182 years.

The cemetery should be promoted to the general public through an educational process and visited by many as a historical location.

One young American, Thomas Alas age 16, a junior at Vintage High School in Napa is earning his Eagle Scout credentials by building benches and flag holders at the cemetery.

In the article included, Thomas states "So I wanted to make sure every veteran is honored properly, because **to me it's sacred up there.**"

The Yountville Veterans' agree with Thomas - they believe **it is sacred up there** as well!

Every month Veterans from the Yountville Veterans Home are buried there, sometimes alongside their spouse.

Thomas hopes to become a Navy Seal.

The entire 615 acre campus should be promoted to the general public and developed in a way that integrates the campus with the local community.

The Palo Alto Veterans Hospital and Administration is an excellent model to follow for Yountville.

With their collaboration with the Stanford Medical School medical students attend the Palo Alto VA hospital and are included in the doctor's daily rounds to the veteran patients and as interns learning their new skills along side of exceptional physicians.

Yountville can promote the same excellent collaboration. The Yountville Veteran campus could be integrated with the Yountville local community and blend well with residential and commercial development as Palo Alto has accomplished in the last decade.

Post - Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Treatment Center

The Yountville campus could be a center for treatment of Veterans suffering from many types of health conditions.

In an April 2017 editorial, the Napa Valley Register reports that the 11,000 Veterans in the Napa County do not have a local installation to go to for care and treatment and must travel out of the area for service. The Yountville campus could be developed into a great treatment center for those Veterans and more. PTSD is one mental health problem that many Veterans who served in a combat zone suffer from and there is no known cure. Yet PTSD can be treated and Veterans may learn to cope and live with this health condition. Many World War II and present day war Veterans suffer from the mental health problem and a significant number of veteran suicides are attributed to suffering from PTSD. The Yountville campus could be an excellent treatment center for treating the Veterans suffering from PTSD.

Current veteran resident buildings should be reconstructed as single level buildings with the same profile as the administration building, the Eisenhower building, the Franklin Roosevelt building and others. Single level buildings eliminate the constant problems and safety of elevators, remove the danger of housing elderly patients on a second floor, and reduce exposure to fire and earthquake events.

The marketing and educating of the general public of the 615 acre campus could include an approach to many significant high-tech companies in Silicon Valley. We should encourage them to "adopt" residential buildings and the hospital, to bring these facilities up to modern day standards and safety conditions. The newly reconstructed buildings should have the most advanced technology built in such as life-alert systems in each room, internet access, emergency protective equipment and systems.

Participating companies should be allowed to promote their participation by adding their company logos to the buildings and receive federal and state tax benefits and incentives for their generosity.

Many of the major Silicon Valley companies are already significant contractors to the federal and state governments promoting their technology offerings and services and competing for major, long-term contracts. Properly approached, many of the Silicon Valley companies will be pleased to participate in a redevelopment program of the Yountville campus.

CONCLUSION

As a very young Army officer returning home from the Vietnam War, I witnessed Veterans of the war receiving insults and being disrespected for having served their country in time of war. Some of my fellow officers use to share a certain poem to better understand the attitude and treatment that we were receiving from members of the public:

"In time of war and not before, GOD and the Soldier we adore. But in times of peace and all things righted, GOD is forgotten and the Soldier **slighted**". by Rudyard Kipling

Thankfully, the American soldier returning from war today is respected and thanked for his or her service by many in the public. Hopefully, the American soldier will never be **slighted** by the public again for service to his or her country.

In our response letter we have only addressed the conditions and possible remedies for the Yountville Veterans' campus. We believe that Yountville should be considered differently from any other of the Veteran homes in California due to its unique history, legacy, size of campus, mission and future remedy possibilities in support of Veterans.

A historic review of the Yountville campus highlights that Veterans founded the campus by raising funds in San Francisco in 1881. The Veterans used the funds they raised to purchase the original 910 acres for \$17,500 in October 1882.

The Veterans sold the campus to the state of California for one 20 - dollar goldpiece. (It is interesting to note that some current real estate estimates of today's six hundred and ten acres may show a value far above \$2 billion) There were 800 members in 1900 when the state took control. Nearly all of the original organizational documents of the home were lost in 1906 when the San Francisco office of the Veteran's Home Association were destroyed in the earthquake and fire that devastated the city.

Colonel Holderman, one of the most highly decorated soldiers of World War I (a Medal of Honor recipient) commanded the Yountville campus from 1926 to 1953 and built a 500 bed hospital that was very needed for the Veterans.

In the 1970s the home faced a major financial crisis and the state legislature approved a \$100 million renovation.

The Little Hoover Commission Report has outlined the financial condition and problems for the Yountville campus looking forward in their most recent report.

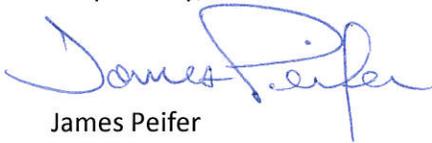
Since it has been a major struggle for the state to maintain and improve upon the conditions of Yountville it may be a wise and serious consideration to turn the entire campus over to the Federal Veterans Administration (as the original veteran founders once did to the state for a 20 dollar gold piece) to operate and sustain for current and future Veterans with the Palo Alto location as a model for development.

If the state is determined to maintain operational control of Yountville and look to develop the campus moving forward then it would be necessary to immediately fix and upgrade the safety conditions of the residential buildings. It would also be necessary to suspend the addition of any new Veterans until living conditions of the residential buildings are resolved and upgraded to modern, proper, living standards.

The state should create a "**development team**" of Veterans, top CalVet management and experienced business members to make the approach to Silicon Valley companies in pursuit of their help to raise financial support to renovate and develop the entire Yountville campus for current and future Veterans.

Many of your Veterans look forward to meeting with you and the members of the Little Hoover Commission to resolve these significant issues sometime in the near future.

Respectfully,



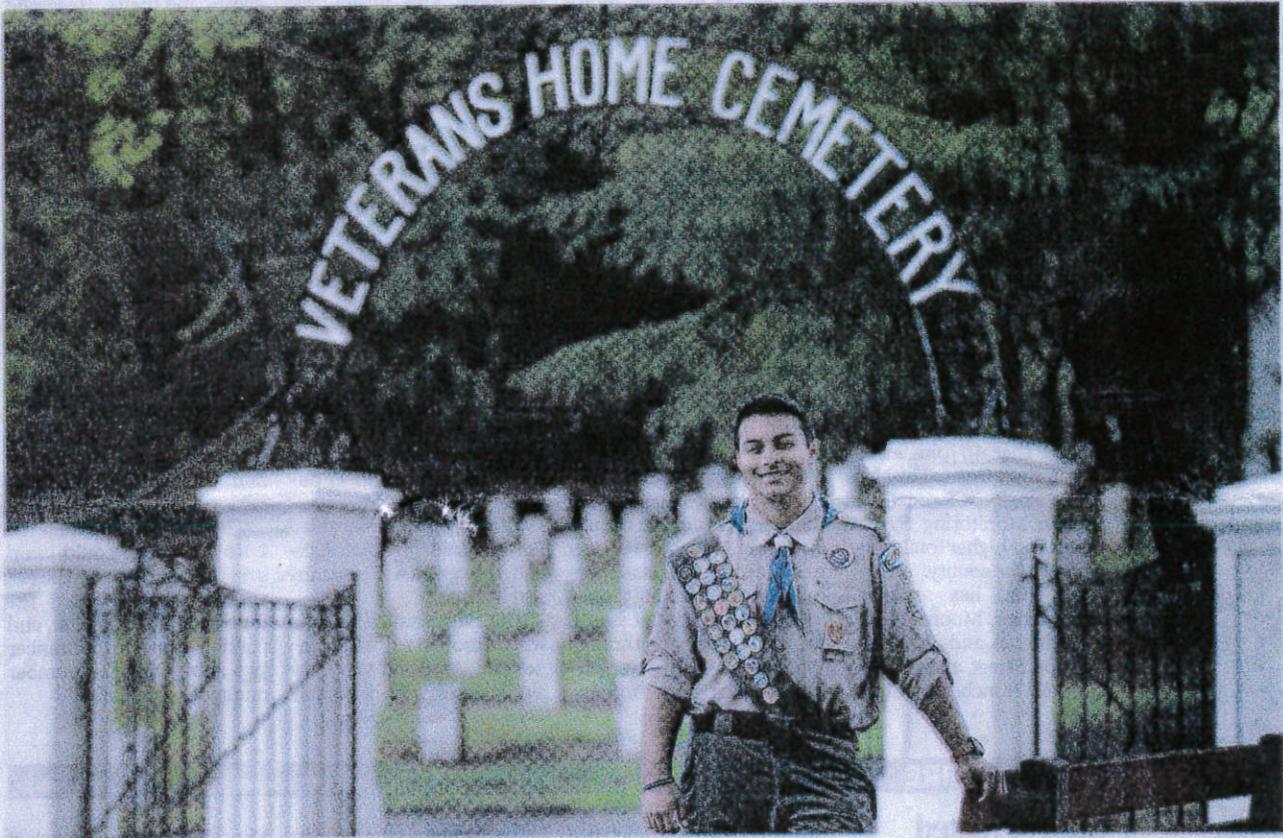
James Peifer

cc: Dr. Vito Imbasciani

Little Hoover Commission Report Members

James Peifer: I am a veteran Army combat officer of the Vietnam War. I served as a MACV Mobile Advisor Team Leader in III Corps in Vietnam. I commanded Mobile Advisor Team 57 leading the South Vietnamese Popular Forces against the enemy. We fought the Viet Cong many times in 1968 and the North Vietnamese Army in a significant battle in May 1969. I finished my service as a Captain in the Army Reserves. I have come to live at the Yountville Veterans Home because of heart disease. In March 2017 I received my seventh heart artery "stent" at St Helena hospital. Doctors' believe that some of my heart disease may have been due to exposure to Agent Orange spraying in Vietnam.

March 2017



J.L. SOUSA, REGISTER

Boy Scout Tomas Alas has chosen as his Eagle Scout project, installing four benches at the Veterans Home of California at Yountville Cemetery and replacing more than 500 headstone flag holders.

Scout will upgrade cemetery

Benches, flag holders to make Vets Home site more welcoming

HOWARD YUNE
hyune@napanews.com

Lest people forget about those laid to rest outside the Veterans Home of California, a Napa teenager is leading an effort to make the Yountville cemetery more welcoming to visitors – especially those who decorate the graves.

Tomas Alas, a 16-year-old junior at Vintage High School, has regularly visited the burial ground with family members during the last decade, joining them in planting flags by gravestones for Memorial Day and Veterans Day. But the thought germinated over the past two years that the cemetery needed to be more welcoming to those coming by to pay their respects.

"I'd see that some veterans didn't have a place where they could relax, or kids would have

trouble pushing flags into the ground with all the broken flag holders," he recalled Monday. "So I wanted to make sure every veteran is honored properly, because to me it's sacred up there."

That desire has crystallized into a project Alas, a member of Napa's Boy Scout Troop 83, is leading on behalf of the Veterans Memorial Grove Cemetery as part of a campaign for Eagle Scout recognition.

With support from the Boy Scouts and the state Depart-

ment of Veterans Affairs, Alas is overseeing a donation drive to pay for new flag holders at more than 500 headstones near the Veterans Home, which took in its first ex-soldiers in 1884, less than two decades after the Civil War ended.

Other funds will be used to acquire four benches of powder-coated steel, which will be installed at locations with the best views on the burial grounds.

Please see SCOUT, Page A2

Scout

From A1

"He's been a shining example for what young adults can do in looking to the future and to the past," said Joshua Kiser, spokesman for the Veterans Home. "I think he's brought together the community as well as veterans. He's done this all on his own; we've helped where we can but he's a very driven young man."

Collections began in January and already have surpassed Alas' original \$5,000 goal, although the Boy Scout will accept donations through April 1 and reserve the surplus for sprinklers, maintenance and other cemetery needs.

Alas will then oversee a

team of volunteers - which may include relatives, schoolmates, other Scouts and up to four adults - during installation work later this spring, according to Dave Gruening, scoutmaster of Troop 83 at St. John's Lutheran School. Completion is planned before the Veterans Home's Memorial Day weekend observance during the final weekend of May, with much of the work possibly being done during a week-long school vacation in mid-April, said Kiser. Afterward, a panel of Scouting leaders will review the project and decide whether to name Alas an Eagle Scout, a distinction Gruening said is given to only 4 percent of boys entering the movement.

"Tomas is a little bit more

mature than some of them, but after all the years I've been working with youth, it still amazes me how they come up with ideas to benefit the community," he said. "It gives me more faith in Scouting as a whole, and at his age, Tomas already epitomizes what an Eagle Scout is."

Alas, the nephew and great-grandson of service members, hopes to enlist in the Navy and become a SEAL after completing college. But the motivation for improving Napa County's cemetery for veterans, he said, is already close at hand - as close as the Veterans Home resident who once approached him as he was planting another flag at another marker.

"He made sure that I put a

How to donate

Donations by check to Tomas Alas' Eagle Scout project to improve the Veterans Memorial Grove Cemetery can be made payable to the law office of John E. Carelli, 1610 West St. (Suite 4), Redding, CA 96001. Contributions will be accepted through Saturday.

Donors must write "Memorial Grove Cemetery" on the memo line of the check.

For more information, contact Alas at 707-224-1717 or tsurvivor@att.net

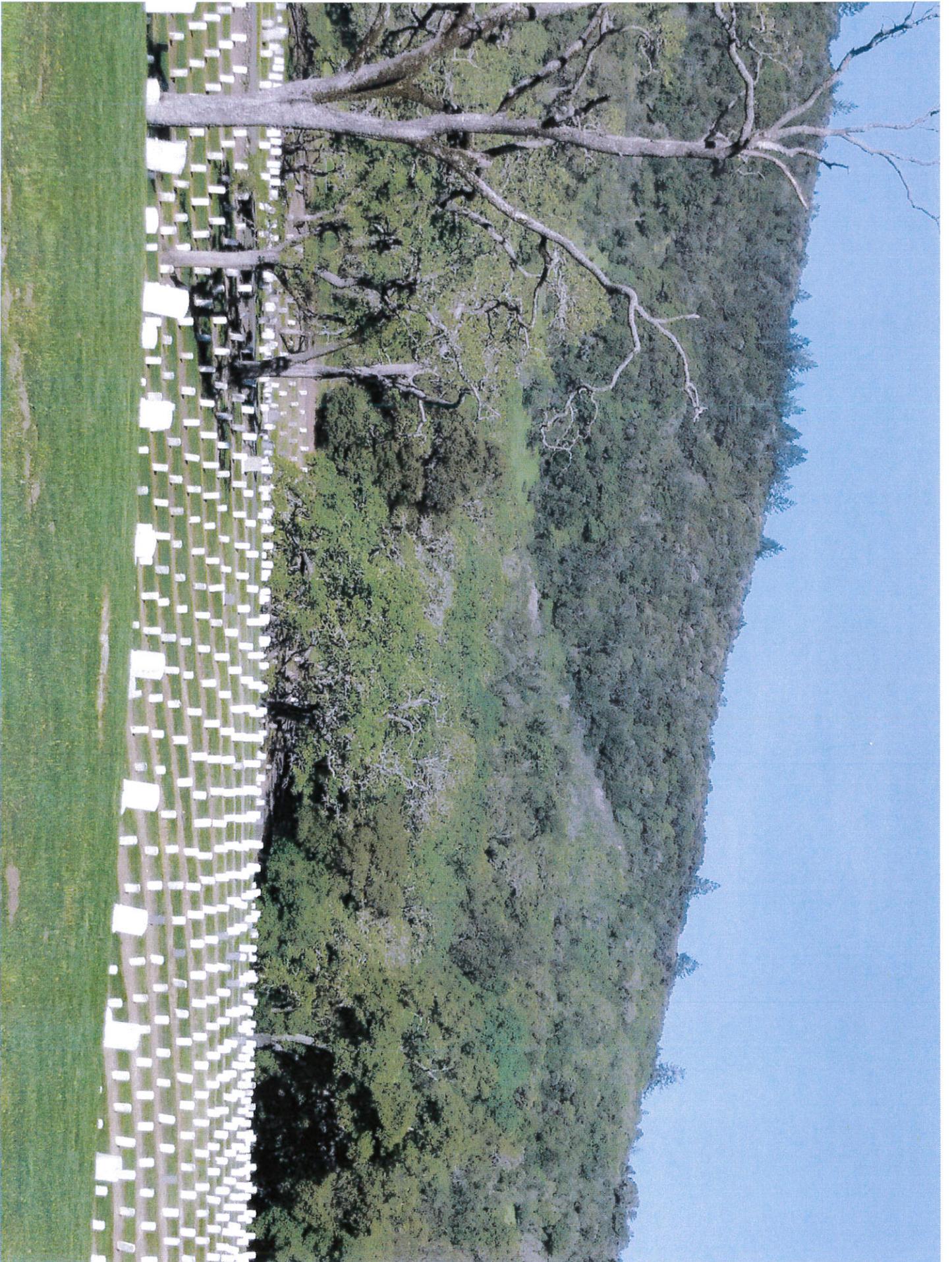
flag on one specific marker," he said, "because (that man) was a friend and they'd been in combat together."

THIS MONUMENT
COMMEMORATES THE HEROIC
DEEDS OF THOSE WHO
SLEEP HERE.

ON FAMES' ETERNAL CAMPING GROUND
THEIR SILENT TENTS ARE SPREAD
AND GLOBY GUARDS WITH SOLEMN ROUND
THE BIVOUAC OF THE DEAD.

1861 1865
TO PRESERVE OUR UNION

SUMMER
TO
APPROXIMATE



IN MEMORY OF THE
UNKNOWN SOLDIERS
OF ALL WARS
KNOWN BUT TO GOD



May 1, 2017

Chairman Pedro Nava,

Thank you for your time reading this letter.

"Integrity has no need for Rules" - Albert Camus

Yountville Veterans Home:

After sending you my last report, dated 4-18-17, (copied to Dr Imbasciani, Congressman Mike Thompson, and members of Board of the Little Hoover Commission) many Veterans and a number of State Employees working at the Yountville campus have come to me with information on serious subject matters related to the campus.

These subject matters are as disturbing as the issues that I detailed in my previous letter. The Veterans and State Employees have asked to remain anonymous at this time due to their fear of retaliation. These people are more than willing to speak to you and the board once assured of their safety. They will also speak to any leader capable and willing to make significant and positive changes.

As I transitioned from a position as a Forward Observer with the 199th Light Infantry Brigade to command MACV Mobile Advisor Team 57 I filled in as an aide to General Fredric Ellis Davison who commanded the 199th. General Davison's regular assigned aide was away on R&R.

General Davison was a leader who told his men what needed to be accomplished and he expected it to be accomplished. When there were racial tensions in one of his battalions he helicoptered in and gathered all the men around him. He told them that his rule was that the only color he recognized in the Army was O.D. Army Green. He said that, "if any soldier violated his rule they would be dealt with swiftly". After that meeting we never heard of any racial trouble or incidents in the 199th.

General Davison was always counseling young officers about leadership. He said that a leader only ate after his men were well fed. He said that a leader never rested until he was sure his men were well equipped to go out on the next mission and that a leader never slept until he was sure that his men were safe and well protected.

General Davison would be appalled to have found out about the living conditions of the Veterans at the Yountville Campus.

(See General Davison's picture attached)

YOUNTVILLE LEADERSHIP

All levels of Leadership at the Veterans Home seem to have gone AWOL.

Missing are:

1. Leaders that respect Veterans.

2. Leadership that insures Veteran protection from fear of the Administration and/or staff.
3. Leadership that welcomes recommendations, suggestions, and complaints of any kind.
4. Leaders that are personally involved with the infrastructure problems, and walk the entire facility monthly, introducing themselves to Veterans while identifying and solving problems.
5. Leaders that personally monitor all work orders on a daily basis.
6. Leadership that will **repopulate** the residential buildings taking care to place the oldest and the most physically challenged Veterans on the first floor and in a practical and common sense manner.
7. Leaders that ask for and sometimes demand help and support from the management at the State Level to improve living conditions and quality of life for the Veterans at Yountville.

The following examples of deplorable events would never have happened if qualified, strong, competent, and professional leaders had been managing the campus:

Air conditioning in a Yountville Administrators' home on campus broke down and was repaired in one day, yet, a 98 year old Hero of World War II has been without air conditioning and heat for almost two years.

(By the way) I am Happy to inform you the above Veteran finally got his heating and air conditioning fixed after almost a two year wait and coincidentally 9 days after I sent you my April 18th letter.

2. **A state employee family** living on campus was forced to vacate their home in favor of an Administrator's extended family member who has now occupied the home.
3. **In March a Veteran suffered a heart attack** at the Home Dining Hall. When a medical team arrived from the Holderman Hospital they tried to revive the Veteran using Defibrillator Paddles. The batteries with the Defibrillator Paddles had not been charged and therefore the medical team could not revive the Veteran with the Paddles. They revived the Veteran with CPR procedures and he was taken to Queen of the Valley Hospital. The Veteran died a short time later.
Veterans and State Employees witnessing the event and seeing the failure of the the Defibrillator due to uncharged batteries were very upset. They realize that - "It could have been me!" As far as I know the Veteran's family has not been informed about the failure of the Defibrillator Paddles.
4. **Worker's, including maintenance engineers,** repeatedly are reported for sleeping on duty at Holderman Hospital.
5. **There is no Contingency Program** in place to order backup equipment and parts to avoid excess down time of equipment and operating systems.

6. The current Ordering and Purchasing System takes too long to make purchasing commitments and is not allowed to purchase directly from key manufacturers. This antiquated system keeps the middle-man in the purchasing program, increases the purchase price, and promotes delays in the delivery of critical parts and components.

7. Abuse of overtime is "out of control" at the Yountville campus. There is no competent supervision of the overtime policy. Recently, **two workers on overtime** left the Yountville campus to have dinner at the Red Hen restaurant in Napa. They spent a lot of their overtime eating and socializing at the restaurant. A Yountville supervisor was attending a party at the same restaurant and reported the behavior of the workers to their supervisor. No disciplinary action was taken with the workers who had blatantly abused the overtime program.

8. Managers and supervisors at the Yountville campus fail to enforce basic policy and rules of employment and accountability.

9. Refrigeration equipment in the Dining Hall is not being properly serviced and maintained.

10. Very expensive kitchen equipment had been purchased, long ago, and has never been utilized. A Cook chill line was purchased for \$750,000 and never used. A Blast Chiller for the Diet Kitchen costing \$55,000 has never been connected.

YOUNTVILLE BOILER SYSTEM

The Boiler System at the Yountville Campus is one of the most critical operations, running 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

The Boiler System is rife with flaws and problems that are preventing an efficient and safe supply of steam for the Campus. The Veterans at the home, especially the Navy Veterans, are extremely knowledgeable of boiler systems. These Veterans have first hand knowledge of these systems and they know how the systems should be maintained and operated safely. Many of these Veterans could easily maintain a system such as required at Yountville.

The following lists major concerns for everyone to be aware of who live at the Yountville Campus:

- 1) There is **No Operation Manual** in the Boiler Room.
- 2) There is **No TOXIC CHEMICAL PROTECTION** - it is required to have a functioning eye wash and shower for the safety of the maintenance engineers working with the very toxic chemicals needed to treat the boiler system.
- 3) There is **No Current Maintenance Protocol** and periodic maintenance logs. Manuals and records that are essential to avoid harm to the operators have not been updated since 2004. (old records do show that these necessary records were kept and existed back in 2004)

WITHOUT PROPER CONTROLS

Without the proper controls and maintenance procedures the boiler system and operation has become a major health risk for all humans living and working at the Veterans Campus and also to the aquatic life at Yountville.

The following explains the risk:

Condensate is almost 100% pure water and pure water is one of the most corrosive elements on the planet, especially when it comes in contact with steel and starts to cool. Steam leaves the boiler through piping to transfer heat to a heat exchanger or steam jacket. When the steam condenses in the pipe it is called condensate. The problem is CO₂. When water cools, carbon dioxide (CO₂) easily dissolves in it. At the right pH, it starts to form carbonic acid and carbonic acid eats through steel.

Keeping the pH in the pipes within acceptable ranges is extremely important to boiler operation.

Three steps are important:

- 1) The system needs to be checked for leaks and failed steam traps.
- 2) The pipes and condensate receivers need to be properly insulated.
- 3) The steam needs to be **treated chemically with a condensate treatment.**

The most common types of condensate treatments are **Amines.**

Neutralizing amines are used in boiler water treatment to control condensate return to line corrosion.

Most amines are designed to work synergistically with oxygen scavenging, dispersion and other boiler treatment compounds, but **the right mix of these chemistries and their proper administration should always be handled by an experienced Water Treatment Expert.**

Monoethanolamine (MEA), piperazine, aminomethopropanol (AMP) and methyldiethanolamine (MDEA) are relevant compounds for the capture of CO₂ in gas-fired power stations.

MEA and piperazine have been used in various industries and may represent a significant potential threat to human exposure.

Toxicity of the amines from single and repeated exposures include their potential to cause mutations, tumors and birth defects.

Condensate water is Leaking into the ground all over the Yountville Campus and contaminated steam water is escaping into the air.

Incredibly the Boiler System is leaking more than 2000 gallons of water per hour. This waste water is endangering the Home's Veterans due to this major health risk. The Leaching of the boiler chemicals into the ground water is contaminating and harming aquatic life.

Below the Woodrow Wilson Building(C), we found an open trench, fed by a large pipe that ends near the parking lot. This trench carries this Boiler system water from the pipe to the stream below. This water, when mixed with the stream water, seems to cloud up and a Veteran remarked that there used to be cray fish in this pond. This water seems to be headed to the Town of Yountville.

A Veteran and I viewed the leaking boiler system through the maintenance window at the Lyndon Johnson Building (J) last week and he took pictures. Please find the leaking water in the picture provided. This picture is from the window in the maintenance room at the back of the building and the contaminated steam being released through a fan in the window. We welcome you and your staff to visit these locations and view them for yourselves. (See enclosed pictures)

Yountville needs energized, pro-active, and responsible real leaders to manage operations, modernize living conditions for the Veterans, develop a central treatment center for state-wide Veterans and lead the future integration of the Yountville Campus with the local community.

The Yountville Veterans Home is not the place for the State to send any more of their tired, worn-out, retiring employees to finish out their careers managing the campus.

With this second letter to you, and all who have been copied, we are seeking to meet with the appropriate authorities who may be authorized to respond to our concerns, recommendations and demands.

If you are not the proper authorities for us to work with please let me know and we will move on to seek resolution from other government authorities and organizations.

Please respond to me by May 16, 2017 so that I may know how to proceed.

Respectfully,



James Peifer

408-206-8550

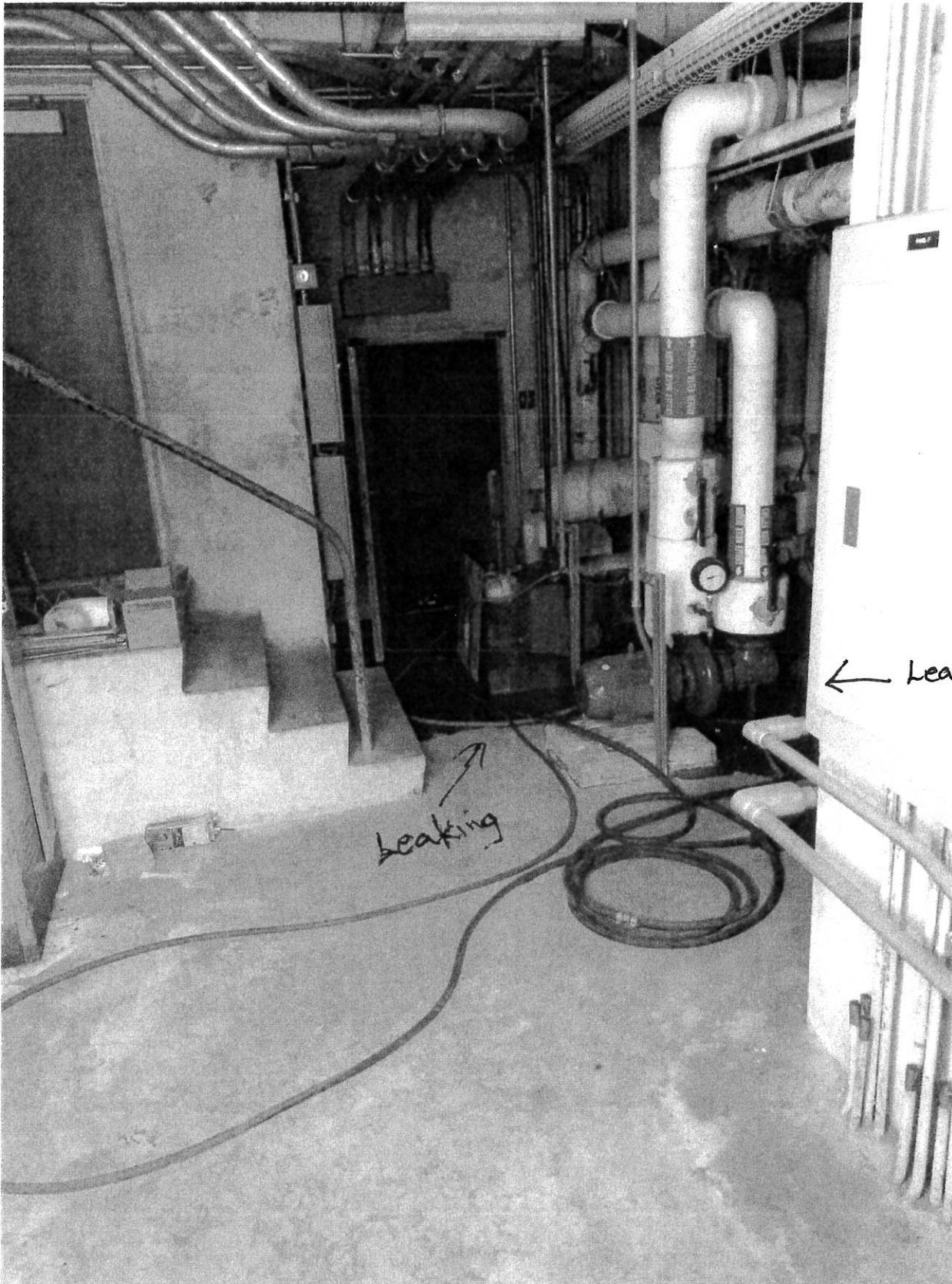
jvpeifer@yahoo.com

cc: Dr Vito Imbasciani

Congressman Mike Thompson - Fifth District, California

Members of the Board of the Little Hoover Commission

Building J



Building J



FAN
Blowing OUT
Contaminated
Air

Building C



8 Open Trench fed by a
large pipe that ends
Near the Parking Lot of 'C'

1968



↗
General Creighton
Abrams
Commanding General
Vietnam

↑
General Fredric
Davison
199th Light Infantry
Brigade

