



DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA
SERVING VETERANS.



SERVING AMERICA.

California Legionnaire

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THE AMERICAN LEGION *Centennial celebration*

"As the Centennial celebration nears, we will continue to share histories of posts whether it was chartered in 1919 or 1941. If your post was named after someone, do you know who and why it was named after him or her? If you do, we would like to know. Every month, we will want to publish a post that wants to share its history with all of us. So, if you have a story, please email it to: aide_deptcmdr@att.net. Also, be sure to add your post's story on the Legion's Centennial page at: <http://centennial.legion.org/histories/california>."

History of Benjamin J. Bowie Post 228 – South Central L.A.

by Marilyn Rideaux, Editor, California Legionnaire

Benjamin J. Bowie Post 228, Department of California, was chartered in 1922. It was named after Benjamin J. Bowie who was the first Negro soldier from Los Angeles to be killed in action during World War I.

Benjamin J. Bowie was born in Monticello, Florida, December 1891. His family migrated to California during the "Great Migration" of African Americans from the South. He was drafted into the U.S. Army on October 28, 1917 and was trained as a combat infantryman. He sailed to France in May 1918 and served in combat with the 365th US Regiment, 92nd Infantry Division until he was killed in action on September 11, 1918. Tragically, Corporal Bowie was killed by his own Lieutenant, being mistaken for a German soldier while cleaning his rifle in a company dugout.

Initially the members of Post 228 met in a clubhouse at 1126 East 46th Street in Los Angeles and moved its present location which was purchased in the 1940s. Benjamin J. Bowie Post 228 has contributed significantly to the cultural, social, and economic development of Los Angeles by participating in noteworthy fashion to community and veterans' affairs.

Some of the contributions were identifying the need for establishing a veterans' domiciliary facility in Sawtelle and a veterans' hospital in Sepulveda during the 1920s. Post 228 also sponsored various education activities related to the public education system in Los Angeles during that time, and has played a leading role in the establishment of annual membership drives associated with the local 28th Street Branch of the YMCA. Christmas parties for as many as 500 needy children were hosted starting in the 1930s and continue today. The Post led an effort to cause the US Army to establish a regiment of the California National Guard to be composed of Negro officers and enlisted men. In addition, they sponsored and participated in the activation of a Citizens Military Training Corps Unit and summer training program at Fort MacArthur during the two summers immediately preceding World War II. Ben Bowie Post 228 assisted members and minority veterans in obtaining gainful employment and with establishing private businesses in and around Los Angeles.

The Benjamin J. Bowie Post 228 Drum and Bugle Corps was, for many years the only jazz drum and bugle corps in the world. One of its'



L.A. City Councilman, Curren Price Jr., addressing members of Benjamin J. Bowie Post 228 and members of the community during the dedication of Benjamin J. Bowie Post 228 Square and unveiling of a mural, "Penta-Loom: Ode to Soldiers" on June 2, 2016

most talented members, the late Manual Bray, had been the US Army bugler who played "Taps" at the burial of General John J. Pershing. The drill team was frequent winners of Department-level competitions and an occasional contender

—POST 228, see page 3



Army Pvt. Herman R. Granados Remembered A 75th Anniversary Sojourn to Manila

By Dr. John Ellis, Ed.D.,
C.A.L.P.A. President

Manila, Philippines - It was a somber moment standing among the sea of marble headstones of 16,636 U.S. and 570 Filipino service personnel (a mere fraction of those) who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the Pacific Theater during WWII. Yet, the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial at Ft. Bonifacio (formerly Ft. McKinley) is the final resting place of the largest number of military service men and women killed during the Second World War.

I arrived at this 152 acre cemetery on a mission... to locate the name of Herman Granados (after whom my American Legion Post 739 in Indio was named), on one of the rectangular limestone pillars that form a giant hemicyclic ring.... one Missing In Action name out 36,286 MIAs. And this? THIS was just

one cemetery out of so many.

Herman Granados had just graduated from Coachella Valley High School when he joined the Army, following in his brother Refugio's footsteps who had earlier joined the Navy. No doubt filled with the excitement of serving his country and embarking on a grand adventure with his posting to the Philippines, little did Herman know that he was heading into the eye of the great storm of war brewing in the Pacific.

December 9, 1941 was surely like most any other day in the hot and humid climate of the Philippines for Herman... another day at his post on Nichols Field where U.S. combat aircraft were being readied following the devastation at Pearl Harbor two days earlier. But then? Japanese attack planes unexpectedly swarmed out of the sky strafing and bombing

everything in sight.

When it was over, the U.S. counted their dead... and... their missing... including 21-year-old Pvt. Herman R. Granados, the first casualty of WWII from the Coachella Valley. His was but one more name to be added later to the columns at the American Cemetery... a name without a rosette next to it... indicating a resting place beyond the protective field of well-manicured green grass.

As I walked past pillar after pillar in search Herman's name 75 years later, it became all the more apparent why, as members of The American Legion, we have a responsibility to keep their memory alive, whether it's through the naming of a post, maintaining the POW/MIA table, placement of the POW/MIA flag at our meetings, or the homage we pay them each on Veterans and Memorial Day.

For the Granados family, though, Herman's memory was kept alive, in part, when his brother, Refugio, carried on the family lineage, becoming a parent of two boys, one of whom he named Herman.

That Herman also went on to join the military, serving as an Air Force aviation refueler in Korea while his brother, Eddie, served with the Army's 101st Airborne in Vietnam. Today, both are active members of Herman Granados American Legion Post 739.

And so it was, that a journey to the Philippines became so much more... a personal reflection of those who fought... and of those who died in the service of their country. Letting my fingers run across an etched name, among so many, was but one small way of saying... "Thank you for your service." Yet, it seemed not enough in the stillness of the day.



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NOTICE:

- Submissions to the California Legionnaire must be submitted by due date published in previous issue in order to be included in the upcoming issue.
- Photos should be no less than 580KB. If emailing from your smart phone, send at the Largest Size. Do not embed photos into your Word.doc – send photos as separate images, use a numbering system to match photos with their appropriate photo captions, which should be typed in a Word.docx. Images that are pulled off of web sites will not reproduce well, if at all. PDFs must be saved as high resolution from their original document. Please e-mail articles to: aide_deptcmdr@att.net with the words California Legionnaire in the subject line of your email.
- All submissions become the property of The American Legion Department of California. All submitted material is subject to edit, rework and omission. We are not responsible for lost items or misplaced material.
- Please send "Change of Address" and "Deceased Notifications" to: alhqdoc@gmail.com or mail to: The American Legion, Department of California, 1601 7th Street Sanger, CA 93657-2801
- Do not direct them to the Editor of the California Legionnaire.
- All Advertising must be approved for publication by the Department Commander.



Gary Leach
Commander

Department H.S. Oratorical finals in the State Capitol on Saturday, March 4, 2017. What a great opportunity for the finalists and we may get some good publicity for this program and for the American Legion.

In October, following a successful District Membership Revitalization of the 4th District, I attended the Department Commanders' and Adjutants' Workshop at National Headquarters in Indianapolis with our Adjutant, John "Doc" Bart, and the Fall National Executive Committee Meeting with our NEC, Janet Wilson. That was followed up by another successful District Membership Revitalization for the 1st District.

FROM THE COMMANDER'S DESK

Greetings, fellow Legionnaires. Thank you all for what you do every day for our veterans and our communities. Thank you, also, for the hospitality I enjoy everywhere I travel.

At the end of September, High School Oratorical Chair, Fran Kilgore, and I, met in Sacramento with our legislative advocate, Pete Conaty, and toured the Capitol. The good news is that we now have space reserved to hold our

Congratulations to Legionnaires who were recognized at the B.T. Collins Army Reserve Center on Sunday, October 30th, at a Congressional Community Service Recognition ceremony, which I was privileged to take part. No surprise that a lot of Legionnaires are doing great things in their local communities.

We held a joint meeting of the Finance and Ways & Means Commissions in early November and some promising fund raising ideas were discussed and will be implemented. On Veterans' Day, I was in Los Angeles at the West L.A. V.A. Campus for "America's Parade." What a great event that was! L.A. Dodgers icon, Tommy Lasorda, was the Grand Marshal. We had a lot of participation in the parade, and a lot of support from the local community. NEC Janet Wilson and I got to ride in a convertible owned by past NEC, Hugh Crooks, along with National Vice Commander for the Western Region, Paul Espinoza, who flew in from New Mexico. Many thanks to Paul, and to Wayne Yee, Michael Hjelmstad, and many other volunteers for the months of dedicated planning it took to put on this event.

I hope you all have a wonderful Thanksgiving with your loved ones. We are looking forward to our visit from National Commander, Charlie Schmidt, in December. Continue working membership, and let's keep going Full Speed Ahead!



Janet M. Wilson

The National Executive Committee members met on October 12 and 13 in Indianapolis. A total of 26 Resolutions were read, received, reviewed and voted upon. All resolutions are available for viewing in the Legion's Digital Archive at: www.archive.legion.org

Two resolutions I thought I should report and share:

Resolution #8 Title: Use of the English Language in all Official Meetings of the American Legion
Submitted by Internal Affairs Commission

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in a regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 12-13, 2016, That every department, district/county and post is strongly urged to conduct official meetings in English not only because it is the position of The American Legion that English should be the official language of the United States of America, but also to ensure that every Legionnaire and veteran is afforded the opportunity to understand, participate in, and be informed about every subject that arises in an American Legion meeting or is part of any official correspondence or published media; and, be it, finally

RESOLVED, That the intent of this resolution be incorporated in the Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies.

Resolution #16 Title: Expectations for Rendering Proper Respect When Participating in Programs of the American Legion
Submitted by the Americanism Commission

WHEREAS, The American Legion since its founding has supported this country, and

WHEREAS, Countless members of The American Legion died defending the Constitution of the United States and the First Amendment; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has fought bigotry, racism and similar concepts since its founding; and

WHEREAS, The Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion pledges that "For God and Country" we shall associate

ourselves together "To foster and perpetuate a 100 percent Americanism"; and

WHEREAS, There have been public displays of disrespect to the Flag of the United States, including during the National Anthem, by certain individuals, groups and others failing to show respect thereto; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion realizes there are proper platforms for expressing protest or disagreement; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion vehemently rejects using disrespect to the Flag of the United States or the National Anthem as a platform for publicly expressing protest or disagreement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 12-13, 2016, that The American Legion expects participants of all its programs to show proper respect to the Flag of the United States at all times including during the National Anthem; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the national organization of The American Legion recommends to departments and posts that the chairman or director of any American Legion program make clear to all participants in advance of the program that The American Legion has the expectation for rendering proper respect to the Flag of the United States, at all times, including during the National Anthem; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That if any participant of any program of The American Legion cannot or will not live up to this expectation, the individual should not be a participant in American Legion programs; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That if any participant of any national-level program of The American Legion cannot or will not live up to this expectation, the individual will be removed from the program and not be allowed any further participation.

The National Commander, Charles Schmidt, will be touring California in December. Please try to attend one of the events in your District or Area. The schedule will be in this issue of the California Legionnaire and on the Department website, www.calegion.org

Yours in Service for God and Country

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,
Much of California especially rural and central city areas and all our VA Hospitals suffer from a shortage of physicians. Veterans living in these areas or dependent on VA treatment suffer long waits and often inadequate care.
This can be mitigated by fast track training of several thousand former military medics living in California as

Physician Assistants or Nurse Practitioners possibly at VA hospitals.
Unions have blocked this fast track training available in several other States and funded under the Affordable Care Act. Former Military Medics in California are forced to undergo the full spectra of training required of Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants as if they had no experience. After Vietnam California and

all other States undertook this fast track training to tap into this valuable resource yet today a couple unions can block it.
Unacceptable
KURT HAHN 50-year member Post 111 Interim Executive Director Northern California Healthcare Authority 222 Alexandria Drive Healdsburg California 95448 707-433-6430



MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR



Mike Hooper

Hello California Membership Team, yep that is all of us that are members of The American Legion,

First to all I want to let you know that California is doing good in membership but we can do much better. Our District revitalizations are going great. District 4 transferred in 95 members into local posts, and signed up one new member. District 1 transferred in 57 members and signed up 3 new members. When we held the event in District 10, just a week after the Convention, we transferred over 100 members into local posts. These revitalizations are very important to our membership in California.

In the past we did our best to motivate our post members to try to sign up new members into the American Legion. By conducting these revitalizations, we are not only asking them to talk to prospective new members to their posts, but we are doing it. Yes, we are training our members and showing them how easy it is to ask someone to join their post. These revitalizations are usually a 3-day event from 9 am to 4 pm Thursday and Friday, then on Saturday it's from 9 am to noon. We have a County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) attending at least one day of the event (hopefully all three days) to assist veterans with information and claims. Our American Legion members participating in these revitalizations not only participate but can receive training on all aspects of membership such as how to use mylegion.org, how membership is counted, how to process membership, and much more. So, if your District would like to conduct a revitalization, all you should do is contact your Area Membership Chairman and they can get you started. It's a win-win situation for your Districts and local posts.

After the District revitalization, each post is provided with the lists that can be used to call prospective members. During the revitalization, some of them we were unable to contact for whatever reason, so the revitalization continues even after the 3-day event. We are also provided with a list of expired members, the ones who have not paid their dues last year and beyond.

With the revitalizations being conducted throughout the state let us not forget that it is imperative that we recruit new members into our local posts. It starts at Post level. We at Department can provide training, revitalizations, membership information, post and District visits, but when it comes to recruiting members it takes ALL of us. We at Department are here to help in any way we can. Let us also look at reinstating those members who did not pay last year. Contact them and ask if they are okay and if everything is fine. This is our most important concern. Let them know you care and your post is there for them. Ask them if they are still interested in remaining a member of your post and if not ask them why. You might learn something by their answer.

So with this all said let us remember we need to recruit, reinstate, revitalize and most of all retain our members. Communication with your members is a must. Let them know what your post is doing and if you are not involved with your post, get involve. Help them help others, our community, state and nation. Let's get this ship turned around and go "FULL SPEED AHEAD."

-AREA 5, from page 4

The November 6, 2016 Area 5 meeting took place at the San Diego Post 731 Larry E. Holmberg that was preceded on Saturday, November 5, by a highly motivating community participation event - recognizing and supporting the Chula Vista Cal Vet Home. Residents of the home were grateful recipients of afghans that were made by Area 5 Adjutant, Michelle De La Cruz, and members of District 29 and District 22.

The participants of the 6K walk were District 22 officers and 5th Area officers who walked to raise funds for the Veterans Home in Chula Vista. All Area 5 officers who participated in the walk expressed how motivating this experience was to

them. This was evident by the recruiting efforts exhibited at the evening dinner and breakfast on Sunday. Additionally, the day after our meeting I received comments from walk participants regarding the satisfaction experienced by contributing to the care of those Veterans residing at the Chula Vista Cal Vet Home.

This is another example of the combination of community involvement - Veterans Helping Veterans - and the recognition and motivation that stimulates membership in the American Legion. What can your Districts and Post members do to motivate community involvement and grow the American Legion Family membership? Be a "force to be reckoned with." Semper Fi

"OPT-OUT"

You can help us save money by volunteering to discontinue receiving a copy of the California Legionnaire via mail. If you have an email address, you will be notified when it is available on line for viewing and/or download.

Please remember to include the following information:

- Full Name
- American Legion membership number
- Mailing address
- Email address
- **Be sure to state "opt-out" in the subject line of your Email.**

Forward your "OPT-OUT" request to Marilyn Rideaux, Editor-California Legionnaire, aide_deptcmdr@att.net or mail to The American Legion, Department of California, 1601 7th Street, Sanger, CA 93657-5157, ATTN: California Legionnaire.

-POST 228, from page 1

at National. The Drum and Bugle Corps and the drill team consisted of soldiers who served in the Army as noncommissioned officers with the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry Regiments.

Benjamin J. Bowie Auxiliary Unit 228 was chartered in 1926. Later, in the 1930s, Sons of the Legion Squadron 228 was chartered. At its height, post membership numbered approximately 700 and 250 Auxiliary members. Among noted personages who were members of Post 228 were Norman D. Houston, formerly Chairman and CEO of Gold State Mutual Life Insurance Company, Baxter S. Scruggs, William J. Powell, Jefferson High faculty member and an aviation instructor, Lt. Colonel Moody Staten, Major George Allen, Gilbert W. Lindsey, the first black Los Angeles City Councilman who served in both the 10th Cavalry and 25th Infantry Regiments, Dr. Andrew L. Wallace, Dr. Emmitt L. Wyndon, DDS, Rev. H. Mansfield Collins, Pastor of 1st African Methodist Episcopal Church, Judge Leroy Dawson, Jerome L. Hubert, Henry H Green, Woodley Lewis Sr., and Ford B. White. One of the Post's most loyal members, Floyd Simmons, was for many years the post service officer and devoted countless hours serving the needs of hospitalized veterans at Wadsworth Veterans Hospital in West Los Angeles.

During World War II, members

"Benjamin J. Bowie Post 228 Square"



Members of the L.A. City Council along with City Councilman, Curren Price Jr, and Patrick Henry Johnson, creator of "Penta-Loom: Ode to Soldiers" mural in the background

The intersection of 51st Street and Central Avenue in Los Angeles was dedicated as the "Benjamin J. Bowie Post 228 Square" on June 2, 2016 by City Councilman Curren D. Price Jr. This honor was bestowed on Post 228 for its many contributions to the community as well as pays tribute to the many servicemen and women of



L.A. City Councilman, Curren Price Jr., dedicates Benjamin J. Bowie Post 228 Square

of Post 228, principally Lt. Colonel Mood Staten and Frank W. Cleveland served as commanding officers the 1401st and 1402nd Engineer Combat Battalions, California National Guard. Ray Isom, also a member, was the father of Rachel Isom who was married Jack Roosevelt Robinson, the first black in modern time to pSmith & Wesson M&P15 with Magpul accessories Indianapolis "500" auto race in 1932 as a mechanic during the era of two-man cars and himself drove Indy-style cars in championship races at the old Ascot raceway and other local tracks.

Over the years Benjamin J. Bowie Post 228 in South Central Los Angeles has provided countless cultural, economic, and social benefits to the City of Los Angeles.

South Central Los Angeles. Proud members of Post 228 and members of the community gathered for the dedication.

The Square's dedication, coincided with the "Penta-Loom: Ode to Soldiers" mural unveiling. The mural, portrays the images of personnel from various branches of military service and pays homage to the first American Legion Post established in California.

The mural was created by artist, Patrick Henry Johnson, and is the first to be commissioned under the City's new mural ordinance and was made possible by a partnership with Union Bank and ArtworxLA. Councilman Price commented that the mural was part of his office's ongoing efforts to breathe new life into historic Central Avenue.



DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER



Scott McKee

“In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes,” and I would include change. Wow what a year! Well it’s beginning again and now it’s our government’s turn to make changes, and they surely will. Every major election cycle our government changes. Current office holders depart to make way for new office holders who will bring in new ideas and ways of operating the different agencies and departments of the Federal government. In this case it will be the Veterans Administration and what brings to my mind what President John F. Kennedy said in his first inaugural address. “So let us begin anew--remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity

is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.” As advocates of our veterans let me paraphrase his words; So the VA will begin anew with new leadership-remembering that when Veteran Service Officers advocate benefits for our veterans and their dependents, we will negotiate an equitable and reasonable outcome. When working with the VA we must always be cognizant of our responsibility and work both equitably and in the best interest of those who so honorably served their country. This is not just a statement but a sacred pledge of those of us who serve in this vital industry.

The VA has brought about the new National Work Queue, which means the VA reached a historic milestone in reducing the disability claims backlog to a new low – and the number of these claims (pending more than 125 days) have come down even further since. This reduction was possible due to 56 regional offices having the ability to process disability claims electronically from start to finish – more than 99.8 percent of VA’s pending disability claims inventory is fully electronic. This flexibility allows VA to better manage its capabilities to best serve all Veterans just as Veterans served our nation – without regard to their state affiliations.

By fully transitioning to a national workload approach, VA will be able to move claims electronically across regional office boundaries through the National Work Queue – an electronic workload management initiative designed to improve VBA’s overall production capacity.

You may ask, does that mean my disability claim won’t be processed by my local regional office? Not necessarily. The regional office in the state where you reside will continue to be the first filter for determining where your claim will be assigned, provided that office has the capacity to provide you with a timely decision. If not, your claim will be processed by the next available office that has the production capacity. You can still maintain the ability to check the status of your claim through your eBenefits account, as well as through your Veteran Service Organization (like the American Legion), VBA’s national call centers, and regional office public contact representatives.

What about the support from Veterans service organizations or my local congressional representative? Veterans’ service organization (VSO) representatives will retain access to claims information for the Veterans they support through the Veterans Benefits Management System at each regional office, and online through the Stakeholder Enterprise Portal. The current relationship between VSOs and VA employees (specifically claims processors) will not change as a result of the National Work Queue. Congressional staff will still have access to VBA regional office staff as they do today to check on the status of a constituent’s claim.

How about the quality of decisions? With a national workload approach, VA will continue to focus on ensuring Veterans, their families and Survivors receive timely and accurate claim decisions – without regard to their state affiliations. Truly as an advocate for over thirteen years this is a positive step in the right direction.

Remember also with this change and a change in the Administration of the Executive Branch of the Federal government all of these programs, like the National Work Queue, may become very liquid in the way develops. Just like the Federal Government the American Legion Department Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Service Division will become very fluid in the ensuing year’s in order to keep pace with the programs, policies and changes with the advent of a new administration.

To stay tuned for those changes and for us to be good stewards of our Department of California resources please contact your Area Vice Commanders to arrange for your Department Service Officer to teach a VA & R Seminar in your Area. All we ask is that you bring in twenty plus attendees and give us some dates and we’ll do what we can to make it happen.

Just like the changes we all experience in life your VA & R Staff and Department Service Officer have experienced large changes in our offices. We are saddened to announce the sudden passing for Service officer James Jackson who suddenly passed away in the office at the Oakland Regional Office a few months ago. He is and will continue to be sorely missed. His wife, Sherral spoke about how much James loved his job and that he looked forward to going to work daily to serve our veterans. Please keep Sherral and family in your thoughts and prayers. Earlier this year after twenty years of service to the VA & R Division Nestor Soriano retired out of our San Diego Office. Michael Camerena from the Los Angeles Office requested a transfer to San Diego Office and relieved Nestor of his duties. Additionally LE Watts our Claims Specialist from the Oakland Office moved onto new employment and other endeavors. We wish for Nestor and LeAne, “fair winds and following seas” in their new pursuits in their lives. Thanks you for your service to The American Legion and our Nation’s Veterans.

Our hope as, “We all begin anew,” that we will “steer true” as we meet the new challenges ahead of us. As we draw closer to the holidays and the New Year, may the filled with a happy, blessed, healthy and prosperous time to spend with family and meet the challenges face on and we steam head at full speed for our Veterans whom we serve.

➔ The Holidays are coming and the year is closing out. What a lasting gift to give by donating to the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division of The American Legion Department of California. Don’t forget you can tax deduct by donating to the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation “Rehab Fund” (501 c 19) and/or California VA & R Foundation (501 c 3). Both are tax deductible and make out the check to **American Legion Department of California earmarked either Rehab Fund or Foundation.** All proceeds go the VA & R Division so we can continue to “Care for those who have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan.”



DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN



John Aldridge

Blessings everyone. On September 24th and 25th, I was in Indianapolis attending the Annual Chaplains Conference. The Conference was very enlightening. I had anticipated a much larger group but the group was about 30-35. The National Chaplain stated, if anyone is interested in attending the conference, they can register on-line. The Conference generally occurs around the 4th weekend in September at the Sheraton in Indianapolis (same time the Americanism Conference is going on). I encourage all Chaplains (Legion, Auxiliary, Sons, Riders, etc.) to attend a Conference.

During the conference, we discussed many concerns. One of the main topics discussed was the ways an American Legion Chaplain can best provide for the Spiritual needs of all Legion members regardless of one’s own religion, church or denomination. In another discussion, I found out all Chaplains should have a copy of the official chaplain guide and prayer manual. This is important because the old “How To” Chaplain’s manual is no longer the official publication by National Headquarters although it still can be found online. The Department has replenished its’ supply of official Chaplain Guides and I’ve asked for them to be brought to our Spring DEC.

As an American Legion family, I ask that every member continue praying for the sick/injured. Prayer changes situations. Also, please continue sending cards, flowers, etc. or visiting them. Sometimes it helps comfort a member(s) when they receive a card or visit. When a member passes away, sometimes cards and gifts of sympathy to family members helps comfort them by knowing others care and share in their grief. Please continue to pass the word along if you know of someone injured, hospitalized or deceased. Thank you.

To all Chaplains: Please know that as spiritual leaders of our respective areas, it is imperative that we make our presence known and if possible, to be of assistance when needed. It may be helpful to you to establish a rapport with local churches, hospitals, and funeral directors. Also, be aware of other resources available in your respective communities. Thank you very much for serving. As you serve, it is important for Post Chaplains to keep records of their activities as they occur so they can complete and turn in the Annual Post Chaplain’s report. The report form has been revised.

Here’s a word for our great Organization; For God and Country we associate ourselves together for the purposes spelled out in The American Legion Preamble. National describes our service to God and Country program as basic Americanism, and it is non-denominational. As we continue to serve, please keep in mind our founding fathers ideas and beliefs that The American Legion recognizes and emphasizes the spiritual foundations upon which our nation rests. Yes, there is a very good reason why God comes first in our organization.

Last but not least, do you hear the voice of God calling on you to serve in the Chaplaincy? If so, please answer the call. Let your intentions be known to Commanders at all levels. The Chaplaincy can always use help. God Bless you all... Have safe, happy and Blessed Holidays!

Sincerely, Chaplain John.

“Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.”
Proverbs 16:3 (KJV)



DEPARTMENT SERGEANT-AT-ARMS



E. "Paul" Ball

There are so many good articles out there and good information regarding our National Flag. The rituals and protocols that we have with in our association. We all know what the flag of our country means to us as citizens. There are flags that we salute and flags that we do not salute, one being the POW/MIA flag. Saluting this POW/MIA banner would mean the servicemen and women or veterans are deceased but not prisoner of war POW or missing in action MIA.

A question is on whether or not with your cover on and saluting the American Flag and repeating the Pledge of Allegiance. I attend post meetings where this is done including my own post and they state that this is right. I do not speak while saluting the flag with my cover on.

In opening ceremony of a regular meeting, it states "The Chaplain will offer prayer." All members/guests in attendance shall remain standing with their cap removed and placed over the heart from the opening prayer through the POW/MIA ceremony, and CONCLUDING with the Pledge of Allegiance." Concluding meaning to the end. Following prayer, the POW/MIA ceremony, and the pledge of allegiance everyone will recover." We should all read the article that was in the October 2016 California Legionnaire by the Past Department Sergeant-At-Arms, Larry Leonardo, about the POW/MIA banner on the empty chair.



DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER REPRESENTING AREA 1



Kim D. Conrad

Hello California Legionnaires.

Area 1 has held 2 caucuses so far this Legion year. Both were very productive. Thank you to all members that attended. Our next Area 1 Caucus will be held on January 21-22, 2017 at James E. Fowler Post 264, 541 5th Street, Lincoln. I encourage all Area 1 officers and commissioners to attend. If for some reason you can't attend, please send a copy of your report via email to our Area 1 Adjutant, Susan Johnson (suzyjo08@aol.com). We will be sure it is read at our meeting.

I have only 2 Districts left to visit in Area 1. I will visit District 5 in Petaluma on December 4 and District 4 in Chico on December 11. I have thoroughly enjoyed my District visits so far. I've had the pleasure of meeting many new acquaintances and have seen many posts that I've not visited before. I'd like to thank everyone for welcoming me and the great hospitality. If a second visit is necessary to any District in Area 1 before Department Convention 2017, District Commanders just need to ask and I will be there.

I represented The American Legion Department of California at the Humboldt County Veteran Stand Down, September 30-October 2, in Ferndale with Mike Voight (District 1 First Vice Commander). We met many veterans, listened to their needs, explained the benefits of American Legion membership and maybe we will have future members. It was a great experience. Mike and I plan on being there each year.

I will attend the Walk For Veterans on December 16, 2016, 10:00 AM at Capitol Park in Sacramento where Our National Commander and Department Commander are scheduled to participate. All Veterans are invited.

All Districts in Area 1 have either scheduled a revitalization or have already conducted one. I'm hopeful that we can meet or exceed our membership goal this year for The Department of California.

Keep working membership.

FULL SPEED AHEAD



DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER REPRESENTING AREA 2



Lawrence R. Douthard Sr.

First I want to thank everyone who sent cards, email or spoke to me personally concerning the passing of my wife Joyce. Your condolences were very much appreciated as I and my family work through our loss. Joyce supported me in my participation in many veteran organizations and this year was the first time she could not accompany me to convention.

On July 4th, I attended and participated in the annual Carnival Day at the VA Hospital in Menlo Park. I attended the American Legion Department Picnic at Yountville VA Home. A good time was had by all. Everyone enjoyed the band, and I picked up my supply of homemade Jalapeno Jam for the year.

I attended the Fall DEC meeting at Amador Post 108 and as usual they were a gracious host. Department Commander Gary Leach conducted an excellent meeting. Membership goals have been set and it is "Full Speed Ahead." Also, I had the opportunity to sign-up and become a CALPA member once again.



DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER REPRESENTING AREA 4



James A. Hadley

Greetings California Legionnaires. I attended the 5th Area Caucus in Long Beach at the VA Hospital on September 11 just to see how the other half works, not bad. Wednesday, September 14th, I attended the 19th District's meeting in Pico Rivera and the 17th District meeting at Bob Hope Patriotic Hall on Friday September 16. I attended the 6th Area meeting in Pacific Palisades on Sunday September 18.

South Los Angeles Veterans Collaborative held a pancake breakfast for homeless veterans on Veterans Day at St. Andrew's park in Los Angeles. About 60 people were feed a good breakfast, and there were also giveaways. There was a short program where a representative from Karen Bass's office spoke, 8th Council District Marqueece Harris-Dawson and Anthony Anderson-field deputy 8th Council District. They were also co-sponsors of the pancake breakfast.

The next Area 4 meeting will be:

Saturday, February 4, 2017

10:00 am

Community Post #46

5309 Sepulveda Blvd

Culver City 90230

(310) 391- 3087

Please join us when/if your schedule permits. We've got a great team. We'll be a little NOISY and sometime SENSIBLE, but I promise that we'll be TEAMIN' with our fellow Legionnaires throughout the country to make our voices heard on issues affecting our Veterans. Thanks again and God Bless

Those who came before me have set the bar high but with your help, we will raise it! We will continue to take care of fellow veterans and their families, continue to support our local communities, work our programs, support each other, and continue to push membership.



DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER REPRESENTING AREA 5



Raymond Baxter

Greetings Comrades. If you received a recent email from our Past Department Adjutant, Bill Siler III, you may recognize the following phrase: "force to be reckoned with." The phrase means we can and should make a difference in the lives of fellow veterans in our communities who are currently members of our great American Legion Family and those potential members who are not familiar with the American Legion Family.

Community involvement makes a difference in understanding the presence and benefits of the American Legion and how we fit into our local areas with our cooperative participation in the military recognition-related ceremonies: Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Presidents Day, Military Birthdays, POW-MIA, local parades and functions that recognize all veterans in their community. Participating in establishing or restoring veterans-related memorials at local cemeteries that have been overlooked and in need of attention is important to make our communities aware of our Veterans presence and sacrifices made. For example, the current notable restoration project located in Area 5 is in District 30 - Imperial Valley. The restoration project has been recognized by the local newspapers for the joint efforts of American Legion Holtville Bradley-Keefer Post 138 and Calipatria Post 135, American Legion Auxiliary and the local Boy Scout troop. The Boy Scouts are developing a veterans' memorial at this site and local volunteers are joining in to donate their time and efforts to see this project to completion. This is true recognition - working in one of the hottest environments in the State of California to restore a forgotten cemetery. The American Legion and Auxiliary are stepping up to be "a force to be reckoned with." Accolades to District 30, Area 5!

—AREA 5, see page 5

Supporting the Community

By Mark L. Rice, Post Commander

Fair Oaks American Legion Post 383 has been learning the value of community involvement. Knowing that the American Legion is a valuable part of their community, they recently decided to show their gratitude to their local First Responders.

It started with a suggestion by Post Adjutant, Bill Heilmann, that the post seek some way to show a sign of appreciation for those heroes that put it all on the line for the safety and wellbeing of their community. At first they sought to take up a post collection for Peet's Coffee gift cards, but the various department regulations prevent officers and

firefighters from receiving any form of gratuity. After a long round table discussion, it was decided that putting up a couple of banners at a busy intersection simply saying thanks. The idea was taken to a post meeting and the membership voted to support the signs. Post member Dominick Damore researched locations where at the end of the current election, we could get permission to use a space where election signs were removed. A sight was found, permission granted and on November 9th, the day after the election up went the banners.

The Executive Committee knows that not only is the post demonstrating its support for these



heroes, but Fair Oaks is also made aware that the American Legion

is an important part of the local community as well and is involved.

Title: The American Legion Walk for Veterans
Date: December 16, 2016
Time: 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Location: California State Vietnam Veterans War Memorial (Capitol Ave. and 15th St., Sacramento)

DESCRIPTION

The American Legion, Department of California is hosting The American Legion Walk for Veterans on December 16, 2016 that will be led by National Commander Charlie Schmidt.

The purpose of this free 1-mile community awareness walk is to (1) raise awareness about veterans and The American Legion's positive impact on communities nationwide, (2) bring attention to the many great services that The American Legion provides (e.g., advocacy for veterans' benefits, job fairs, family support through Temporary Financial Assistance), and (3) bring attention to veterans who served their country and paid the ultimate sacrifice.

All participants will be required to sign a Release and Waiver of Liability form available for download at The American Legion, State of California Web site (www.calegion.org). Participants under 18 years of age will be required to have their parent/legal guardian consent to their participation by signing the release form. The completed and signed form should either be scanned and emailed to post233wfv@gmail.com by December 15 or provided at the time of check-in on December 16 prior to the start of the walk.

CONTACT

Email inquiries regarding this event to post233wfv@gmail.com

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL REGISTRANTS

Name, email, cell phone number, company/organization, t-shirt size (Small to 3X), and if over 18 years of age.

ONLINE REGISTRATION TIMEFRAME

Monday, October 24, 2016 (12:00 A.M.) through Thursday, December 15, 2016 (11:59 P.M.)

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

We look forward to having you participate in the walk on Friday, December 16, 2016. Check in will begin at 10:00 a.m. on the day of the event. In order to participate, a completed and signed Release and Waiver of Liability forms must be submitted for each participant by the time of check-in.

MESSAGE TO DISPLAY AFTER ONLINE REGISTRATION ENDS

Online registrations for the walk are no longer being accepted. You are welcome to show up at the check-in table on the day of the event to regis-



ter, however, please note that t-shirts are limited.

The American Legion, Department of California

The American Legion was chartered and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veterans' organization devoted to mutual helpfulness. It is the nation's largest wartime veterans service organization, committed to mentoring youth and sponsorship of wholesome programs in our communities, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting strong national security, and continued devotion to fellow service members and veterans. Hundreds of local American Legion programs and activities strengthen the nation one community at a time. American Legion Baseball is one of the nation's most successful amateur athletic programs, educating young people about the importance of sportsmanship, citizenship and fitness. The Operation Comfort Warriors program supports recovering wounded warriors and their families, providing them with "comfort items" and the kind of support that makes a hospital feel a little bit more like home. The Legion also raises millions of dollars in donations at the local, state and national levels to help veterans and their families during times of need and to provide college scholarship opportunities.

The American Legion is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization with great political influence perpetuated by its grass-roots involvement in the legislation process from local districts to Capitol Hill. Legionnaires' sense of obligation to community, state and nation drives an honest advocacy for veterans in Washington. The Legion stands behind the issues most important to the nation's veterans community, backed by resolutions passed by volunteer leadership.

The American Legion's success depends entirely on active membership, participation and volunteerism. The organization belongs to the people it serves and the communities in which it thrives.

Ways & Means Commission

By Janice Somers, Chairman

"We Heard You"

Now, it is your chance. The subject matter for the calendar will be our Legion family doing business, not

landscapes. This calendar is one of the major fundraising items that you buy to support our Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) through the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation (VA&R) account. Every cent goes

to this worthy program, not into the general fund. The major fundraisers are Holiday Cards, Fall & Spring Sweepstakes, and the Calendar.

We need your photos!!! These photos must be in California and

doing American Legion Family work. The Ways and Means Commission will pick 15 of these photos for next year's calendar.

—WAYS & MEANS, see page 7

Legion of the Silver Rose

By Clara Pon

So, you ask, “What is the Legion of the Silver Rose? Is that a new Legion program?” The answer to that would be, “No, it is not.”



Photo courtesy of Ken George. Bill Cook guest speaker & 2015 honoree.

Richard “Big Rick” Guerrero, Director of Legion of the Silver Rose, California, Vice President of Chapter 262, 2nd Vice Commander of Post 262 in Fontana, and an Army Veteran brought this program here from Arizona in 2013. He was so moved by its mission, he added this award event to his Rider’s Chapter to try to give Vietnam Veterans something they deserved a long time ago.

The mission of the Legion of the Silver Rose (LSR) is to recognize the courage, heroism and contributions of American Service personnel found to have been exposed to Agent Orange in a combat zone, whose exposure resulted in internal, invisible wounds which are revealed only by passage of time. The Department of Veterans Affairs recognizes over 40 cancers and sicknesses, including Diabetes, as Agent Orange related

and “service connected.” The LSR hopes to see every veteran exposed to Agent Orange given the honors and recognition they deserve. And, until the day arrives that our own government decides to honor these victims, the Legion of the Silver Rose will continue to offer their Silver Rose Award to all eligible veterans or their surviving loved ones.

On Saturday, October 15, 2016, District 29 Commander Ken George and I attended our first Legion of the Silver Rose induction ceremony along with over 200 guests at American Legion Post 716 in Los Alamitos, hosted by American Legion Riders Chapter 716. American Legion Post 716, Los Alamitos also happens to be the mother chapter for the Legion of the Silver Rose. They were one of the first posts to donate money to this worthy cause.

Prior to the induction ceremony, the 17 honorees were transported to Joint Forces Training Center by a combined California (ALR Chapters 262, 132, 281, and 716) and Arizona (ALR Chapters 24 and 35) Legion riders escort to pay tribute at the Veterans Memorial Park. Being part of the Riders escort was truly an honor and a privilege. One of the riders was past District 29 Commander and 2015 Silver Rose Award honoree Bill Cook from Saddleback Valley Post 862. As one of the guest speakers for this year’s honorees, he spoke passionately and reverently about his fellow Vietnam Veterans and those suffered or are suffering the effects of Agent Orange.

The 2016 Legion of the Silver Rose honorees were:
 William H. Adair, E-4 USMC
 Dennis W. Alcorn, E-5 USA
 Martin F. Daly, E-4 USA
 Kenneth W. Derr, E-4 USA
 Jack P. Kuebler, E-4 USA
 Charles E. Landreth II, E-5 USMC
 David P. Legat, E-4 USN
 Ray Lisa E-7, USA
 Richard Lucio, E-4 USN
 Antonio Maldonado, E-4 USA
 Michael D. Murphy SR, E-4 USMC



Photo courtesy of Ken George. K. George (L Front), B. Cook (L Back) with Legion of the Silver Rose honorees or loved ones that accepted on their behalf and Big Rick Guerrero (R).

Patrick M. O’Brien, E-5 USA
 David A. Pflaster, E-4 USAF
 Michael F. Rossler, E-4 USAF
 Frankie L. Rowland, E-4 USAF
 Edward St. Onge, E-5 USA
 Craig B. Stern, E-5 USA

A special thanks and welcome was extended to our Legion Family members from Arizona. National Director of LSR Ken Thorp and his wife Sylvia was accompanied by Mike Smith, Tom Basil, and Bill Hachbarth from Post and Chapter 24 from Tombstone, AZ. The other half of the Arizona entourage included President of Chapter 35 John Gadberry, Basil and Colleen Kaspar, Susie Benton, Tim Derk, April Miyasato, Dave and Terri Genevay, and Ken and Marty White from Post and Chapter 35 from Chandler, AZ.

Big Rick plans to hold two ceremonies a year beginning in 2017. He held his first induction ceremony last year on October 3, 2015 honoring 25 Vietnam Veterans with 325 guests in attendance. His second induction ceremony this past October drew another big crowd. He attends the Area 5 Legion Riders President’s meetings to ask for donations to help him with the financial costs to plan, organize, and present awards at these induction ceremonies. He also raises money all year long by selling men’s and women’s shirts, pins, cups, patches, and other items as well as hold raffles and fundraising events.

If you would like to learn more about the Legion of the Silver Rose, be part of it, or donate to the Legion of the Silver Rose,



Photo courtesy of Ken George. Legion Rider escort for 2015 Silver Rose honorees.

please contact Big Rick Guerrero at (909) 440-0670, or by email at: richardguerrero3928@msn.com.

If you are interested, their next events start next year.

- Information booth at Legion Post 434 during the Area 5 Rider Director’s meeting on January 21, 2017.
- Induction ceremony on April 8, 2017 will be held at Fontana Post 262.

More information on the Legion of the Silver Rose can be found at their website along with an application form to nominate a Vietnam Veteran and photos from previous induction ceremonies at <http://www.legionofthesilverrose.com/>

–WAYS & MEANS, from page 6 Department.

Every photo must have sender’s name, email address, phone number, post number, district, area, and a caption of why the photo was taken, date of the photo, and who is in it. Email your entry to calendar@calegion.org.

The deadline for submittal is Wednesday March 1, 2017. Submit your Photos via email to the

The Ways and Means Commission is working on a Department of California pin to help fund the VA&R program. More details will follow once we present our proposal to the Finance Commission and Department Executive Committee in the Spring.

Our VSOs need your help to support these fundraising programs

under the VA&R headings.

This year’s approved budget is short by over \$100,000. We need all members to support the California American Legion fund raising efforts. All donations we receive from these go directly to support our Veterans Assistance and Rehabilitation Program. Only 10% to 13% of our members are participating in these fundraisers now. Let’s work together to help

our Veterans by increasing our participation in the California American Legion fund raising programs. The Ways and Means Commission task and mission is to take care of our California Veterans who seek help through the services provided by VSOs. We welcome your support and encourage ideas to fund the VA&R program for today and future years. Thank you.

Charles E. Schmidt, National Commander of The American Legion – 2016/2017



Charles E. Schmidt was elected national commander of the 2.2 million-member American Legion on Sept. 1, 2016, in Cincinnati during the 98th national convention of America's largest veterans' organization.

Schmidt enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1965 and served on active duty until his retirement in 1993. During that time, he advanced from an administrative clerk to a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Officer Training School, earning a commission and assignments to Executive Support Officer positions at major headquarters. His Air Force assignments took him to Oregon, California, Montana, Nebraska, Colorado, England, Germany, Philippines and Vietnam.

As an active-duty service member, Schmidt joined Story-Hardin Post 164 in Craig, Mo., in 1984. After his military retirement as a major, he was employed by the Air Force Total Quality Management Program at Lowry Technical Training Center in Denver.

He transferred his American Legion membership to Harney County Post 63 in Burns, Ore., when he moved to Oregon for a 15-year career at the Greater Oregon Federal Credit Union. He retired from the credit union as the executive vice president.

An American Legion Paid-Up-For-Life member, Schmidt served as the Department of Oregon commander from 2004-2005, and he's served at every level of the Legion, including National Executive Committeeman from 2005-2016.

While serving in the Air Force, Schmidt earned a Bronze Star, a Defense Meritorious Service Medal, a Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, a Joint Service Commendation Medal, an Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, an Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor device and two oak leaf clusters, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal with three oak leaf clusters, a National Defense Service Medal with a bronze star, a Vietnam Service Medal, an Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, an Air Force Overseas Long Tour Ribbon with two oak leaf clusters, an Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with one silver oak leaf cluster, an NCO Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon with oak leaf cluster, a Small Arms Expert Marksmanship with bronze star, an Air Force Training Ribbon with oak leaf cluster, a Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm, and a Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with four bronze stars.

Schmidt resides in Hines, Ore., with his wife, Linda. They have two daughters, Andria and Cori, and two sons-in-law, Peter and Anthony. They also have six grandchildren: Madeline, Alex, Adam, Raymond, Nicholas and Thomas.

National Commander, Charles Schmidt's, Itinerary-Department of California

Friday-December 9, 2016

- Arrives at San Diego Airport

Saturday, December 10, 2016

- Tour of Mt. Soledad, 9:00-9:45 AM
- Brunch at American Legion Post 460, Kearney Mesa, 10:15 – 11:45 AM
- Army/Navy Game at American Legion Post 416, Encinitas, 12:15 – 2:30 PM
- Dinner banquet at American Legion Post 731, Linda Vista, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Sunday, December 11, 2016

- Breakfast, Walk for Veterans, Lunch at Hollywood American Legion Post 43, 8:00 AM
- Social, 5:30-7:00 PM and Dinner, 7:00 PM, American Legion Post 283, Pacific Palisades

Monday, December 12, 2016

- Tour of West Los Angeles VA Medical Center, 10:00 AM followed by lunch in Hospital cafeteria
- Social and Dinner, 888 Seafood Restaurant-Rosemead, hosted by Chinatown Post 628, 6:00 PM

Tuesday, December 13, 2016

- Social (10:00)/Lunch (11:30), American Legion Post 291-Newport Beach; following Lunch, **tour of Newport Harbor by boat, invitation only**

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

- Lunch at American Legion Post 595 at 11:00 AM, Perris, then tour of Riverside Veterans' Cemetery at 1:00 PM
- Social (5:00 PM) and Dinner (6:00 PM), American Legion Post 79, Riverside

Thursday, December 15, 2016

- Department Headquarters, Sanger, Light Lunch
- Social (6:00 PM), Dinner (7:00 PM), American Legion Post 108, Amador

Friday, December 16, 2016

- Visit State Capitol, Sacramento, 9:30 AM
- Walk for Veterans, 11:00 AM – Noon, California State Vietnam Veterans War Memorial
- Social (6:00 PM), Dinner/Program (7:00 PM), American Legion Mission City Post 564, Santa Clara

Saturday, December 17, 2016

- Tour of Yountville Veterans' Home
- Reception (6:00 PM), Dinner (7:00 PM), American Legion Post 77, Woodland

Sunday, December 18, 2016

- National Commander Schmidt concludes California visit

Dicken Era Carolers
5:30 pm

JOIN US
December 11, 2016

NATIONAL COMMANDER'S BANQUET

Social
5:30-7:00 pm

Dinner
7:00 pm

RSVP
By December 7th \$15.00 per person
(310) 454-0527 business@post283.org

15247 La Cruz Drive
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

The American Legion
Department of California

Chinatown Post 628

- Presents -
"An Evening with the National Commander"
Charlie Schmidt

Monday - December 12, 2016
6:00 PM - 1800 hrs
RSVP Required by: Dec. 6, 2016

Contact:
Wayne Yee - 818.371.9909 - w.yee@atf.net
Tony Wong - tkwong@w2designinc.com

888 Seafood Restaurant
8450 E. Valley Blvd., #121
Rosemead, CA 91770

All Checks Payable to:
American Legion Post 628
P.O. Box 709
Alhambra, CA 91802

DONATIONS: \$30.00 Per Person - \$300.00 Per Table

ALL LEGION MEMBERS WELCOME!

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016
LUNCHEON HOSTED BY
NEWPORT HARBOR POST 291

HONORING
CHARLES E. SCHMIDT
NATIONAL
COMMANDER

PROGRAM
10AM SOCIAL HOUR
11AM CALL TO ORDER
11:30AM LUNCH

\$20 DONATION
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED 949.673.5070

Mission City Post 564
Is Proud To Announce The Visit Of
American Legion National Commander
Charles E. Schmidt

Friday, December 16, 2016

No Host Social Hour At: 6:00PM • Dinner At: 7:00PM
Program Begins At 8:00PM

Seating Limited To 200 • "Business Casual" Attire
RSVP With \$5.00 Per Person By Mail Only By **December 10th**
No Call-In RSVP

Make Checks Payable & Mail To:
Mission City Post 564
2120 Walsh Avenue
Santa Clara, California 95050

Oratorical Contest

By Fran Kilgore,
Commission Chairman

The plans are made and the dates have been set. This year the Department of California's High School Oratorical finals will be held at the Capital building in Sacramento.

In September, I met with Commander Leach, Janet Wilson and Lorraine Plass in the offices of Pete Conaty and his staff member, Dana Nichol. We spent an afternoon touring the Capital building and looking at various available rooms for holding our finals.

These rooms can only be available to us with the sponsorship of a member of the legislature. Through the efforts of Pete Conaty, we are being



helped by Assemblyman Ken Cooley of the 8th District. Pete agrees that this is the perfect venue for an oratorical contest on the US Constitution.

The time to be planning your contest is NOW. To be on schedule for the Department and National Finals the following schedule should be followed:
Post contest should take place in late December or early January. Some are underway already. District contests should be held in late January or early February so that Area contests can be held in February. Our Department contest will be held on Saturday, March 4, 2017 at 1:00 PM. The National finals will be held on April 22 – 23, 2017 in Indianapolis, IN.
If you are having trouble getting your Post or District Contest going, contact your Area Commissioner. We are all here to help. It is our job.

Area 1	Smokey Davis	smokey95692@att.net	phone (530) 392-2203
Area 2	Alan Hale	toodarnbusy@earthlink.net	phone (650) 359-3277
Area 3	Fran Kilgore	fran58@hotmail.com	phone (559) 977-8053
Area 4	Byron Hobbis Jr.	bhobbis@gmail.com	phone (562) 941-5798
Area 5	Josephine Thomas	togojosie@gmail.com	phone (909) 521-6650
Area 6	David Gibson	bgibson@aol.com	phone (714) 906-1068

Of all the positions that I have held in The American Legion, the High School Oratorical Program has been the most rewarding. If your Post has not held one recently you should step

up and do it. You will be glad you did. You will meet such wonderful students. The room we have reserved for the contest will only hold 98 people, so it is possible that in the

next issue we will be asking for a tentative rsvp if you are planning to attend. It will not be necessary for attending but it will enable us to plan on an overflow if one is expected.

NEWS RELEASE: Non-VA Emergency Card

On Tuesday, October 4th, Mr. Robert Marenich, Marine Corps veteran and Chairperson of the Veterans and Families Advisory Council (VFAC) at Sacramento VA Medical Center at Mather, CA, gave an outstanding presentation explaining the new, vitally-important and long-needed Non-VA Emergency Card which will be used throughout the VA Northern California Healthcare System (VANCHCS) beginning in 2017. The Non-VA Emergency Card will provide specific instructions to the veteran, spouse, caregiver, EMTs, hospital emergency personnel, and billing instructions directly to Mare Island, and will be distributed first to all veterans who are enrolled at Mather VA hospital.

The purpose of the card is to (1) direct the EMTs to take the ailing veteran to the nearest VA medical facility if possible and avoid taking the veteran to a non-VA hospital by

EMTs unless essential, (2) have all bills sent directly to Mare Island payment center instead of the veteran,

(3) cut down on denied claims, (4) speed up payment to non-VA service providers, and (4) ultimately reduce financial and emotional distress on veterans.

The current practice of billing the veteran directly has resulted in ruined credit records, several bankruptcies, and some suicides by veterans overwhelmed by emergency medical bills and no-pay/slow-pay VA procedures.

The need for change to the current system was brought to the attention of the Veterans and Families Advisory Council by members of American Legion Sacramento Legislative Action Post 861, after some of its members experienced severe financial hardship under the current no-pay/slow-pay system. In support, Commander Harper

formed a committee consisting of Ernie Larson and Bud Lee to write and formally present a pro-forma proposal to the VFAC at Mather VA, and the project was approved and adopted by Post 861. Previous VFAC Chairperson, Ms. Leslie Winegar (Navy veteran), Mr. Marenich, and Mr. Michael Williams (Army veteran), have done an admirable job of providing the necessary leadership and follow-through on the year-long project by getting the VFAC and hospital administration to adopt the concept, designing the card, coordinating with Mare Island payment center, and educating area hospitals and ambulance services on the card.

Ms. Winegar, a VA employee, was promoted to VANCHCS and Mr. Marenich, a highly-regarded volunteer, was appointed to lead the VFAC. It should be noted that Veterans Affiliated Council Commander, Phil Rios, is also a



Mr. Robert Marenich, Chairperson, VFAC (Lt) Cmdr. Don Harper, American Legion Post 861 (Rt)

long-time contributing member of the VFAC at Mather VA hospital. The Non-VA Emergency Card, once it is well-established in Northern California, is expected to be recognized and adopted in other regions and, eventually, nationally.

Past Commanders' Club

By Robert C. Heinisch, State President

The Past Commanders' Club of California has a great opportunity to help the Department of California grow by doing what it does best.

Our club is comprised of hundreds of past Post, County, District or Department Commanders. As former elected leaders from every level of the Department of California, we have experienced and solved nearly every type of problem or situation that can arise at the Post level, and our mission is to help develop leadership throughout the Department.

If you are a new Post Commander seeking mentoring, confidential assistance, knowledge, training or advice, we can help. Just contact your Outpost President. If you do not know your Outpost President, contact your District Commander and he/she will send you to the right person.

If you are a District Commander and have a problem Post which dominates your time, bring us on board to help you turn it around. If you have a leadership problem anywhere in your District, let us know. We will work with you - just ask.

We can help train new officers for their positions, steer them in the right direction, make their life a little easier and let them know that they are not alone.

We do not wear symbols on our chest, capes, or neoprene body suits. We don't judge, don't break confidences and don't brag too much.

If you are a Commander or Past Commander, join us. You too can have fun and solve problems at the same time.

We do not have a symbol projected in the sky, but if you need us, just call.

Legislative Advocate's Report



By Pete Conaty, Legislative Advocate

We had a very successful year at the Capitol. We covered over 60 bills this year. The following list is the veterans and military bills signed into law by the Governor at the end of this year's Legislative Session, which ended on August 31. The Governor had until September 30 to sign or veto those bills. The 2015-15 Legislative Session is effectively over and all legislation will start over again in January. There will be newly some elected legislators also.

This newly convened Legislature in January is one of the reasons it is so important for Legionnaires to attend the Legion's Annual Day at the State Capitol on March 14. We need to meet the new legislators, reacquaint ourselves with the old ones, and get engaged on the newly introduced veterans bills for 2017. Please spread the word and the date to all of your post members.

Pete Conaty

For more information of all past legislation (as well as current legislation once the session begins in January), go to: <https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billSearchClient.xhtml>

**AB 2254 AUTHOR: Achadjian [R]
SUMMARY:**

Revises the list of armories to be made available for providing temporary shelter to homeless persons to include the Atascadero armory in San Luis Obispo County.

**AB 2273 AUTHOR: Irwin [D]
SUMMARY:**

Prohibits a member of the active militia, including the National Guard, from being prosecuted for a military crime based on an attempt to kill himself or herself. Requires the Adjutant General to ensure that any member of the active militia that attempts to kill himself or herself is referred to the Behavioral Health Liaison Program to receive assistance, counseling, or referral to other appropriate available services.

**AB 2562 AUTHOR: Assembly Veterans Affairs Committee
SUMMARY:**

Relates to military service benefits. Deletes references to the date a reservist is called to active duty, both the definition of a reservist and payment deferral provisions, thereby making benefits available to any reservist who otherwise meets the definition.

**SB 294 AUTHOR: Pan [D]
SUMMARY:**

Requires the Board of Administration of the Public Employees' Retirement System to provide a form to be used by a member to receive credit for his or her military service with employer paid employee and employer contributions. Requires employers to inform the member his or her rights to receive credit within certain number of days of the member's return to state service by utilizing that form. Requires employer to provide letters or electronic communications to all employees informing them of those rights.

**SB 543 AUTHOR: Wolk [D]
SUMMARY:**

Amends existing law that establishes Veteran's Home of California in Barstow, Chula Vista, Lancaster, Ventura and Yountville. Provides for an administrator for each home or homesite. Provides funding for designing and constructing veterans' homes. Requires each home to establish a Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Operating Fund to administer quality of life activities for the general welfare of residents. Provides for funding.

**SB 866 AUTHOR: Roth [D]
SUMMARY:**

Authorizes a housing developer or service provider that provides housing or services pursuant to the Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of 2014, to provide housing or services to veterans and their children in women only facilities in limited instances.

**SB 905 AUTHOR: Bates [R]
SUMMARY:**

Defines a club for purposes of the qualification for a on premises liquor license for members of a club and their guests. Includes a nonprofit umbrella organization established to provide a central meeting location, and services for veterans, including those on active duty, and that owns or leases, operates, and maintains a facility for these purposes. Requires the organization to serve a minimum number of veteran organizations.

**SB 1012 AUTHOR: Nguyen [R]
SUMMARY:**

Requires any Flag of the United State or the Flag of the State purchased by the State or any local government agency be made in the United States.

**SB 1059 AUTHOR: Monning [D]
SUMMARY:**

Relates to the State Approving Agency for Veterans Education. Includes as a qualifying institution for federal Title 38 awards, an institution that has been accredited by the Committee of Bar Examiners, if the institution complies with specified disclosure and compliance requirements.

**SB 1180 AUTHOR: Jackson [D]
SUMMARY:**

Requires that a certificated or classified employee who is a military veteran with a specified military service connected disability rating be entitled to a specified number of days leave of absence with pay for the purpose of undergoing disability related medical treatment.

**SB 1227 AUTHOR: Lara [D]
SUMMARY:**

Requires the California Conservation Corps to collaborate with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Employment Development Department to assist any corps member who is a veteran of the United States Armed Forces, in obtaining employment after participating in the corps program. Provides that such collaboration efforts shall include providing access to veterans supportive services and workforce services.

**SB 1314 AUTHOR: Block [D]
SUMMARY:**

Provides that community college students participating in specified baccalaureate degree programs who also satisfy specified eligibility requirements shall receive awards for upper division coursework fee. Extends awards under the Middle Class Scholarship Program to community college students enrolled in upper division coursework of a baccalaureate degree program. Requires the Office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to provide any financial data necessary for award determination.

**SB 1455 AUTHOR: Block [D]
SUMMARY:**

Provides that a pupil complies with a school district's residency requirements for school attendance in a school district if he or she is a pupil whose parent is transferred or is pending transfer to a military installation within the boundaries of the district while on active military duty pursuant to an official documentation. Requires a school district to accept applications by electronic means for enrollment and course registration for those pupils.

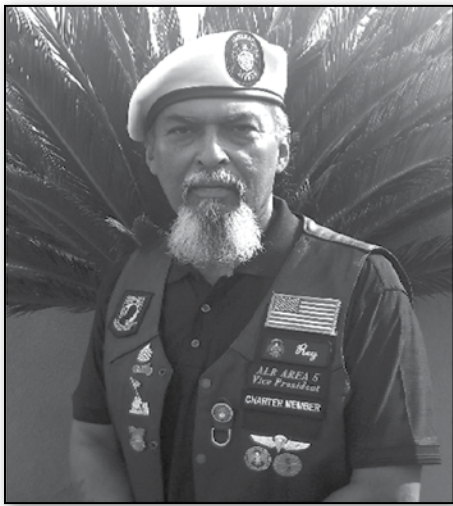
**SB 1458 AUTHOR: Bates [R]
SUMMARY:**

Amends an existing property tax law which provides a disabled veteran's property tax exemption for the principal place of residence of a veteran or a veteran's spouse. Expands that definition of veteran to include a person who has been discharged in other than dishonorable conditions from service under certain conditions and who has been determined to be eligible for federal veterans' health and medical benefits. Provides time periods regarding the disabled veterans' exemption.

★ **DON'T FORGET** ★

Deadline for the next issue
of the California Legionnaire
is **January 10, 2017.**

American Legion Riders (ALR) – Area 5



By Rey Ruiz, Area 5 Vice President

Varoom, varoom this is the familiar roar you hear when the Riders are in town or arriving at your Post.

Riders from Chula Vista, East to Indio and stretching to Barstow and as far north as Los Alamitos and EVERY WHERE in between... this is AREA 5 American Legion Riders.

Our Motto is Veteran's serving Veteran's. We gather for Poker Runs, Parades and community events to serve Veteran's in our communities.

Our members are the motorcycle enthusiasts of the American Legion; with members from The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary, and The Sons of The American Legion. WE are the collective Family of the Legion.

We are also the mobile unit of the Legion. Many Legion members will travel to their home Post and to other local Post from time-to-time. The Riders will travel weekly throughout the Southern sector of California and beyond. If you have an event, more than likely Riders from 40, 60 to 100 miles away will be there.

Since being nominated and elected as the Area 5 VP, I had to sit back and (a) decide if this is something I could or wanted to do? (b) did I have the time to do it and do it whole heartedly?

Well after 7 months or so with the support of my wife and family the answer is YES a definite YES.... I have expanded my knowledge, broadened my relationships with comrades and we've enjoyed the time thus far.

Area 5 Riders is comprised of 31 Chapters and is roughly 900 riders or 46% of the Riders in the Department of California. Thus far they have participated in various events from Escorting the "Remembering Our Fallen" Exhibit, from Area 3 to the Midway in San Diego, Escorting Fallen Heroes Cart, Warrior Heart, Salute to Veterans Run, Legion of the Silver Rose, West Coast Thunder, Veteran's Honor Ride, The Barstow Veterans Home a variety of Car Shows, Poker Runs and just about any other legal means to raise funds in support of local Chapters, Posts and the community of Veterans in need with donations for the services that are need.

Charities that have been recipients of the fund raising are Our Heroes' Dreams, Miramar National Final Honors Carriage Service, Ft. Rosecrans Memorial Day Funding Hawley Veteran Center, VA&R, San Diego Veteran's Village, Wreaths Across America, White Heart Foundation, Wounded Warriors, Legion of the Siler Rose Tombstone, AZ and Los Alamitos, CA and the list goes on.

Last year the ALR Area 5 Community pulled together for service for a young Marine. This is one of my other volunteer positions. This 8-year old was gung-ho bright and energized the unit and his family. I placed an email out days before the services calling for an escort of service. To my surprise we had over 50 bikes and some 60+ Riders show up. The family was so amazed over what we had done for this young man-that these riders came and escorted their son to his final resting place. This is what we do. We honor and take care of our own. If not for us, who will?

The American Legion Riders are enthusiastic, motivated and dedicated to serve the community, youth and veterans. Additionally, these riders are not only a mobile unit but they are also involved with and support their Post. Without being a Post member we would not exist. We need to participate in post events and the family meetings. Legionnaires, SAL or Auxiliary, we need to be present as a member of that parent organization. Attend the monthly meetings not as a rider but as a Legionnaire, Son or Auxiliary member. Be supportive and engaged in the activities and be part of the solution.

Area 5 has collectively raised and donated countless funds and continue to fund raise for our community, youth and veteran organizations. We look forward to continuing the fund raising and donations. I am honored to serve as your Area 5 VP and look forward to a continued exciting year. I want to thank all the Posts that have ALR chapters for your dedication and participation. Continue to thrive, build and bring excitement to the Post.

The plug, if you're interested in starting a Chapter and want to be part of the roar and need information and guidance, feel free to contact me by email Area5vp@gmail.com on how you can start a Chapter. Riders not only bring motorcycles to the Post, they bring excitement, enthusiasm and other Riders to support them and the Post.

In closing from Area 5, our membership of Riders and I want to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season. Semper Fi

CORRECTION

The following is a correction to a front-page article showcased in the October 2016 issue of the California Legionnaire.

National Commander's Color Guard, Newport Harbor Post 291 Color Guard, Way to go!!!

By Clara Pon

The color guard team from Newport Harbor Post 291 went to Cincinnati to reclaim their 2015 National Color Guard Open Military Class championship at the 98th American Legion national convention on August 26, 2016. This was only the second time they competed in both categories.



L-R: National Commander Dale Barnett, Brian Fleming, Kevin Van Otterloo, Don Putzig & Carmen Williams holding the 1st place banner, Bob Bright, and Department Commander Gary Leach. Front, L-R: Ken George and Dennis De Rosia.

Law & Order Commission

Anthony N. Guerrero, Chairman

Law & Order Commission will be meet on May 13, 2017 in Clovis. We are requesting that all Post reports regarding Law & Order programs, Law Officer and Firefighter nominations, be submitted to the Area Commissioner by May 1, 2017. If you are unable to get it to your report to your Area Commissioner, you may send it to me c/o Anthony Guerrero, 1908 Cougar Lane, Clovis, CA, or you may call me at 559-322-4863 if you need any assistance.

No reports will be accepted at the Department Convention in Riverside. That will be too late for consideration. Thank you.



ALEI - January 21 CLASS ANNOUNCEMENT

January 21, 2017 at Bob Hope Patriotic Hall is the next class date to learn about programs offered under THE FOUR PILLARS of the American Legion, how to run them, recruit participants, conduct public relations activities to support them and obtain community involvement.

Contact Tim Mosman at 213 388 2655 to register.



DISTRICT SCRIBE COLUMN

District 18 Post Families Host First Responders Recognitions

By Laura Bradshaw

Various Post Families in the Elegant 18th District hosted simultaneous events honoring first responders on the 15th anniversary of the 9/11/01 attacks.

Abraham Lincoln Post 241 in Baldwin Park delivered 62 meals to two law enforcement and two fire stations in Baldwin Park, including the CHP.

Arcadia Post 247 invited law enforcement and fire personnel into the Post for breakfast, serving 10 first responders and then delivering 107 meals to stations in Arcadia, Duarte, Monrovia and Temple City.



El Monte Post 261 Family's guests

El Monte Post 261 invited law enforcement and fire personnel from El Monte Police and Fire stations into the Post for lunch.



First responder guests at Arcadia Post 247

East Pasadena Unit and Squadron 280 delivered more than 136 meals and six K-9 baskets to two police and four fire departments in Pasadena, South Pasadena and Altadena.

Charter Cove Post 755 in Covina delivered 118 meals to three law enforcement and eight fire stations located in Glendora, San Dimas and Covina.

Inspired by a social media posting from an American Legion Post in Florida, SAL Squadron 755 member Jesse Bradshaw presented the idea to the Post 755 Family and set the project in motion. Mr. Bradshaw challenged other post families in the 18th District to do something comparable to honor our first responders. Four other Posts accepted the challenge. Pasadena Post 13 and Pomona Post 30 hosted their own events on other weekends. Past Department President Norma Duvall-Douglas and Past District 18 Commander Peter Douglas III hosted a candlelight memorial in Harlingen, TX.

In addition to the meals delivered, 3735 First Responder Survival Kits (candy bags) were delivered by all Auxiliary Units to first responders throughout the 18th District. The project was headed up by District National Security Chairman Malinda Sinclair from Arcadia Unit 247 with assistance from District Community Service Chairman Laura Bradshaw from Charter Cove Unit 755.

District 26 November & December Events

By Romie Bassett, District Commander

Wednesday, December 7, we will be at the Redwood City Court house once again. The San Mateo County History Museum will be staging a special reception and exhibit opening at 5:00 p.m.

We are most hopeful that as a veteran of World War II, you can be with us. The displays within this new exhibition, Peninsula at War! San Mateo County's World War II Legacy will focus on what happened on the San Francisco Peninsula during that devastating conflict exactly 75 years ago. Members of the "Greatest Generation" who participated in the war effort, either in the armed services or as civilians, are being invited to this special opening event as guests of honor (at no expense of their own, of course).

The evening will include local leaders saluting veterans, live music of the 1940s (played by the Ron Borelli Orchestra) and special presentations to each veteran. If you plan to go to this event, it is necessary to let us know if you are coming. Call 650-299-0104 to RSVP. At that time, you will be asked what branch of the service you were in, when and where you served. With this information our History Museum will create a specific keepsake for you as a message of appreciation for your contribution to the safeguarding of our freedoms. If you have not visited us before, the San Mateo County History Museum is located at 2200 Broadway within the 106-year-old "Old Courthouse" in Redwood City. It features exhibits related to the use of natural resources, suburban development, ethnic experience and entrepreneurial achievement on the Peninsula from the time of the Costanoan Indian through today. The museum is open every day except Monday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Squadron 755 Commander Victor Putt, District 18 Community Service Chairman and Unit 755 President Laura Bradshaw, Post 755 Commander Ken Anderson and Squadron 755 member Jesse Bradshaw with San Dimas Sheriff officers

Ritual Commission

By Eric Kurtz, Chairman

Greetings Comrades,

As we enter the holiday season, I hope that all have a joyous time with friends and family. Also, as we hit the half-way point of service during the year, I hope that everyone holding a position at the various levels of leadership in the Department have been gaining knowledge of their position as well as for the next step in your future service in the American Legion. Learning is a never ending journey when it comes to ritual and ensuring that we do our best to do things right. Remember to keep an Officers Guide, the Constitution and By-Laws, Robert's Rules of Order, and those who have been there and done that close if you are not sure of something, and remember the only stupid question is the one not asked. One big important item with the elections being over is that even with our different views and opinions about the new administration is that we still need to stick together and continue to work as a team and a family. If anyone has any questions or information for me I can be contacted by email at cplelkurtz@gmail.com or phone at (661) 310-9030.

For Service to God and Country
Semper Fi



American Legion Riverside Post 79

presents a

Dinner Honoring

**National Commander
Charles E. Schmidt**

Riverside Post 79

**2979 Dexter Drive (Fairmont Park)
Riverside, CA 92501**

**Wednesday, December 14, 2016
5 pm No Host – Dinner 6 pm**

**Donation \$10.00
Roast Beef Dinner**

R.S.V.P.*

**Auxiliary President Judy Bendzala
(951) 293-6962**

bendzala55@gmail.com

**Commander Rudy Valadez
Rudy (951) 892-5614**

**Seating is Limited*

★ **DON'T FORGET** ★

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NSCC El Toro Battalion, Another Successful Fundraiser

By Ken George

The 5th annual Navy birthday ball was another successful fundraiser for the US Naval Sea Cadet Corps (NSCC) El Toro Battalion held on Saturday, October 22, 2016 at Newport Harbor Post 291. The artfully carved ice sculpture of the Navy eagle by Ulises Dominguez, part of the staff at Post 291, adorned the center of the hall surrounded by beautifully decorated tables. Party goers were immaculately dressed from tuxedos to retired and active military personnel dressed in their mess dress uniforms ready to dance and enjoy the festivities of the evening.

The evening started with the traditional piping aboard for our illustrious VIPs that included Commander Gary Leach, National Executive Committeeman Janet Wilson, Service Officer Scott McKee, and Historian Lillian L. Moss from The American Legion, Department of California, RDML Sandra Adams, USN (Ret.), Master Chief David Dickey, USNR (Ret.), LTJG Rene Marcoux, NSCC El Toro Battalion, National Vice President-STEM Mrs. Maria Dickey, Navy League, and USMC Iwo Jima

from Torrance down to Newport Beach to celebrate with all of us the 241st Navy birthday. We were very honored to have him attend.

The NSCC El Toro Battalion under the command of Rene Marcoux, also one of this events planning committee members is also the proud mom of Sierra Marcoux, Chief Petty Officer of NSCC El Toro Battalion who was ceremoniously



Photo by Lillian Moss
Ice Sculpture.



Photo by Carmen Williams
Dick Corder and CPO Sierra Marcoux cutting the birthday cake.

Veteran Walt Wagner, Newport Harbor Post 291 member.

Throughout the evening, many other Navy traditions occurred including the recitation of the Sailors Creed and the ceremonial birthday cake cutting where the oldest and youngest sailor both cut the cake. This year is also the 75th anniversary of Pearl Harbor. We were very fortunate to have among our distinguished guests a Pearl Harbor survivor, Dick Corder. At 94 years young, he traveled all the way

discharged that evening. She will be reporting to Naval Station Great Lakes for boot camp where she will start her naval service on February 21, 2017. As the youngest sailor in the room, she had the privilege to share the cake cutting with Dick Corder.

We concluded the evening with several traditional Navy toasts, something new for us this year. Two of the nearly one dozen toasts included recognizing LTJG Marcoux who has recruited over 70 cadets to

San Diego Naval Recruiting Station. periodic updates on the Cubs game.



Photo by Carmen Williams
L-R: Lillian L. Moss, Ken George, Art Castro, Scott McKee, Dick Corder. (Pearl Harbor survivor), Janet Wilson, Doug Nye, and Gary Leach.

She happily reported that one is now attending West Point and two are at the Naval Academy in Annapolis. She has done an amazing job as the CO providing guidance, structure, discipline, and mentorship to these cadets while writing grants and organizing fundraisers to raising money to run El Toro Battalion.

This year's Navy birthday ball exceeded last year's amount of \$5,000 and exceeded our expectations. American Legion Newport Harbor Post 291, Orange County Navy League, and NSCC El Toro Battalion, who ran the silent auction were able to raise over \$8,000 for the Sea Cadets to help offset their operating and administrative costs. It was another terrific evening shared with friends, dancing, celebrating the Navy's birthday, paying tribute to 75 years of Pearl Harbor, raising money for the children of our future, and the

My thanks to our Legionnaire friends that come year after year from other nearby cities to support us. We're glad you had a fantastic time. I also want to thank and acknowledge PO3 Peter Howell, USNR, Carmen Williams, Auxiliary Unit 291 for making the tables and chairs beautiful, Tim Sullivan and Sons from Squadron 291 that assisted in logistics, and all the hard working members of the Navy ball committee, Robert Bents and Sally Nockold from OC Navy League and Rene Marcoux and Tracy Van Slyke from NSCC El Toro Battalion that spent countless hours making this one of the best Navy birthday balls in the last five year. I look forward to collaborating again with this awesome team for next year's Navy birthday ball. Please join us again for this wonderful event supporting the future leaders of tomorrow. Until next year, Cheers!



Photo by Carmen Williams
NSCC El Toro Battalion Sea Cadets standing at attention.

Legislative Commission

By Don Harper, Chair, Legislative Commission

LEGISLATIVE DAY AT THE CALIFORNIA STATE CAPITOL

The Legion will hold its **next Legislative Day at the Capitol on March 14, 2017**. Please mark your calendars. All Legionnaires, Auxiliary, and SAL are encouraged to attend. The event will take place at the State Capitol in Sacramento and will take place in the morning and afternoon. After the Legislature reconvenes for the new session in January, we will be able to provide more details on the time and place. To the extent possible, we will try to follow the same format as in years past.

LEGISLATORS OF THE YEAR FOR 2016

The American Legion-Department of California has chosen **Senator Joel Anderson** and **Assemblyman Ken Cooley** as their 2016 Legislators of the Year. Both legislators are firmly committed to helping veterans and a brief bio of each is below. They will be presented with their awards at the Legion's Day at the Capitol event on March 14, 2017.

➤ **SENATOR JOEL ANDERSON (R-SAN DIEGO)**

Senator Anderson has a long track record of fighting for veterans. While in the Assembly he was selected as the American Legion's 2010 Legislator of the Year. In the last six years, he has continued to pursue reform of the complex policies involving taxation of veterans. Senator Anderson served four years in the State Assembly, then moved to the State Senate in 2011.

Senator Anderson's veterans related legislation:

AB 257, which granted free state park passes to disabled veterans and recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor. This eliminated the one-time fee required of eligible veterans to receive a lifetime pass to enter all California State Parks. This bill was signed into law.

SB 1152, which sought to provide that the welfare exemption for veterans' halls shall not be denied to property owned by veterans' organizations that is used for fraternal, lodge, or social club purposes. SB 1152 made legislative findings and declarations regarding the qualitative distinction between the activities of veterans' organizations and other nonprofit entities that use property for beneficial public purposes, and that in light of this distinction, the property is central to the organization's exempt purpose and activities. SB 1152 died in the Revenue and Taxation Committee and Senator Anderson then vowed to bring the bill back in 2015, which he did (SB 2).

SB 2. This bill was an effort to ensure that the welfare exemption for veterans' halls would not be denied to property owned by veterans' organizations that is used for fraternal, lodge, or social club purposes. SB 2 made declarations that the purpose of the legislation was to provide economic incentive and support to veterans' organizations to provide for the social welfare of the community of current and former military veterans. The legislation found that the State Board of Equalization's constriction of the tax exemption has resulted in an onerous tax burden on California veteran service organizations posts or halls, hinders the posts' ability to provide facilities for veterans, and threatens the economic viability of many local organizations.

SB 725, regarding the retrofit and remodel of veterans' buildings and memorials that are on county and city property. Prior law had stated that a county may not revoke the dedication of a veterans hall or memorial building to a veterans' organization as long as the veterans' organization had not violated the terms and conditions of the dedication. SB 725 extended that law to cities. SB 725 also provided that a property is not considered abandoned if the veterans service organization is required to move from the property in order for the property to undergo seismic retrofitting or remodeling. This bill was signed into law.

➤ **ASSEMBLYMAN KEN COOLEY (D-RANCHO CORDOVA)**

Ken was elected to the California State Assembly in November, 2012. Served on Rancho Cordova's first City Council upon its formation in 2002. He was re-elected in 2004 and 2008. He also served as mayor in 2005 and again in 2010. He secured the inclusion of hiring credits for Local Agency Military Base Recovery Areas (LAMBRAs), protecting hiring tools for businesses on our local bases, McClellan and Mather.

Assemblyman Cooley's veterans related legislation:

AB 1289, Cooley. State government: California Vietnam Veterans Memorial. This bill would establish the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial as the official state Vietnam veterans war memorial.

ACR 48, Cooley. Brain Injury Awareness, Treatment, and Prevention Month. Brought awareness to TBI which is the signature injury of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, presenting new challenges for members of the military and their families.

Staunch supporter of local veterans' events:

Assemblyman Cooley, since his election, has endeavored to become active in the veterans' activities in his home district. He works closely with the Sacramento Veterans Affiliated Council and has actively participated in their events.

He was involved with the 25th Anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial celebration in Capitol Park. Assemblyman Cooley has taken a great interest in the redevelopment of the former Mather Air Force Base in his district as well as the VA facilities that are located at what is now known as the Mather Field Business Complex. He was a supporter of the Veterans Village project which opened on the site last year. He is also supportive of the Sacramento Stand Down event for homeless veterans.

Assemblyman Cooley presented over 150 recognition resolutions to veterans from the Sacramento Region at the "Spirit of Veterans Day — Saluting Community Service Excellence" Ceremony on October 30, 2016.



THE LAST BUGLE CALL

Reporting Period: 9/01/2016 through 10/31/2016
460 Deceased Comrades

O Lord, You have shown us that death is but the gateway to a more glorious life and that we must not fear its coming, and we know, also, that neither life nor death can separate us from Your love. Assure us, yet again, that our departed comrades are not lost to us, but sharing new life with You in the kingdom of our Father, where we shall in your good time be reunited. We know them to be with You forever ... Amen.

The American Legion Membership Application

Sign-up on-line TODAY at: www.calegion.org
— OR —

Mail application below and \$47 to:
TAL DoC Post 1000 Application
1601 7th Street, Sanger, CA 93657
Please make your check payable to
TAL DoC Post 1000

The American Legion Membership Application

(Name) _____ (Phone) _____

(Mailing Address) _____ (Date) _____

(City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip) _____ (Post #) _____

(Membership ID# former member) _____ (Email Address) _____ (Dues) _____

- Please check appropriate eligibility dates and branch of service below
- Aug 2, 1990 – cessation of hostilities as determined by U.S. Government
 - Dec. 20, 1989 – Jan. 31, 1990
 - Aug. 24, 1982 – July 31, 1984
 - Feb. 28, 1961 – May 7, 1975
 - June 25, 1950 – Jan. 31, 1955
 - Dec. 7, 1941 – Dec. 31, 1946
 - April 6, 1917 – Nov 11, 1918
 - U.S. Army
 - U.S. Navy
 - U.S. Air Force
 - U.S. Marines
 - U.S. Coast Guard
 - Merchant Marines 12/7/41 – 12/31/46 (only eligibility)



I certify that I served at least one day of active military duty during the dates marked above and was honorably discharged or am still serving honorably.

Signature of applicant _____ Name of recruiter _____
30-009 (2009)

Save the Date:

- December 9 – 18, 2016**
National Commander's Visit
- January 21/22, 2017**
Area 1
James E. Fowler Post 264 (District 7)
541 5th Street, Lincoln
- Jan 21, 2017**
American Legion Extension Institute
Bob Hope Patriotic Hall
- January 28-29, 2017**
Area 5
Brawley Post 60 (District 30)
509 G Street, Brawley
- February 4, 2017**
Area 4
Community Post 46 (District 23)
5309 Sepulveda Boulevard, Culver City
- March 9 – 12, 2017**
(Spring) Department Executive Committee Meeting
West Covina Post 790 (District 18)
- March 14, 2017**
Annual Legion Legislative Day
State Capitol - Sacramento
- March 18, 2017**
Area 6
Camarillo Post 741 (District 16)
7 Veterans Way, Camarillo
- March 25, 2017**
Area 2
Santa Clara Post 419 (District 13)
958 Homestead Road, Santa Clara
- June 21-26, 2017**
2017 Department Convention
Riverside
- August 18- 24, 2017**
99th Annual National Convention
Reno, Nevada

“AMERICA’S PARADE: LA”



By Marilyn E. Rideaux

The first “America’s Parade: L.A.” was held on Veterans Day, November 11, 2016, on the grounds of West Los Angeles VA Medical Center. America’s Parade originated in New York. The New York-based United War Veterans Council partnered with the Los Angeles County Department of Military and Veterans Affairs



Grand Marshal, Tommy Lasorda (front right)



Award winning Jackie Robinson American Legion Auxiliary Color Guard Unit 252

and The American Legion, Department of California, to replicate this historic event.

In addition to honoring military service members (past and present) it stimulated public support public support for veterans and their families in the Greater L.A. region, “America’s Parade: LA” commemorated the 15th anniversary of the September 11 attacks.

Baseball great, Tommy Lasorda, was the grand marshal. Lasorda who served in the U.S. Army during World War II, missed the 1946 and 1947 seasons of his professional baseball career. We are grateful to Mr. Lasorda for his sacrifice to our country.

On hand was NBC4 Southern California to provide free coffee, snacks, and interview veterans.



Honoring Hollywood Stars who served during World War II



Department Commander, Gary Leach, NEC, Janet Wilson (back seat), National Vice Commander-Western Region, Paul Espinoza (right front), and Past Department Commander, Hugh Crooks, behind the wheel

Following the Parade, a Veterans Day Resource Fair was held on the VA grounds. Special thanks to VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System and all those who worked throughout the year to make this event a success.



World Champion Stunt & Drill Team, Victor McLaglen Motor Corps, entertained audience near the review stand prior to start of the parade



Eligibility Dates

Gulf War/ War on Terrorism Aug. 2, 1990 – present*	Korean War June 25, 1950 – Jan. 31 1955
Panama Dec. 20, 1989 – Jan. 31, 1990	WWII Dec. 7, 1941 – Dec. 31 1946
Lebanon/ Grenada Aug. 24, 1982 – July 31 1984	WWI April 6, 1917 – Nov. 11 1918
Vietnam War Feb. 28, 1961 – May 7, 1975	* if currently serving on active duty today, you are eligible.