

ENTERTAINMENT

Yuba museum honors America's war vets

Memorial Day picnic sparks distant memories

Russell Brown
For the Appeal-Democrat

Last week was Memorial Day for a large group of war vets and their family members as they gathered at the Museum of the Forgotten Warrior located just outside the gates of Beale Air Force Base. Of course, every day is Memorial Day at that special museum.

War memories from as far back as World War II flowed freely at the annual potluck lunch held on the ranch property of Dann Spear May 17. The picnic tables were set up between Spear's home and the museum he built to honor war vets both alive and dead.

"It's a labor of love," Spear said of the museum.

Over the course of four hours, visitors parked in a nearby field and carried their contribution to the meal past two army helicopters, a tank, and a few other pieces of military machinery that act as a gateway to Spear's museum. Some of the vets carried with them photos or war memorabilia to contribute to the museum.

"This place has so much to it, it's kind of overwhelming," said Vietnam vet Joe Fegan, who brought with him a photograph of



Military uniforms of various services and vintage are displayed in the background as two men share conversation during the annual potluck at the Museum of the Forgotten Warrior in Linda.

Russell Brown/Appeal-Democrat

► **SOCIAL SCENE**

put all of this to rest. It's therapeutic actually."

Spear said Fegan's perspective

the men and women who went into battle. That tribute began as a small display of war memorabilia spread across a card table. It has grown to fill the structure he built at his own expense. A

Some of the contributions came from those who were in the war; others from family members who offer the items as a memorial.

IF YOU GO

The Museum of the Forgotten Warrior will be open Memorial Day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

During the year the museum is open every Thursday from 7 to 10 p.m., and on the first Saturday of each month and Veteran's Day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Although the museum benefits from word-of-mouth in terms of getting war items donated to the museum, Spear still actively seeks more donations through letter writing and phone calls. He said his wife allows him to indulge himself in this pursuit, and the results have been a museum that has gained national recognition.

"When the vets come here, it's a safe place where they can talk," Spear said.

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Social Scene runs Saturday and Sundays. To suggest an event to be covered, call Features Editor Larry Badger at 741-2430.