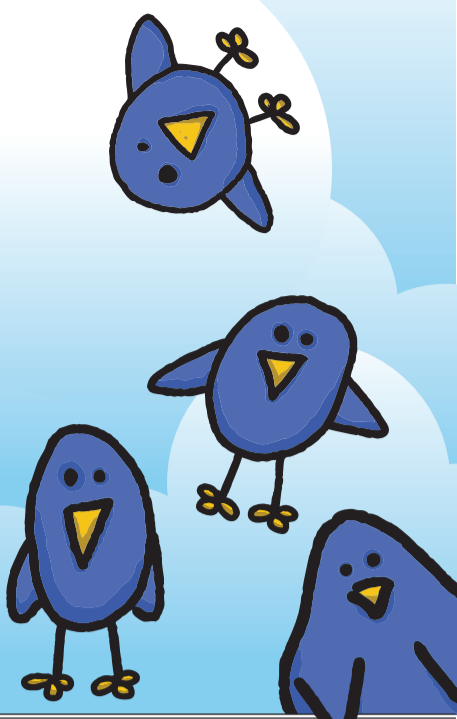
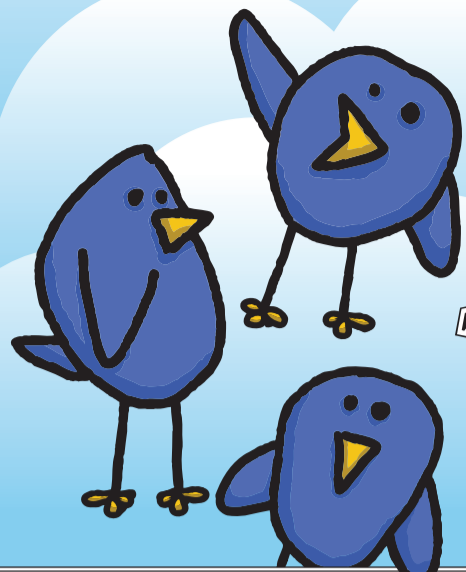


# ALL A TWITTER!

So few characters, so much money. On Thursday, Twitter, known for 140-character messages, will hold an initial public stock offering expected to raise \$1.75 billion. A look at 10 memorable tweets, **Business 4.**

## ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

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### STAMP OF APPROVAL

New Medal of Honor postage stamp includes O.C.'s most respected veteran: Walt Ehlers.

By **TOM BERG**  
ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

He's been invited to every presidential inauguration since Dwight D. Eisenhower. He has a building named after him and an action figure. He's been given our country's highest military honor.



What else is left? How about a postage stamp honoring Walter Ehlers, 92, of Buena Park?

On Monday - Veterans Day - the U.S. Postal Service will unveil its latest stamp, honoring the 464 Medal of Honor recipients from World War II.

Each stamp displays an image of the Medal of Honor. An accompanying sheet includes the names of all 464 recipients

SEE STAMP • PAGE 10

**INSIDE**

#### OCTA COMMITTEE TELLS BOARD TO GO SLOW ON TOLLS

LOCAL 1

#### HEARING SHEDS LIGHT ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

LOCAL 1

Who are the key characters at Twitter on the eve of the company's initial public stock offering? **Business 1**



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SAM GANGWER, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Linda Horist and her second-grade class at Nohl Canyon Elementary School in Anaheim Hills show the "WOW" face that's her signature, with hands forming W's and mouths forming O's. It was announced Monday that Horist is one of five California teachers of the year.

## WOW! KUDOS FOR TEACHER

A second-grade teacher from Anaheim known for her innovative ways of engaging students - including her signature "WOW" face - joined four other educators Monday as a California teacher of the year for 2014.

Linda Horist advanced to the state contest after her selection in spring as a teacher of the year for Nohl Canyon Elementary School, Orange Unified School District and Orange County.

On Monday, her students, parents and peers showered her with praise and plaudits.

"'Wow' doesn't begin to describe what she does to educate these kids," said parent Patty Bell, whose 8-year-old daughter, Melina, is her second child in Horist's class. "She just gives her whole heart to these students."

STORY BY ELYSSE JAMES ON NEWS 11

### HORIST'S APPROACH

"Creative engagement strategies are instrumental to the way my classroom operates, and student motivation is paramount to building a foundation for learning. From the moment a student enters the classroom, my message is "you can do, be, dream and become anything you want to!" Find the joy in learning and you'll find the joy in yourself. This is the philosophy I constantly demonstrate to my students."

- Linda Horist, in her 2014 California Teacher of the Year Application

THE MORNING READ

## Their new Gettysburg address



COURTESY OF MIKE REETZ  
Union Lt. Col. Horace Porter and his wife, Sophie.

'Living historians' Mike and Shelley Reetz, formerly of Anaheim, portray a Union officer and his wife at the site of the famous Civil War battle.

The lieutenant colonel braces himself against the chill as he stands at this once-bloody place called Little Round Top.



**KEITH SHARON**  
REGISTER WRITER

The autumn temperature has dipped, and even in his thick dress blues - brass buttons shining, red sash around his waist - the cold is getting to him.

But he's got a job to do. There is history to impart in the hilly country outside Gettysburg, Pa. On July 2, 1863 - the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg - Union soldiers successfully defended Little Round

Top against the Confederates.

"The last two days, it's been miserable standing up there," the proud Union officer said in a telephone interview. "But it's worth it."

He will tell the tourists his name is Horace Porter, and that he works for Gen. Ulysses S. Grant.

Porter will tell them the history of Little Round Top, about his wife, Sophie, his daughter Elsie and the gnawed pencil in his pocket that became famous at the end of the Civil War.

This is what Lt. Col. Porter isn't saying:

His real name is Mike Reetz. He's

SEE GETTYSBURG • PAGE 13

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# GETTYSBURG: Couple embrace their place in history

FROM PAGE 1

65. And three years ago, his love of Civil War history prompted him to relocate to Gettysburg from Anaheim.

"I'm 176 years old, but I don't look a day over 93," Reetz says with a laugh.

The persona he has adopted since he moved to Gettysburg — Horace Porter — was born in 1837.

If you get out to Gettysburg and you meet Mike Reetz, remember one thing: Do not call him a reenactor.

Reenactors, he will tell you, dress up, run around shooting blanks at one another, play dead, eat burned beans from a campfire and sleep in the mud.

Mike Reetz is a "living historian." He researches his Porter persona, acts like his Porter persona, dresses like his Porter persona and talks about his Porter persona. Then he slips out of character and goes home for the night.

"We eat in restaurants and sleep in comfortable beds," he said.

When his obsession began, his wife told him, "Don't ask me to be involved."

So he didn't. Mike Reetz was born in Virginia (a Confederate state), but he didn't understand why school kids called him a "rebel" (a Confederate nickname) when his preferences would have been with the Union army. His family moved to Garden Grove in 1956.

"The Civil War has always been in the back of my mind," he said.

Reetz graduated from Garden Grove High School in 1965. He started at Orange Coast College, but then enlisted in the Army. He served as an artillery surveyor and endured two tours in Vietnam. He married Shelley in 1971.

Working for the county, Reetz made a career out of testing asphalt and concrete, then later inspecting road construction sites.

Shelley Reetz worked as a



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MIKE REETZ

Mike Reetz portrays Lt. Col. Horace Porter five days a week at Gettysburg National Military Park.

teacher (her title was "resource specialist") at Albert Schweitzer Elementary School in Anaheim. They raised two kids — Kelly and Patrick.

The Reetz family had visited Civil War sites on family vacations over the years. He loved the history of it all and became an armchair expert.

In 2007, something changed. Reetz bought a uniform.

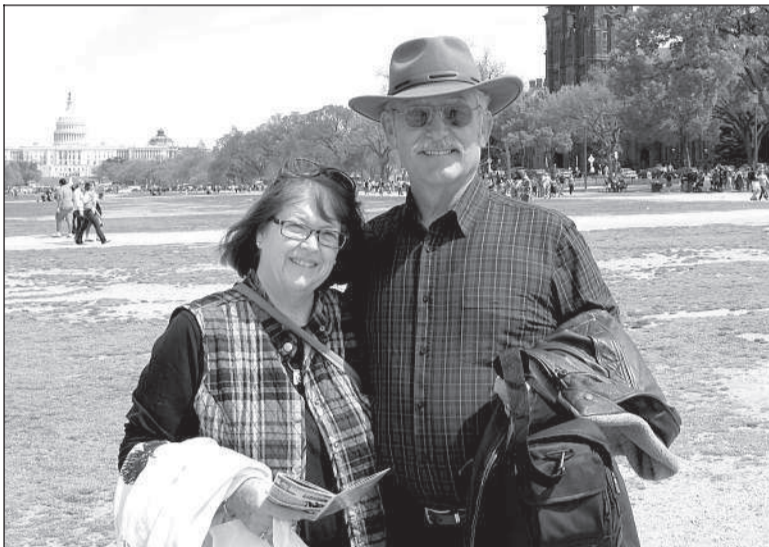
It was blue (Union), but it had no persona attached to it. It was the uniform of an artillery sergeant. Reetz wore the

uniform to the Labor Day Civil War reenactment in Huntington Beach. While others relived the battle, Reetz stood off to the side answering questions about how cannons fired.

Then he got an idea.

Reetz was in Gettysburg again, this time in 2009. He approached Gen. Ulysses S. Grant.

"General Grant, nice to meet you," he said.



Shelley and Mike Reetz, out of character, in Washington, D.C.

The man portraying Gen. Grant was Larry Clowers. Haven't heard of Larry Clowers? He's so big in the world of Civil War living history that he has an agent. He makes television commercials.

Reetz said the key phrase, "stepping out of character now," and Gen. Grant became Clowers. As they talked, they discovered they lived about a mile apart in

Orange County.

Reetz explained that he was looking to buy a house in Gettysburg. Then the men slipped back into character.

"How would you like to be on my staff?" Gen. Grant said.

"Could I be John Rawlins?" Reetz said.

"Already have one."

"Could I be Horace Porter?"

"Perfect."

All he had to do was change uniforms.

After they retired, Mike and Shelley Reetz moved into a house on Herrs Ridge Road in Gettysburg. And without prompting from her husband, Shelley donned a ballgown and became Sophie Porter, Horace's wife. She was persuaded to put on a corset by some local reenactors. After that, she was hooked.

"They're completely sane," their daughter, Kelly Reetz, said. "They just have a very strong passion for history. I'm very pleased they're able to do something together in retirement."

Five times a week, from April 1 through mid-November, Mike Reetz puts on the uniform and becomes Horace Porter, standing at the Gettysburg National Military Park visitors center or at the battle site of Little Round Top. Shelley doesn't go as often, but she's still out there a couple of times per week.

He explains to tourists that Horace Porter didn't arrive at Gettysburg until long after the famous battle. But he said people don't mind that they're getting a history lesson from a character who isn't completely historically accurate.

He tells the story about how, on the day of the Confederate surrender at Appomattox Court House, Gens. Grant and Robert E. Lee didn't have a pencil to sign the agreement. Horace Porter reached into his pocket and pulled out a pencil, one that had been chewed by his daughter Elsie.

He carries pencils in his pocket and gives them to children who listen.

Last month, he gave out two dozen pencils.

"Horace fits my personality," Reetz said. "He didn't drink much. He didn't smoke. He was rather shy, rather quiet. He was dedicated to his wife."

"When I get in that uniform, I'm not Mike Reetz, I'm Horace Porter."

CONTACT THE WRITER: ksharon@ocregister.com

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