

El Dorado County
Veterans Monument
Memorial Day Ceremony

May 29, 2023
11:00 a.m.



2023 MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

is hosted by

El Dorado County Veterans Alliance

Friends of the El Dorado County Veterans Monument, Placerville.

*“To honor and remember all who served
and made the ultimate sacrifice”.*

11:00 CALL TO ORDER: OIC/Sgt. at Arms

PRESENT COLORS: CAP Squadron 85 Color Guard

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

NATIONAL ANTHEM: Ponderosa High School Chamber Choir

FLYOVER: Flight of WWII era T-6 "Texan" Warbirds. Flight leader Chuck Wahl

INVOCATION: Chaplain Lt. Colonel Tim Thompson, USAR (Ret.)

MASTER OF CEREMONIES: LCDR Peter Wolfe, USCGR (Ret.)

CHORUS: Service Anthems, Ponderosa High School Chamber Choir

PROCLAMATIONS:

State of California: Cal Vet Deputy Secretary of Communications
Lindsey Sin

El Dorado County: District Two Supervisor George Turnboo

City of Placerville: Mayor Michael Saragosa

PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS: Janet Buchanan

GUEST SPEAKER: Major Drew Dela Cruz, USAF DFC

SPECIAL MUSIC: Ponderosa High School Choir under the direction
of Craig Mason

WREATH CEREMONY: Captain Jack Babbitt, Guests

THREE VOLLEY RIFLE SALUTE: Combined Veterans Rifle Team

TAPS: Victor Mansfield; Commandant Marine Corps League (Ssgt Sky
Mote) det 697

REFLECTIVE MUSIC: Ponderosa High School Chamber Choir.

BENEDICTION: Chaplain Lt. Colonel Tim Thompson, USAR (Ret.)

RETIRE THE COLORS:

**Thank you for attending and,
Veterans, THANK YOU for your service.
eldoradocountyveterans.org**



Guest Speaker Major Drew Dela Cruz *USAF-DFC*

August 22, 2021, more than 100 massive cargo aircraft were tasked with evacuating 114,000 refugees from Afghanistan, including the USAF C-17 piloted by, then, Captain Dela Cruz. His C-17, call sign Reach 651, was circling above Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar with 450 Afghan refugees aboard. The plane had been aloft for hours, had only one small toilet and no air conditioning as it flew through stifling subtropic air and ... it was running low on fuel.

The crew had been briefed earlier in the day that saboteurs planned to attack Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul possibly by suicide bombers so the crew had taken extra precautions to search everyone coming on board.

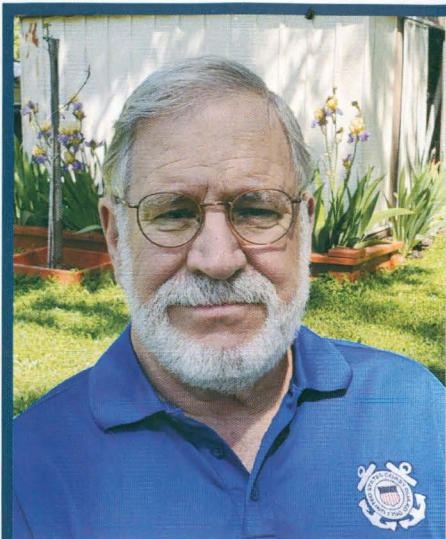
While the aircraft was waiting for landing clearance, a 16-year old mother began convulsing then fell unconscious. To better care for the woman away from the cargo bay, Capt. Dela Cruz ordered she be brought to the flight deck.

As the crew took her to the flight deck, two Afghan men tried to force their way to the front to gain entry to the cockpit. A Security Staff Sergeant physically restrained one of them as a loadmaster pulled the other away, thus defusing the possible attack on the flight crew. A female Sr. Airman saved the life of the young woman while a Lieutenant barricaded the cockpit door. Capt. Dela Cruz declared a medical emergency and was given immediate clearance to land. With extreme skill and assistance from another pilot, Dela Cruz was able to navigate the jammed tarmac and get the stricken woman to a waiting ambulance.

Dela Cruz' poise, sound decisions and command authority aboard Reach 651 led to his being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for a single act of heroism and extraordinary achievement in aerial flight. Seven other members of the crew of Reach 651 were similarly recognized.

Dela Cruz' parents, El Dorado Hills residents, Jill and Rick are justly proud of their son's actions. Rick Dela Cruz points out the last mission son Drew flew out of Kabul was his "proudest moment". His C-17 was full of United States Marines, and he was proud to get the marines out and back to safety.

A graduate of Oak Ridge High School in 2012 and the USAF Academy, Major Dela Cruz is stationed at Travis AFB where he resides with his wife, Janessa.



Master of Ceremonies
Peter Wolfe
Lieutenant Commander,
USCGR, Retired

LCDR Peter Wolfe, USCGR (Ret.) served as an officer on high endurance cutters and was awarded the Humanitarian Service Medal for search and rescue and law enforcement.

Peter retired from the U.S. Coast Guard in 1998 with 22 years of enlisted and commissioned active and reserve service, his enlisted service was as a Yeoman Third Class assigned to Coast Guard Training Commands in California and New York and as a crew member on patrol boats assigned to the Pacific Area.

After receiving his commission, Peter was a team member or Boarding Officer responsible for nearly 100 drug enforcement boardings and vessel seizures at sea. In 1976, Peter found himself leading a boarding party which seized a 611-foot Soviet transport ship for violations of the newly established U.S. 200 mile territorial limit.

In 1979 Peter was assigned as operations officer for the Commander, Southeast Squadron, a multi-service flag officer responsible for the U.S. Navy, Coast Guard and Air Force response to the Cuban refugee crises and the Mariel Boat Lift.

LCDR Wolfe was Executive Officer of the Coast Guard Air Station in Sacramento, California, conducting search and rescue and law enforcement operations throughout the Pacific from Southern California to Alaska.

As a reserve officer, Peter was recalled to active duty and ordered to Alaska to assist in the clean up operations related to the grounding of the MV Exxon Valdez.

In civilian life, Peter is an architect and building inspector. Notably, LCDR Peter Wolfe is the Architect for the El Dorado County Veterans Monument. Peter and his wife, Karen have four adult children. Peter is a member of the board of The El Dorado County Veterans Alliance.

**Issuing the proclamation
for the State of California is
Lindsey Sin**

United States Navy Veteran Lindsey Sin serves as Deputy Secretary of Communications for CalVet. After graduating from high school in Sacramento, Lindsey enlisted in the US Navy and served from 1997 until 2005 as a Cryptologic Technician Interpretive in the Arabic language. She completed two flight tours in Rota, Spain during which time she deployed in support of Operations Northern Watch, Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. She worked with veterans at Sacramento State and served as Vice President of the Veterans Alumni Association. She resides in Sacramento with her husband and two children.



**Issuing the proclamation
for El Dorado County is
George Turnboo
District Two Supervisor**

With ancestors in El Dorado County since the 1840s, El Dorado County District Two Supervisor George Turnboo continues a family legacy of service. For several generations, the Turnboo name has been associated with service to the country and community. Several of Supervisor Turnboo's ancestors have served in various branches of the military with honor and distinction.



George has been a local business owner for over 40 years.

**Issuing the proclamation
for the city of Placerville is
Michael Saragosa
Placerville Mayor**

Michael Saragosa has served the City of Placerville since 2018, as a city councilman and, currently, as mayor. Mayor Saragosa has served on the Planning Commission and the Historical Advisory Committee. He is a public affairs professional with over 25 years of experience in government and government relations. Michael is a board member for the El Dorado County Transportation Committee.



Mayor Saragosa and his wife, Brenda, have lived in Placerville since 2005.



Photo courtesy of SCA-TV2 and Laurie Edwards.

A formation of renown T-6 “Texan” Warbird aircraft presents three flyovers in tribute to veterans. The ceremony opens with an eastbound direction, the aircraft fly westbound over the monument during the National Anthem and return eastbound a few minutes later in a “missing man” formation. The “missing man” aircraft, by tradition, breaks off from the group and flies west while the rest fly east.

Leading the flight is flight leader, Chuck Wahl. Joining the flight are; Jim Eberhardt, Terry Tarditti and Jim Booth. Booth will be performing the “missing man” maneuver.



The Youth of the Monument

Since the beginning of ceremonies at the monument, we have been privileged to have had hundreds of Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Explorers, Civil Air Patrol Cadets, musicians and the chamber chorus from Ponderosa High and more.

What may not be known is that in addition to the parade of flags that see the youth proudly marching, they show up early and set up all the chairs. Additionally, they stay after the event and put all the chairs away. The chorus and musicians practice many hours before each ceremony and are proud to do so.

These young men and women are our future. Please recognize their contributions.



WELCOME HOME

Planned for placement at the El Dorado County Veterans Monument, to the left of the entrance walkway, is statuary portraying a joyous return from duty for two El Dorado County members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Standing will be a life-sized male figure dressed in fatigues like those worn by the U.S. Army, Air Force and Coast Guard. Kneeling, will be a female figure dressed in fatigues similar to those worn by the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. Rating and warfare badges will be obscured intentionally, so that the figures can represent anyone. A Labrador retriever, symbolizing the joy that family and friends have over the return of their service men and women, will be running joyously toward the veterans.

Artist Rip Caswell, famed for his portrayals of military themes and figures, will sculpt the statuary based on the concept conceived by Friends of the Veterans Monument. Welcome Home will represent the welcome that some never got, but which through the statuary will never end.

To learn how you can help place Welcome Home at the El Dorado County Veterans Monument, visit

eldoradocountyveterans.org

**HISTORY OF THE
EL DORADO COUNTY VETERANS MONUMENT**

THE EL DORADO COUNTY VETERANS MONUMENT WAS FIRST ENVISIONED BY FORMER UNITED STATES MARINE, RICHARD W. BUCHANAN, DURING THE VIETNAM WAR, WHERE HE WAS AWARDED THE NAVY CROSS FOR UPHOLDING THE HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE MARINE CORPS AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICES. ON MAY 24, 1968, AS 3RD BATTALION, 27TH MARINES MOVED AGAINST WELL-ENTRENCHED ENEMY FORCES DURING THE BATTLE OF LE BAC (I), BUCHANAN WITNESSED NUMEROUS EXAMPLES OF THE AMERICAN FIGHTING SPIRIT AND SELFLESS DEVOTION TO DUTY BY HIS FELLOW MARINES AND CORPSMEN. HE VOWED THAT THEIR DEDICATION, AND THE DEDICATION AND SACRIFICES OF OTHER MEN AND WOMEN OF OUR ARMED FORCES, WOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN.

DEDICATED NOVEMBER 11, 2006

*History of the El Dorado County Veterans Monument
Dedicated Veterans Day 2006*

El Dorado County Veterans Alliance/Friends of the Monument

Officers and Board of Directors

President

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John Poimiroo-USN

Directors

Greg Etzel-USAF

Melisa Miebert RN-USA

Vern Pierson-USA

Tim Thompson-USA

Mike Williamson-USN

Peter Wolfe-USCG

Special Recognition

El Dorado County Facilities

Sierra Monuments

CAP Cadets

EDC Sheriff's Explorers

Area Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts

and Boy Scouts and their leaders

Ponderosa High School-Chorus-Floral

Frank Yost-Sound

El Dorado County Veterans Organizations

- American Legion, Post 119
- Disabled American Veterans, Post 63
- El Dorado County Department of Veterans Affairs
- Fleet Reserve Association 275
- El Dorado County Veterans Alliance/
Friends of the Monument
- Marine Corps League,
SSgt Sky Mote Det 697
- Pearl Harbor Survivors 30
- Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 2680
- Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 9241
- Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 10165