

# American Legion celebrates WV veterans



Veteran Steve Quinton attended the Military Appreciation Night at the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 53 in Buckeye. (Photo courtesy American Legion)

## By Marge Christianson

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 53 in Buckeye invited veterans from the Korean, Vietnam and Persian Gulf wars, Operation Desert Storm and Shield to its recent Military Appreciation Night.

Verrado resident Ret. Brig. Gen. George Canelos was the guest speaker at the event held at Post 53, 402 E. Narramore Avenue. A naval flight officer, Canelos flew more than 70 missions during the Vietnam War. During his 32-year military career, he flew to locations around the world on training and operational missions and deployments. He spoke about the changes in the military over the years and shared with high school students in attendance valuable advice based on his experience in serving.

Also attending the event was Christeen Verchot, a registered nurse who retired from the U.S. Air Force. Verchot is a co-founder of Phoenix's James Walton Home, where male veterans can receive 90 days of transitional housing and access to

specialized resources. She thanked the Buckeye American Legion Family and VFW Auxiliary 12098 for their twice-yearly visit, as well as their donations and meals. Veterans from the James Walton Home were at the event and shared stories of success after receiving assistance.

In addition, civilians learned about military traditions. Veterans were encouraged to wear their military decorations according to regulations on civilian wear. There was a presentation about the meaning of the "Prisoner of War/Missing in Action" table and a moment was taken to remember those honored. On the lighter side, the rules of a "the mess" and "GROG Bowl" were explained (hint: the bowl is not one you would find in your kitchen!).

"The mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to serve veterans, military and their families. Demonstrating our appreciation for their sacrifice is part of that mission," said Trina Stark, president of the Buckeye Auxiliary Unit. ■