

- Sunday
- »Next Story»
- News
- Local News
- Insight
- Business
- Sports
- Sunday Currents
- Arts
- Travel
- Homes
- Homescape
- Books
- Passages
- Front Page (PDF)
- The Last Week
- Sunday
- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday
- Weekly Sections
- Books | UT-Books
- Family
- Food
- Health
- Home
- Homescape
- Dialog
- InStyle
- Night & Day
- Sunday Arts
- Travel
- Quest
- Wheels

Subscribe to the UT
Union-Tribune.

Click here for
Home Delivery Special

Sponsored Links

The San Diego Union-Tribune.

Advertisements from the print edition

Beach exhibit calls attention to fallen

By **Bruce V. Bigelow**
STAFF WRITER

November 11, 2007

OCEANSIDE – Kenyon Ralph, who did two tours in Iraq with the Marine Corps, walked with other veterans yesterday in the annual Veterans Day parade in downtown San Diego.

After the parade ended, he drove to Oceanside to help Veterans for Peace, who had set up neat rows of 2,400 small wooden crosses in the sand north of the pier, creating a miniaturized “Arlington West.”

Each foot-high marker, which bore the name of a service member who has died in Iraq, was intended to convey the cost of war, said Dave Patterson, a Vietnam War veteran and Arlington West coordinator.



SEAN M. HAFEEY / Union-Tribune
Veterans for Peace set up 2,400 crosses on the beach in Oceanside. Each marker has the name of a service member who died in Iraq.

Attached to one cross, which read “Sgt. Regina C. Reali, 25, U.S. Army Reserve, Dec. 23, 2005,” were photos of a young woman, smiling in desert fatigues, body armor and helmet.

Reali, a Fresno resident, was killed with Sgt. Cheyenne Willey of Fremont when a roadside bomb exploded near their Humvee in Baghdad, according to a Pentagon press release.

The beach exhibit did not convey the total cost, however. A sign posted on a nearby sandwich board read: “Please take a moment to reflect on the 3,859 dead.” Even that total did not reflect the latest U.S. fatality, which has not yet been confirmed by the Department of Defense, since the war began May 1, 2003.

The memorial drew passers-by throughout the day: An Oceanside widow whose husband was killed in Iraq 18 months ago, a visitor from Switzerland, a couple from Indiana who were planning to attend today's football game between the Indianapolis Colts and the San Diego Chargers.

“I was for the war at first; I just wish it wasn't dragging out so long,” said Greg Lloyd, an Indianapolis resident and veteran. “But I think they're making progress over there now. The surge is working.”

Others were less optimistic.

“You'd think we would have learned our lesson 40 years ago. It's just a shame,” said Joe Veraldi, who drove from his home in Encinitas to visit the temporary exhibit. “We're ruining another generation of men.”

Ralph, 24, a former sergeant now studying at the University of California San Diego, said he thinks the U.S. government lied about the reasons for the Iraq war and continues to suppress its true cost.

“It's a part of our oath of enlistment to support our country against all enemies, foreign and domestic – especially domestic,” Ralph said. “That doesn't expire when we get out. I think the current administration has no regard for our Constitution. They think they're above the law.”

As the sun settled into the Pacific Ocean, Patterson and other volunteers lit votive candles at the base of each marker in the memorial, which included a handful of Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Jewish symbols.

[»Next Story»](#)

Sponsored Links

[Contact SignOnSanDiego.com](#) | [Online Media Kit](#) | [Print Media Kit](#) | [Frequently Asked Questions](#) | [Make us your homepage](#)
[Contact the Union-Tribune](#) | [About the Union-Tribune](#) | [Site Index](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Your California Privacy Rights](#)

© Copyright 2007 Union-Tribune Publishing Co. • A Copley Newspaper Site



Jewish War Veterans v. City of San Diego, No. 08-56415, archived on February 24, 2011