Tommy Anderson – CALPA
Thank you to Take Me Home Huey project and the Light Horse Legacy for portions of this article and pictures.

This is the story of a retired Vietnam War UH-1 Huey helicopter, a Pop artist, and a former US Army aviator. It’s an unlikely encounter and collaboration that resulted in an art installation called Take Me Home Huey that is currently crisscrossing the United States. The now-colorful Huey is referred to as #174, and its mission as a work of art is to honor our Vietnam Veterans that never got a proper welcome home and raise awareness for veterans who suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress (PTSD).

Artist Steve Maloney and Dave Barron, a retired Los Angeles County firefighter and former US Army aviator, had previously collaborated on a helicopter and Steve turned it into a work of art. With the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam conflict approaching, they decided their next project would be a collaboration that would honor Vietnam War veterans and draw attention to veterans of all conflicts who suffer from PTSD.

Barron is the cofounder of Light Horse Legacy, a nonprofit organization that supports veterans of all conflicts and treatment of PTSD for veterans American Public who would see it. It would also give the veterans of that war a tangible symbol that other pieces of helicopter equipment hanging from the ceiling. To me this reflects the chaos that would have occurred inside the cabin during combat. It is a very powerful statement.

Another powerful image that I witnessed was a Vietnam War veteran who had been a UH-1 Crew Chief examining the sculpture. At first, he looked in wonderment and asked a few questions. As he walked around the helicopter he stopped and his expression turned solemn. He walked towards the helicopter and saw the name of his unit in Vietnam. He did what I would assume many veterans would do – walked up, touched the name of his unit, and bowed his head. The sculpture succeeded in its new rescue mission. It is one thing to see the sculpture in pictures, but its real power comes through in person. I felt the same thing as I touched the Huey. Even through aviation. Maloney served in the Michigan National Guard during the Vietnam era. His unit was not called, but he feels strongly connected to the men and women that served bravely.

When Barron found a boneyard Bell UH-1H Huey, he quickly realized that it was a perfect fit for Maloney’s mission to help veterans through his art. It was a U.S. Army Huey medevac helicopter – #174, derived from its serial number 67-17147 – that had served as an air ambulance during the Vietnam War and was shot down with two fatalities in 1969 during a medical rescue. During that mission, crew chief Gary Lynn Dubach and the medic Stephen Lawrence Schumacher showed exemplary bravery, which was not uncommon among helicopter crews in Vietnam. Take Me Home Huey is dedicated to these two brave crewmen, with their names painted in US Military stenciling on each skid. Take Me Home Huey is actually the second helicopter art project by artist Steve Maloney. Light Horse Legacy’s veteran helicopter mechanics previously assisted him with Ride-em-Copter, a mixed-media sculpture created from a transformed boneyard 1970 Bell Jet Ranger. Ride-em-Copter was the centerpiece of the Palm Springs Art Fair in 2013.

Shortly after completing this project, the Light Horse Legacy crew advised Maloney of the availability of Huey #174. It was discovered in scrapyard in northern Arizona.

The artist and the non-profit quickly formed a partnership. The plan was to create the Take Me Home Huey sculpture utilizing the bones of the discarded Huey as the canvas that would not only be a work of art, but also a colorful ambassador for the project’s mission. Light Horse Legacy acquired, re-skinned and restored the aircraft for Maloney, who then transformed it into art for healing. Light Horse Legacy’s founder, Dave Barron, researched the history of Huey #174 and reunited surviving soldiers and families connected to the aircraft.

The ultimate goal was to travel the sculpture through the United States and bring attention to the detection and treatment of PTSD for veterans of all wars. The 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War seemed an appropriate time to get Take Me Home Huey on the road.

Both the artist and the Light Horse Legacy team felt that a helicopter that was shot down while on a medevac mission in Vietnam would properly inspire a feeling of gratitude and respect from the American Public who would see it. It would also give the veterans of that war a tangible symbol that everyone who has served in the military would recognize and love. The artist Maloney created this beautiful piece of art loaded with symbols of the war years that every veteran of that era can relate to.

From the duffle bags on the top of the helicopter, which to me reflect the duffle bags that you carried into Vietnam and flew out with at the end of your tour, to the painting and inscriptions from the stinger to the nose of the aircraft. They range from a Playboy bunny, muscle car, rock and roll and unit insignias, to the powerful listing of all military aviation units that flew in that war.

Inside the aircraft in sporadic areas you find aircraft instruments and other pieces of helicopter equipment hanging from the ceiling. To me this reflects the chaos that would have occurred inside the cabin during combat. It is a very powerful statement.
Greetings from Washington, D.C., where I am currently attending the annual Washington Conference. As you know, one of the Four Pillars of The American Legion is Veterans’ Affairs and Rehabilitation. On January 23, we hosted a Town Hall meeting at Hollywood Post 43 which was facilitated by members of the National Headquarters staff from the Washington, D.C. office. The purpose of the meeting was to get feedback from veterans regarding the health care they had received at the West Los Angeles V.A. Medical Center. The following day, we visited the Medical Center and spent the day getting feedback from employees. On the third day, we visited the Homeless Veterans Program center at the V.A. campus and the Vet Center in Culver City. That afternoon, we met with the West Los Angeles V.A. Medical Center leadership to inform them of the findings.

Here’s what we found. Of all the veterans who took part in the town hall meeting, there was not a single complaint about the quality of care received. On the medical center side, the news was not so good. They have serious personnel shortages—approximately 400 unfilled positions! The Human Resources Department is manned at roughly 50%, which negatively impacts their ability to fill all those vacant positions. Low salaries in a high cost of living area also contributes to the employment problems. In spite of their personnel shortfall, they somehow manage to do an amazing job as indicated by the testimony of the veterans they are serving. The data gathered during this visit will be included in a report to congress and the president, presumably, this week. This is just one example of how The American Legion continues to serve veterans.

We had a membership meeting here with our National Commander on Sunday and the emphasis was, once again, on recruiting new members. Commander Schmidt has challenged us all to recruit at least one new member. Have you got one yet? If you’re proud to be a member of The American Legion, why not invite an eligible friend to join? The Department of California was doing very well until early February, when we missed the 85% target date by a small percentage. We can’t slow down if we expect to reach our goal of 90,000 members. We can do this! Recruit new members, contact delinquent members and get those transmittals sent to the Department. We need everybody to work membership “Full Speed Ahead!”

Thank you all for everything you do every day on behalf of The American Legion.

E. “Paul” Ball

FROM THE EDITOR

By Marilyn Rideaux, Editor, California Legionnaire

Greetings Legion family.

Time marches on and in a few months we will be in the midst of election season for the 2017-2018 year from the Post level on up to the Department. Along with elections comes the end of the current year and deadlines for filing end of year reports and other various documents. Remember to “clean house” and don’t leave a dirty mess for the next administration. Now, that all I’m going to say about that!

I cannot thank you enough for your encouragement and feedback on the California Legionnaire. I hear you, California, and have tried to incorporate your suggestions to best of my ability. Someone asked me recently if the process of doing my job as Editor was getting easier. I had to think about it for a minute and then I replied, “Not really easier but each issue of the California Legionnaire brings a different challenge and I am learning a lot.”

The “opt-out” program is off and running. We have over 300 registered opt-outs and approaching another hundred or so – thank you. Here’s how it’s going to work. When an issue of the California Legionnaire is available for online viewing, you will be notified by email from me. In the email, you will be provided with a link where you can view it. If you sent a notice by Email or mail to opt-out within the past two months and still receiving the California Legionnaire by mail, please be patient.

Several opt-out requests were received in handwritten form. Some of us have very unique handwriting skills – kind of futuristic – even out of this world. Need I say more? With that said, if you elected to opt-out on receiving the California Legionnaire by mail and you are not receiving email notices from me, this means that I could not figure out your email address. Please forward an email to aide_deptcmdr@att.net so that I can record it correctly.

Thank you.
Introducing Californians who are currently serving:

Selma, Calif. Native Provides Healthcare for U.S. Navy Sailors
By Lt. Cmdr. Katy Gray, Navy Office of Community Outreach
SAN DIEGO- A 2010 Selma High School graduate and Selma, California native is serving in the U.S. Navy at Surface Warfare Medicine Institute (SWMI). Petty Officer 2nd Class Jessica Martinez serves as a hospital corpsman at the San Diego based training center. According to Navy officials, the institute’s purpose is providing medical education, operational training and certification for medical, dental and fleet personnel ashore and afloat.
http://navyoutreach.blogspot.com/2017/02/selma-calif-native-provides-healthcare.html

Fresno, Calif. Native Conducts Maintenance aboard the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower
By Lt. Cmdr. Katy Gray, Navy Office of Community Outreach
Airman Ryan Rios, from Fresno, Calif., conducts maintenance on a component-handling dolly in the hangar bay of the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) (Ike). Ike is currently conducting aircraft carrier qualifications during the sustainment phase of the Optimized Fleet Response Plan (OFRP).
(U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Christopher A. Michaels)

Fresno, Calif. Native Provides Healthcare for U.S. Navy Sailors
By Lt. Cmdr. Katy Gray, Navy Office of Community Outreach
SAN DIEGO- A 2000 Eddison High School graduate and Merced, California native is serving in the U.S. Navy at Naval Medical Center San Diego. Petty Officer 2nd Class Brennan Gonzalez serves as a hospital corpsman at the San Diego based preventive medicine unit.
http://navyoutreach.blogspot.com/2017/02/merced-calif-native-provides-healthcare.html

C.A.L.P.A. Announces Call For Contest Submissions & Nomination Of Officers & Contest Submissions

The California American Legion Press Association (C.A.L.P.A.) announces submission requests from all C.A.L.P.A. members for the annual awards which will be announced at the Convention meeting in June.

Entry forms can be secured by e-mailing: calpapresident@gmail.com or texting or calling C.A.L.P.A. President Dr. John Ellis at: (760) 534-0124. Deadline for the submissions is Monday, May 8, 2017.

The categories are as follows:

- Post Newsletters - Al Weinberg Award
  - Posts Under 250 Members & Posts Between 250 & 450 Members, Posts Over 450 Members

- District Newsletters - George W. Hooten Award District Websites - Tim Berners-Lee Award

- Post Websites - John Klensin Award - Posts Under 250 Members, Posts Between 250 & 450 Members, Posts Over 450 Members

- Editorials from Members - William E. Rominger Award

- Editorials from Non-members - Gloria Emerson Award

- Press Releases - Lyn Cross Award

- Post Social Media - Glenn David Award

- District Social Media - Robert Morrill Award

- Photography - Willard Hope Award

- Videography - John E. “Jack” Mumment Award

- Graphic Design - Martijin Koster Award

C.A.L.P.A. is accepting nominations for President and six (6) At Large Board of Directors members. Select Officers will be appointed and confirmed by the Board with committee chairs and other positions appointed at the pleasure of the President. If you are a C.A.L.P.A. member and have a genuine interest in standing for election and investing the time, effort and energy required in helping guide this dynamic non-profit organization through its accelerated growth continuum over the next year. Please submit your name no later than Monday, May 8, 2017 to: Dr. John Ellis ... E-mail: calpapresident@gmail.com. Elections will be formally held at the C.A.L.P.A. annual dinner meeting Friday, June 23rd at the Convention in Riverside.

C.A.L.P.A. ANNOUNCES ANNUAL MEETING DATE AND TIME

C.A.L.P.A. will be holding its annual Awards and Election dinner at the Riverside Marriott at 6:00 PM Friday, June 23rd, 2017. Reservations (recommended) and are just $35 each and can be secured via check or credit card. E-mail C.A.L.P.A. President Dr. John Ellis at calpapresident@gmail.com ... or reserve via text or phone: (760) 534-0124.

C.A.L.P.A. President Dr. John Ellis at calpapresident@gmail.com
Hello California Legionnaires,
Our 2016-2017 administrative year is winding down. I think Mother Nature has made travelling very tough this year statewide with all the rain and snow we've seen. Here in the northwest we've had several power outages that lasted multiple days. I hope everyone fairs well through it all.
I will be attending as many Legion functions as I can between now and Department Convention in June.
Area One is doing a great job on membership so far and I hope we will continue working hard for the remainder of the year. I encourage all District Commanders and 1st Vice Commanders to follow up after our revitalizations to ensure all Posts are taking advantage of the tools available on mylegion.org.
Area One's final Caucus is scheduled for May 20-21, 2017 at Hopland Post 529. The agenda has been sent out via email with hotel/motel accommodations. Anyone needing this info can contact Susan Johnson (Area One Adjutant) by email (suzjoyj08@aol.com).
Safe travel to you all and I'm looking forward to seeing you soon.

Kim D. Conrad

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER REPRESENTING AREA 2

I attended the Four Chaplains Memorial at St. Frances Cabrini Church in San Jose on February 4. On February 19, I attended the Area 2 Oratorical contest at Pacifica Post 238. On February 20, I assisted at Menlo Park VA hospital Game Day.
For March I will be attending the DÉC on March 10-12. On March 16-18, Districts 13 and 28 will hold their membership revitalization at Salinas Post 31. All Posts in those two District are encouraged to attend. Everyone else in Area 2 is welcome to join us on any or all of those days.
Finally, I will be holding my Spring Area 2 meeting on March 25 at Santa Clara Post 419, 958 Homestead Rd., Santa Clara 95050. Doors open at 8am.

Lawrence R. Doutherd Sr.

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER REPRESENTING AREA 3

We are moving right along in the New Year. It is my sincere hope that each of you are enjoying activities, friends, and family in your daily events. I know each encounter I have with any of you put into my plus side for positive things occurring.
Speaking of encounters, I attended Area Five (5) meeting in Brawley, CA, in January 2017. I got to see and speak to many Legionnaires I have not interacted with since our last convention in Fresno, CA. While there, I was able to listen to reports and activities taking place in Area Five (5). I was particularly interested in the report of one Legionnaire who addressed communication and how it can affect our attempts to gain membership from our current active duty members and veterans alike.
Communication is presented in four types: written, verbal, nonverbal, and visual as explained through the website REFERENCE.COM. When we speak about communication, we mostly think official, social, personal. A part of communication that is mostly not thought about is our nonverbal communication. In our efforts to recruit membership, this should also be taken into consideration.
It is not very positive for our recruitment efforts if we present negative facial expressions and body language. The best recruitment effort can be fruitless if we don't appear sincere when talking about the Legion and why someone should join. Smirks and sneers behind the backs of others, along with negative gestures and stances when points are not made, and tone of voice and style of dressing, are subject to scrutiny by other potential recruits for membership.
People have always told me they can read what's going on with me by looking at my face. I know this. The difference is, I am aware and continually try to work on improvement. Think about what nonverbal communication you present to others in your daily life. Whatever needs, we all have to work on these skills to better serve our veterans and our organization. We should remain professional in all that we do for veterans, especially through our communication skills.
Once again, my final Third Area meeting (homecoming) will be April 22, 2017, Fresno Federal Post 509, 3509 N. First Street, Fresno, CA 93706, (550) 224-0522. A flyer will be sent out to provide pertinent information for attendance, within and outside of the Third Area. Please join us.

For God and Country
Honesty, Integrity, Respect

Mildred S. Wright-Pearson

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER REPRESENTING AREA 4

Greetings Comrades from Area 4 and beyond. Thank you, James Higuera and your committee for taking on the task for updating the By-Laws which has not been up-dated since 1992. The committee will bring to the Caucus in May their findings.
District 17 Commander, Ozan Evans, invited me to attend the general meeting for Los Angeles Star Post 309. It was my honor while I was there to install their Officers. This year will mark their 90th Anniversary. In celebration, the Post will be hosting its inaugural golf tournament on August 11, 2017 at the San Dimas Golf Course. In October 2017, the Post will be hosting an anniversary ball. The January membership meeting was held at the Cedar Lodge at Pitchess Detention Center.
District 19 Commander, Nick Rosa, at his District meeting in January held at Montebello Post 272 announced that they had a visit from Department Rader President, Mick Soberaz, and Gary S. Teicher, Membership Chairman of the American Legion Riders. A motion was passed to accept a Legion Rider Chapter within the 4th Area at Eugene A. Obregon Post 804. The BATTLESHIP USS IOWA, we met with the Veterans of the San Pedro area, on establishing an American Legion Post on the BATTLESHIP USS IOWA. The purpose of the meeting was toIron out the final details.
District 23 Commander, Donald Littlejohn, is working with his District to prepare for the annual banquet dinner honoring Department Commander, Gary Leach, on Saturday, March 18, 2017 at 5:00PM, Bob Hope Patriotic Hall, 1816 S. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles 90015.
March 23-25, 2017 the Area 4 revitalization event will be held at South Gate Post 335, 9535 California Ave, South gate, 90280. Contact: Keith Morris (310) 462-5297.

Clay Baxter

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER REPRESENTING AREA 5

Greetings Comrades,
Recruiting and membership renewal of Post members is the main project goal of Area 5. Districts have been dedicating their efforts to revitalization of membership. This program, with assistance from the National American Legion, is available through the Department of California to each District in Area 5. The membership revitalization program has been tremendously successful for those Districts participating in it.
The opportunity to transfer a member from the Post 1000 status to active membership in the local Districts and Posts creates new members and converts membership dues paid to National by converting the membership dues to the local community Post. There is enormous potential to capture many new members and many referrals for membership in the entire Legion family by transferring just one new member from Post 1000.
The Department weekly membership report 2-24-17 reflects the efforts made by Districts that have participated and will continue to seek new members from the Post 1000 venue. As an example, District 22 raised their Department status to third place by transferring and activating members from Post 1000 status. As of the reporting period 2-24-17, membership continues to grow and there is the potential for three Districts, and hopefully all Districts in Area 5, to achieve a 100% membership.
This is one source of new members - with just one phone call from a fellow Legion member to a potential member and asking them join a local Post. This will generate many opportunities for potential future leadership talent in our Posts and community.
Call, write, knock on doors and invite them to your upcoming Post American Legion Birthday celebration March 15-17, 2017. See if they have an interest or desire to be part of the largest and greatest Veterans service organization that will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2019.
Community involvement is another of our most powerful resources to grow our Posts membership utilizing the Four Pillars of the American Legion: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation; National Security, Americanism and Children and Youth.

Meeting notifications
Area 5 Meeting
March 18-19, 2017: District 21, Post 51
400 N. Belardo Road, Palm Springs, CA
Semper Fi

James A. Hadley

California Legionnaire
March 27, 2017
MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

So far this has been an interesting year. This is the 3rd year I have served as your Membership Director and have enjoyed every minute of it. State Commander Gary Leach told me that he wanted to hold a District revitalization in every District in California and we have 30 Districts. That is a very big task not only for the State but for our National staff. Michele Steinmetz is our Assistant Director of Membership and she has been a life savior assisting us in setting up these revitalizations. She has not only California, but about seven other states to deal with. So, a big thanks to Michele for keeping California going.

We have held 10 District revitalizations since the beginning of this membership year and increased membership in these Districts by over 1,100 members. In fact, District 22 had the record transfers of over 377 and District 1 Vice Commander, Chris Yates, is still processing more every week. These revitalizations not only put members into a local post but District leadership learns what we need to do to retain members and how to use mylegion.org. The following Districts have had revitalizations and I want to thank them for their hard work and the “FULL SPEED AHEAD” for membership attitude, Districts 1,2,4,5,6,8,10,16,22,24,26.

If you have any questions on how these revitalizations help just ask one of these District Commanders. We still need to recruit new members and retain the ones we have. Get out of the post and partner up with other organizations. Ask them if they have served and sign them up. Now is the time to call those members who have not renewed for 2017 and see what you can do to get them back. Listen what they have to say. They might have some good ideas on how to help your post grow.

Communication is vital in retaining members. Let them know what your post and the American Legion is doing and keep them informed. You never know they might come out and help for a fundraiser or two.

Check out our web site for some good membership ideas, awards, and some very useful ideas. I want to thank each one of you who have signed up at least one new member this year. Just think if we all did just that. I would also like to thank Membership Chairman South, Larry Leonard, for your efforts in Area 2, Membership Chairman Area 3, S.R. Barghoom (frogy), Membership Chairman Area 4, Keith Morris, Membership Chairman Area 5, Andy Rebulito, and Membership Chairman Area 6, Frank Campo.

Legislative Council Letter

I would like to share my appreciation for the pride I feel in the "teamwork" that was recently accomplished at the Annual Washington Conference. On Tuesday, February 28, 2017, many hours and ‘miles’ of footwork went into completing the mission we refer to as “The Hill Walk”. The day was eventful and busy as our newly elected President was scheduled to address all Members of Congress in the evening.

The “Team” set out to make personal contact with all Members of Congress representing California. We were able to visit all 53 offices. Many of those involved were able to meet, in person, with their Representatives and Staff members.

The purpose of the Annual Conference, is to better inform ourselves of those pressing issues that reflect the Four Pillars of our Organization. As we are all aware, there are hundreds of pieces of Legislation that are pending, at all times that require our support.

It is important that we become more acquainted with those matters, thus we can more wisely work with our Representatives and share the opinions of The American Legion.

Members of the National Legislative Council are often called upon via email with “Action Alerts”. These alerts are urgent calls from our National Legislative Committee, to Council Members requesting immediate contact their Legislators requesting support for various issues. Always relevant to matters important to our missions.

As always, there are far too many

Eric W. Measles, Vice Chairman National Legislative Council

items ‘pending action’ within the Legislative circles to share here however I would like to point out a few items.

A. Full funding of a “Superior National Defense”.
B. “Unification of VA Programs”
C. Reform of VA Claims Appeals
D. Improve quality of life for Women Veterans with Gender specific health-care
E. Support of Care Givers
F. Provide Mandatory “End-of-life” Physical Exams for Reservists
G. Repeal unfair offsets that penalize Disabled Vets and their widows
H. Defending Veterans Educational

---LETTER, see page 9

Huey, from page 1

though I never served in combat, the Huey is close to my heart, just as it is close to the hearts of many others who flew in the war.

There is more to Take Me Home Huey than the sculpture. A documentary film about the role that the Huey Helicopter played during military conflicts as told by pilots, mechanics and helicopter crew members was commissioned by Maloney to the filmmakers Alicia Brauns and Christine Steele. The artist retained an involved role in the film by conducting some of the interviews himself. The film also chronicles the transformation of #174 into a work of art. There is also a beautiful song Maloney commissioned from singer and song writer Jeannie Cunningham titled Take Me Home Huey. It is available on iTunes and worth a listen.

The Palm Springs Air Museum in Palm Springs, California graciously provided space for the completion of the sculpture utilizing a portable military tent that was assembled by D.W Johnston construction company. The owner donated all of his employees’ time. With the sculpture complete the tent was dis-assembled by Marine Corps volunteers from Twenty-Nine Palms Marine Corps Base in California. The museum then hosted the completed Take Me Home Huey exhibition after The Projects Inaugural Exhibition in Peoria Arizona, the home base of Light Horse Legacy.

The Take me Home Huey project came full circle with the release of the 90-minute documentary film named the same at the 2017 Palm Springs International Film Festival. Showing for two days to sold out crowds this film took the People’s Choice award at the festival.

For more information on the tour dates, the Take Me Home Huey project please go to https://takemehomehuey.org/

To contribute to the Take Me Home Huey project please go to https://takemehomehuey.org/donate/

To learn more about Light Horse Legacy and it mission visit http://www.lighthorselegacy.org/

To contribute to the Light Horse Legacy please go to http://www.lighthorselegacy.org/contact---donate.html
Women’s Military History Week – March 6-11, 2017
California Women Warriors who serve women veterans every day (pictured with Denise Rohan-front row center, candidate for National Commander 2017/2018)

Congratulations to U.S. Army veteran, Deborah Johnson, of Bakersfield and U.S. Marine Corps veteran, Dulce Romero, of Yuba City who were honored by CalVet at an annual reception on March 8, 2017 in Cafeteria 15L in Sacramento. These two incredible women were honored for outstanding military core values and dedication to their veteran communities.

The California Legionnaire honors women in the military and women veterans in California

Blessings everyone

District 14 Chaplain, Tom Skypeck

A few copies of the program are available if anyone would like one. There were many program participants (all are not mentioned in this article) that turned this Service into a successful and memorable event and there were even more individuals behind the scenes that contributed significantly to the success of the entire program. I thank God for everyone’s help. A big “THANK YOU” goes to Robert DeToro, J. D. Bennett, and the District 14 Auxiliary for setting up the social hall, providing the cakes and drinks and breaking down the setup. I sincerely appreciate everyone’s help and participation.

It is important that we, members of The American Legion exhibit our “Love One Another”. The greatness in living our fellow Legionnaires allows us to accomplish many things and does much to inspire those observing our behavior. Thank God we have a code of conduct that spells out how we are to conduct ourselves at all times. When we respect each other and help each other at every opportunity, we’ll all be Blessed. I remind everyone of the value and basic necessity of having such a Code.

Post Chaplains should start preparing for their Annual Post reports soon. Each report should accurately reflect the year’s achievements. It is most helpful if the Post Chaplain keeps a record of all his/her activities as they occur. If this is done little effort will be required to complete the annual report. Post Chaplains may also submit a narrative of additional accomplishments not listed in the form, but is not required to do so.

Word for thought: Starting today and for the rest of your life, expect God to do super natural things in your life. Do not wait to see what happens, expect things to happen. Expecting is a very different thing from waiting. Waiting is passive, expecting is active. Expecting does not require any work on your part. When you’re expecting, you are participating in the process that’s going to contribute to the outcome.

God bless you and I hope to see you at the D.E.C.
On Monday, February 6, 2017, the Rev. Dr. Kevin Gibbs was officially appointed by the Veterans Resource Center to serve as the first Interfaith Chaplain at the recently constructed Mather Veterans Village (MVV) in Rancho Cordova, California, which provides permanent housing for disabled and formerly homeless veterans and their families.

Chaplain Gibbs (Left) provides a strong professional background in both pastoral care and military service. He holds a Bachelor of Theology, a Master of Theology, and a Doctor of Theology from Sacramento Theological Seminary and Bible College, and served in several ministries over the years in various parts of the world, and most recently, as co-pastor of the Next Level Living Christian Center in Rancho Cordova, along with Mrs. Gibbs. He retired from the U.S. Air Force as an E-6 after twenty years of honorable service. His combined pastoral and military service in several countries uniquely qualifies him to understand and work with the spiritual, social, and physical needs of MVV veterans and their families who come from varied religious and cultural backgrounds.

Mrs. Tanya Gibbs (Right) works alongside Chaplain Gibbs, and has previously served as a volunteer counselor for a social service agency that helped traumatized women. The pastoral care duo will provide religious activities, spiritual counseling, and coordination between the various faith groups in the Rancho Cordova area, as resident veterans and families request. The new pastoral care service is a faith mission, so all funding will be provided by local churches.

Cmdr. Don Harper (Center), Marine Corps Vietnam combat veteran and commander of American Legion Legislative Action Post 861 in Sacramento, CA is well-known for his many years of service to California veterans, including serving in leadership in local VSOs, helping to ramrod veterans legislation at the California State Capital, co-founding Sacramento Stand Down twenty-five years ago, and being involved from the start of Mather Veterans Village six years ago, including the planning, funding, construction, and leading AL Post 861 to provide each of the 50 units with follow-up extras including 32” TVs, DVD players, microwaves, and a large gas BBQ grill. Cmdr. Harper was very supportive of establishing the new pastoral care program at MVV, and served on the chaplain search and vetting committee, and enthusiastically endorsed Chaplain Gibbs as the best candidate for the position.

Chaplain and Mrs. Gibbs, we salute you for your courage and commitment to serve our brothers and sisters at Mather Veterans Village. For information on the benefits of starting a pastoral care program, and how to go about doing it, contact ernielarson@yahoo.com.

THE AMERICAN LEGION EXTENSION INSTITUTE TRAINING

May 20, 2017, 10 a.m.  
HOLLYWOOD POST 43  
2035 N. Highland, Los Angeles

June 23, 2017, 2 p.m.  
Riverside Convention Center  
3637 5th St, Riverside

September 16, 2017, 10 a.m.  
HOLLYWOOD POST 43  
2035 N. Highland, Los Angeles

Membership Card and $5  
Contact Tim Mosman  
213 388 2655  
Email: Olivia@att.net

Congratulations to our graduates: Dwayne Conyers, David Dolce, Alfonso Hernandez, Michael Hjelmstad, Sidney Hoffner, Patrick Horton, Frances Horton, Sean Jones, Jerry Martinez, Andrew Mitchell and Matthew Skomo. Special thanks to Tim and Olivia for their dedication and service in putting on this course.

THE AMERICAN LEGION—ALLEGORY

By Doc Bart, Department Adjutant

While in Washington this past week observing the training of our Veteran Services Officers and participating in the perennial Washington Conference, I had the good fortune of visiting with the Commander from the Department of France. Standing outside the House of Representatives Building, he schooled me on the Department of France, American Legion Post 1, Paris, and several little known facts about the history of the American Legion in its infancy. His enthusiasm for the American Legion was contagious. His obvious love for our organization, its principals and tradition was only exceeded by his apparent pleasure in sharing it.

My heart began to fill with gratitude for the organization which I, had for years refused to join. Although I had been recruited by a persistent and active member whose enthusiasm was nearly as great as Commander Shanahan’s, I refused to join. I had no interest in the joining an organization full of needless drama and BS, so I wouldn’t. When I visited Posts, I observed an organization full of dissention, derisiveness and petty politics. On September 11, 2001 that all changed. I joined the American Legion not for the politics and drama, but because I knew there was an urgent need and a mission that could possibly be met by and transform the American Legion from what it had become to what it once was and had been created to be. The business of the American Legion is, and always has been caring for our comrades in arms, their families and orphans. Defending the Constitution of the United States, maintaining law and order, all the while passing along the principals and traditions of Freedom, Justice and Democracy to posterity. In my position I see the back of the striking tapestry that is The American Legion. It is seldom pretty, often surprising and sometimes depressing. BUT, when and where the Posts are working the Legion programs and not their personalities, when the leaders care more about accomplishing the mission than getting recognition or promotion, where service comes before self and the mission, not the bar is the focus, … THEN and THERE The American Legion lives and serves and is the highest ideal of SERVICE For God and Country.

Great progress has been made this past year at headquarters in processing membership, working with National to find the technical glitches that have for long frustrated all of us, developing a web presence and streamlining our processes. It hasn’t been smooth and sometimes we’ve moved ahead in fits and starts, but we have moved ahead and will continue moving ahead. I

--ALLEGORY, see page 9
Benefits
I. Protecting the “Uniformed Services Employment & Re-employment Rights Act”
J. Ensuring Federal Benefits are received by Disabled Veteran Business owners
K. Supporting programs and housing to end Veterans Homelessness

The American Legion will once again ask Congress for support of a Flag Protection Amendment. As with any new Congress, there are many new Members and we will ensure that all Members of Congress fully understand the position of The American Legion on this measure.

This year The American Legion is requesting Congress to give final approval to the U.S. Mint to move forward with the production of an American Legion Centennial Coin, celebrating our 100th Anniversary. This matter requires “Timely Approval” by Congress.

Contacting your Representatives and encouraging support is requested. I would encourage anyone interested in learning more about these matters to visit the national website at Legion.org and locate the Legislative Center. All the issues we discussed in Washington, D.C. are included and much more at this valuable location.

My gratitude goes out to all those that joined in the successful “Hill Walk”. Those Legionnaires were: Past National Historian James T. Higuera, NEC Janet Wilson, Alt. NEC Ed Grimsley, Dept. Commander Gary Leach, Dept. Adjutant “Doc” Bart, PDC’s Howard Darter and Dennis Fercho and members of the National Legislative Council and other National Committees, John Aldridge, Peter Duncan, Robert Heinisch, Wesley Schermann, Steve Murray, Michael Briner, Michael Yates, Norm Clendenin, Kenneth George, and Auxiliary Members Past Dept. President Susie Tozier and Aux. Reporter/Photographer Clara Pon.

Allegory

thank you for your patience and understanding. We have boldly tried new things. When they don’t work smoothly, we try again. Again and again until we get it as near perfect as possible. Your Department staff is as good as it gets, dedicated and loyal to you and The American Legion. Their knowledge increases daily. When treated badly by the members, they spring back with new resolve to serve the membership and veterans of California. Please remember there are six (6) department staff serving the entire department. Be kind to them. They are truly devoted to you and the Legion.

In this article I didn’t want to make a list of what we’ve done and what we plan to do. That will come later in another venue I believe you will find useful. I didn’t want to leave you with these truths: 1. To Lead the Legion, You Must First Learn the Legion. Seek first to understand, then be understood. Talk less, Listen more. 2. To Be a Successful Legionnaire, You Must Participate Positively in Your Post and District. Do what you can, even if it’s just making phone calls or stuffing envelopes. 3. To Gain Satisfaction as a Legionnaire, You Must Be Selfless in Your Service. In The American Legion, the attitude of “what’s in it for me” will leave you unhappy and disappointed. 4. To Have a Successful Post, Work the Programs, Not the Personalities. If you’re busy working the programs, you won’t have time for personalities. There are Four Pillars in The American Legion, but one goal. There are many positions to serve from within The American Legion, but one purpose. There are many different cultures, races, religions, and reasons for joining The American Legion, but one calling. We have many differences. When we focus on those differences they define us, and then they destroy us.

Try it. You will be amazed at what is possible for you, your post, and our veterans.
SAVE THE DATE
Monday, August 21, 2017
California party night at Nat’l Convention
Honoring PDC-Jim Hackney
Silver Legacy Resort & Casino
Reno, Nevada
(This is the California headquarters hotel)
A Western Dinner Buffet
Plenty of food, dancing, and fun!!!

More details to follow . . .

The American Legion Uniform

Larry Leonardo, Sr.
Past Department Sgt.-at-Arms, 2014-2015

During a recent “official” Dinner event at an American Legion Post, it was noticed by some guests that some Post members as well as other Legion guests were wearing their American Legion caps during dinner. Although the practice has become so distasteful that many post levy fines for male members wearing their cap during dinner. In an effort to mentor our members on ritual and protocol of the American Legion, I have taken excerpts from my past articles to help our members understand and avoid “fines”, ridicule and harassment by providing information regarding the proper wearing of the official uniform of The American Legion, the garrison cap.

You don’t wear your cap during a meal (males only). Even though the long established Legion etiquette states that your cap is not to be worn during an official Legion, civic dinner or luncheon, our social norms have always been to uncover whenever eating. I use this as my “litmus test” for whether it’s okay to wear any type of cover or cap while eating, if your father or grandfather were seated across from you at the table, would you be wearing your cap? Probably not. Must I always remove my cover if at an unofficial BBQ event or an informal social gathering with hors d’oeuvres or snacks. Maybe not, but use common sense with respect for the uniform and the organization. Just because some members have their caps on doesn’t mean it is correct…it just means they haven’t read my articles, NEC Resolution No. 46, of 1965 or the officer guide.

During the Pledge of Allegiance, why do we, as male members, remove our caps and place them over our heart? It dates back to our military service, while at the salute, we are under arms (Honor or Color Guard with Arms) or your religious organization pins or patches are prohibited, as well. Finally, the garrison cap is the “Official Cap” of the American Legion, not a ball cap or beret with American Legion written on it or has an American Legion emblem. (American Legion Riders’ beret with the ALR emblem is part of the official ALR uniform).

The American Legion cap should never be worn by male members while in a house of worship, unless you are under arms (Honor or Color Guard with Arms) or your religious protocol dictates that you remain covered. If you are marching the flags into a house of worship, you remain covered until the colors are posted and you return to your seat, at which time you uncover (again, males only) and remain uncovered until you retrieve the colors and march out of the building.

Show your Legion Pride; wear your uniform properly, with pride and respect. Your Legion cap is the most recognizable American Legion item you have and with the proper protocol you ARE the greatest Public Relation asset of this great organization.

Next deadline for the California Legionnaire
March 27, 2017
History of American Legion Post 108 Ambulance Service

American Legion Post No. 108 Ambulance Service was formed by the members of Amador Post 108, American Legion looking for a community project back in 1929. The ambulance service was operated by volunteer members of Post 108. The first ambulance was a 1926 Buick Hearse (shown in photo above).

In 1933 American Legion Post 108 began an “Ambulance Ticket” campaign to raise money for the ambulance service and help support the services. The first Ambulance Ticket was sold for $3.00.

It was around the early 1970’s that the ambulance service personnel were paid for their service.

Paramedic programs were established as a county option in California in 1971. Los Angeles County became the first county in California with paramedics. The popular television show "Hill Street Blues" in California with paramedics. Paramedic programs began to gain potential for improved pre-hospital care. Paramedic programs began to be established in many counties in California.

Before 1980, the responsibility for emergency medical services (EMS) and disaster medical preparedness was spread among a variety of state departments. It became clear that a more unified approach to emergency and disaster medical services was needed. The Emergency Medical Services System and Pre-hospital Emergency Medical Care Personnel Act created the Emergency Medical Services Authority in 1980.

In 1983 the first EMT-II’s were introduced and the first time that limited Advance Life Support was provided to the community.

It wasn’t until the mid-1980’s that the first Paramedics came aboard and full Advanced Life Support (ALS) was provided to the citizens of Amador County. On July 1, 2005, American Legion Post No. 108 Ambulance Service expanded its operations into Calaveras County. Almost doubling the size of its operation. Today American Legion Post No. 108 Ambulance Service provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) was provided to the citizens of Amador County.

Ambulance Service provides emergency 911 response to Amador and Calaveras Counties. On a daily basis we staff six (6) 24-hour units, two (2) 12-hour units and one (1) 9-hour unit for response to 911 calls, covering approximately 1,400 square miles with a population of 75,000.

Rancho Cordova Graybar Electric Co. Honors Vietnam Vets

On January 19th, the Rancho Cordova branch of Graybar Electric Co., a distributor of electronic supplies, placed a three-year commitment to support and resources necessary to succeed, and identify and standardize best practices throughout the system.

This is the second consecutive year of star rating improvements for both facilities and is the latest in an upward trend of clinical performance for CalVet. Last year, the Redding Veterans Home received five-stars – the highest possible rating – despite being a brand-new facility. In addition, the Fresno Veterans Home received initial CMS certification with a near-perfect survey and anticipates a similarly high score in its first rating.

“We are proud of our staff’s commitment to quality care across our system of veterans’ homes and we look forward to more great results from them over the coming year,” Imbasciani said.

CalVet operates eight veterans’ homes throughout the state.

California Veterans Homes Improve - CMS Quality Ratings

Larry Leonardo, Sr.
Past Department Sg't-at-Arms, 2014-2015
CONTACT: June Ijana

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) notified the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) yesterday that CMS ratings for California Veterans Homes in Chula Vista and Yountville will increase to four stars, placing them among the highest performing facilities throughout the state.

CMS developed the star rating system to help consumers identify high-performing skilled nursing facilities based on a number of clinical factors, including compliance with Medicare health and safety standards, quality measures, and staffing. The rating for a facility is determined through health inspections and on-site surveys.

“CMS’ star rating system is an essential measure of how well we are serving the veterans who entrust us with their healthcare,” said CalVet Secretary Dr. Vito Imbasciani. “These increased ratings reflect a systematic effort by CalVet to recruit quality leadership in our veterans’ homes, provide clinicians with the support and resources necessary to succeed, and identify and standardize best practices throughout the system.”

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THE LAST BUGLE CALL

Reporting Period: 1/01/2017 to 2/28/2017

584 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 Membership application and $47 to:

TAL DoC Post 1000
1601 7th Street,
Sanger, CA 93657
Please make your check payable to TAL DoC Post 1000

HAPPY 98th BIRTHDAY

The American Legion will celebrate its 98th birthday on Wednesday, March 15.

The American Legion was born in Paris, France, in March 1919, after which a caucus in St. Louis was held. The organization was chartered in September and held its first convention in Minneapolis in November 1919. Virtually unknown due to its infancy, The American Legion had more than $43,000 dues-paying members by the end of its first year. This was an especially remarkable feat in a world without the Internet, televisions, telephones and other media that we take for granted today. There was no interstate highway system and car ownership was still not widespread.

Carry the Legacy Forward is the theme chosen by National Commander Charles Schmidt. As we observe the 98th anniversary of the founding of The American Legion, we would be remiss not to reflect on the momentous struggle that redefined the world and ultimately gave birth to the organization that we honor today.

World War I was the war to end all wars. At least that's what many hoped its legacy would be. With technological advances, such as machine guns, poison gases and explosives of greater intensity … with nearly 10 million killed worldwide… with almost 30 million wounded and injured, surely nations would be too sensible and too decent to repeat such a horrific tragedy.

Legionnaires everywhere could share their memories with Americans in their communities. Those early Legionnaires, the veterans whose legacy we are entrusted to continue, had a missionary zeal to ensure that no veteran, no widow and no orphan would do without the care and comfort of a grateful nation because of the sacrifice that they had made.

Captain Roy Hudson was a dentist from Killeen, Texas. During the war, he commanded a medical detachment in France. When he returned home, he became an early member of The American Legion, Post 76 in Austin, Texas. As a Legionnaire, Dr. Hudson recited the Preamble to The American Legion Constitution which included the pledge to “preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great War.” The promise was later pluralized to include World War II and subsequent wars, the only change ever made to that eloquent mission statement.

One of the most prominent Legionnaires of that era was Harry Colmery, the primary author of the GI Bill. He had started a law practice in Utah when he enlisted in the Army Air Service in 1917. Immediately commissioned as a lieutenant, he became an early member of The American Legion, Post 76 in Austin, Texas. As a Legionnaire, Dr. Hudson recited the Preamble to The American Legion Constitution which included the pledge to “preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great War.” The promise was later pluralized to include World War II and subsequent wars, the only change ever made to that eloquent mission statement.

One of the most prominent Legionnaires of that era was Harry Colmery, the primary author of the GI Bill. He had started a law practice in Utah when he enlisted in the Army Air Service in 1917. Immediately commissioned as a lieutenant, he became a combat pursuit pilot and logged more than 500 hours in the air. He didn’t deploy because he was instead assigned to training other World War I aviators. This experience using early “combat flying machines” led to a lifelong advocacy of proper equipment and safety for U.S. military personnel. It also unleashed the leadership potential of the young veteran who would later be elected National Commander of The American Legion. Numbers, dedication and tenacity are the reasons that Commander Colmery and The American Legion wielded enough influence to pass monumental legislation such as the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944.