# To our veterans: Thank you!

**By Councilmember Rose Herrera**
*Special to the Times*

To veterans of all U.S. wars, thank you for your service and welcome home. Thank you for serving our country, thank you for protecting our civil liberties, thank you for being willing to put yourself in harm's way to defend our way of life. Welcome home to a nation that may not always understand what you have experienced, but appreciates your sacrifice and all that you have done. To those who paid the ultimate price we owe a debt to you and your families that can never be repaid.

We should find inspiration and guidance in President Abe Lincoln's words, "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's veterans.

Like many communities, Evergreen shows it's appreciation for our veterans through community events. On Friday, Nov. 5, the Evergreen Singers performed a Veterans Day concert at the Evergreen Community Center for participants in the City's Senior Nutrition Program.

Again this year, hundreds attended the veterans' event sponsored by the Villages Music Society. With patriotic performances by the Villages Concert Band, Villages Hand Bell Choir, and the Villages Voices. It was a memorable event that showed respect for those that served our country.

San Jose is home to thousands of veterans. It is because of their leadership and advocacy that we have the San Jose Veterans Day Parade and the San Jose Veterans Memorial on Park Avenue adjacent to the Center for Performing Arts.

**District 8 Report**
**By Rose Herrera**
**City Councilmember**

For 92 years, the United Veterans Council of Santa Clara County (UVC), along with the City of San Jose and Santa Clara County, has hosted the Veterans Day Parade through downtown San Jose. I rode in the parade as a councilmember and as an Air Force veteran. Thanks to UVC organizers Dennis Fong and Gene Fanucci for all their hard-work.

At this year's parade, active soldiers, veterans, and their families came together as military communities often do, to support each other. It was heart warming to see the patriotism and appreciation demonstrated by the people along the parade route.

Dedicated on Nov. 11, 1997 the San Jose Veterans Memorial consists of 76 white flags and etched glass panels. These panels display images of veterans and letters written from various military personnel, spanning from the Civil War to the Vietnam War. The design conveys a message of peace, bravery, and the great sacrifice veterans made for our country.

Service to the community comes naturally for veterans. Here are just a few of our local veteran leaders: Roger Lasson, resident of The Villages and past president of the Senior Advisory Council at the Evergreen Community Center and an active board member of the City of San Jose Senior Citizens Commission, served in the Navy as an electronics technician. District 8 resident Dennis Foggie, retired Air Force Staff Sergeant, is the president of the United Veterans Council, and the Post Commander for American Legion Post 791 on North White Road. And, Phil Henderson, an Air Force veteran, is the current Senior Advisory Council President.

As I do every year, this Veterans Day I reflected on the "homecoming" given to veterans over the years. Today, we are welcoming home soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan. Their wounds are both physical and emotional. It is shocking that more soldiers are committing suicide every year than are killed in action. We must do more to recognize seriously troubled soldiers in time to provide the needed mental health services.

The complexity of post-traumatic stress is a serious issue for American soldiers. I was pleased that HBO showed its documentary "Wartorn 1861 - 2010" on post-traumatic stress on Veterans Day. This is the type of coverage that educates and leverages the power of our country to support veterans coming home now and acknowledge the needs of soldiers from past wars.

There are San Jose residents currently serving in the armed forces, many in harm's way. The reality of war is that not all our soldiers will return. Those that do deserve our full support and respect for they fight to protect the very ideals we practice as part of local government. To all military men and women, active duty and veterans alike, thank you and welcome home.

If you would like to support our veterans with a donation or volunteer, please visit www.southbaybluestarmoms.org .

To donate and get more information about the United Veterans Council of Santa Clara County, visit www.uvcscc.org.

For more information on the San Jose Veterans Memorial, visit www.sjparks.org/memorial.asp

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