NOTES & QUOTES

Vista grad moved by plaque for fallen vets

Palomar College student **Brandi Piseno**, who graduated from Vista High School last spring, wrote to tell me just how much her school's Vietnam Memorial plaque meant to her during four years of study on that campus.

TOM MORROW

"After reading your (Nov. 19) column (regarding the San Dieguito Academy's rejection of a proposed Vietnam Memorial), I knew I had to share a memory with you," Brandi told me. "As a freshman, I didn't venture far from my assigned classes. I didn't know much about the school or its history, but my ninth-grade English teacher, Mr. **Jeff Jones**, remedied that problem."

Brandi explained that for each of his end-of-the-year classes, Mr. Jones took students on a field trip around the VHS campus.

"He showed me everything I had never stopped to look at between those hectic class bells," Brandi explained. "One of those things was a small plaque, not much to look at, on the wall outside of our library. It listed the names of Vista High students who had fought and died in the Viet-

fought and died in the Vietnam War."

Brandi said in that moment the reality of the tragedy impacted her.

"It was suddenly tangible. Students — children — boys like I sat next to every day — fought and they died," she said. "They were no longer my grandfather's friends, or the old men who seem to stare at that (Vietnam Memorial) wall in Washington, D.C., just a bit longer than everyone else. They were my friends. They were the boys I knew. I had some grasp of the fear an 18-year-old boy facing a foreign land must feel."

Brandi says she supports efforts to place a memorial at San Dieguito High.

"Ours (Vista High) is nothing more than a small plaque, rather simple and easily overlooked, but that small plaque touched me very deeply," Brandi explained. "Staring at it for the first time remains one of my strongest memories of high school. School officials may see it as 'unnecessary' or 'inappropriate,' but I feel there's no place more appropriate."

DULY HONORED — Being featured in an Encini-