Vietnam veteran dedicates three-plus decades to local Legion

American Legion to celebrate centennial

| March 14, 2019
By Christina Cox
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https://www.mpacorn.com/

Peter Duncan admits he dragged his feet before finally attending a meeting of American Legion Moorpark Post 502. The Vietnam veteran had turned down several invitations from then-Cmdr. Mario Silos to join the post before his wife, Darleen, encouraged him to give the veterans’ organization a try.

“When I opened the door and walked in, everyone looked at me like I had two heads,” Duncan said of the first Post 502 meeting he attended at Cactus Patch Restaurant in Moorpark. “I went in and Mario right away knew who I was and he wanted me to sit next to him up at the head table.”

During the hours-long dinner and meeting, Silos urged Duncan to join the organization and take on a leadership position in the post.

“The next thing I knew he had me convinced that I had to become commander of the post,” Duncan said.

That was 35 years ago. Today, Duncan cannot imagine his life without the Legion.

“Every now and then I get to help someone out, be it a veteran or a family member. I really enjoy doing that more than anything else,” the 73-year-old said.

Over the past three decades, Duncan has become an advocate for local veterans. During his tenure with the Moorpark Legion he served as its commander and adjunct. In those roles he oversees membership, volunteers in the community and

---LEGION, see page 6

Daniella Wilson
2019 Department of California High School Oratorical Contest Winner

By Fran Kilgore,
Oratorical Commission Chair

On Sunday, March 3 the Department of California High School Oratorical Competition was held at the Clovis Veterans Memorial. Six high school students, representing each of our six Areas in the Department competed in this constitutional speech contest.

Daniella Wilson, an eleventh grader from Brentwood High School in the Los Angeles area was sponsored by Post 283, District 24, Area 6, took first place in the finals with her speech, “Rediscovering the Constitutional Virtue of Compromise.”

She will go on to represent the Department of California in the National competition being held in Indianapolis, IN, April 5-7.

Last year’s winner was Nathan York. This year his tenth-grade sister, Aubrey York, took second place in the Department finals. We will see her again next year.

I urge every Post Commander to take this program more seriously. This year we had only five areas in the competition instead of the usual six. This program is too important to let it fade away. The only way to keep it going is for Post Commanders to take it more seriously and work the program. Your Area Commissioner cannot do it alone. It starts at the Post level.

Save the Date:

May 17 – 19, 2019
American Legion Riders (ALR) Convention
Plymouth, CA

June 26, 2019
Past Commanders’ Club Convention
Ontario Post #112

June 27-30, 2019
Department Convention
Ontario Convention Center

August 23 – 29, 2019
National American Legion Convention
Indianapolis, IN

THE 6 MANDATORY POST REPORTS ARE:

1. Post Data Report - Due April 15
2. Notification of Post/Squadron Commanders & Adjutants - see form
3. Consolidated Post Report (CPR) - Due June 4
4. Post Delegate Certification - Due June 9
5. Post Officer Certification - Due July 15
6. Post Financial Audit Certification - Due November 15
https://www.calegion.org/report_forms.html
Hello California!
March 15, 2019 is the American Legion's 100th Birthday. Hopefully you had a grand gala of a Birthday Party to celebrate our 100th Anniversary and look forward to a new and productive year.

At Department Headquarters, we are moving things forward as our Headquarters Staff Members are hard at work under the direction of our Department Adjutant, Paul Brown, supporting our Posts, Districts, and Areas as well as our Department Leadership. Not only are we looking at making the operations of the Department more efficient and effective, we are looking into making our Headquarters safer, better equipped to handle the day to day business in a more business-like manner. We are carefully looking at ways to lower our Headquarters operational and building costs while maintaining a comfortable and productive work environment. As we go to print, we are working on identifying areas of the building and its infrastructure that need improvements and we will prioritize these areas of concern. We have an antiquated computer system as well as an aging telephone system. Little problems brought together become larger problems. We will also work hard to take care of the needs we anticipate for the future.

Our Headquarters Staff is working hard to support the Department’s needs in the previously mentioned areas, but they are also working hard in the Fundraising programs, preparing for our annual Convention and supporting the various Commissions and Committees that make our Department tick. Our membership process has seen new changes as we can process those membership transmittals to the National Organization faster and with more accuracy. Using the MyLegion.org membership processing feature makes on-Line membership transmittals easier for the individual Posts and allows faster processing, which benefits our Posts’ Membership Renewal and Retention effort.

We have a great team of Legionnaires volunteering under the direction of Department Adjutant, Paul Brown, working to make our reporting forms more “User Friendly”, whether it’s a Certification of Officers form, Post Account Audit Certification form or Post Delegates Certification form, our team is working hard to produce our unique Department of California Report Forms that can be used for “Electronic Submission” with a receipt being returned to the person that submitted the form, or you have the option to get a “Hard Copy” to be manually filled-in and mailed, faxed or emailed to Department. Your choice, (but electronic is better, yes, I’m quite partial to electronic things!). And you can keep a Hard Copy for your Post records, as well. In the foreseeable future, all forms will be electronic submission. Be aware and prepare now. I would like to thank the Report Forms Development Team and our Beta-Testers for the many hours making this crucial reporting process a success. Thank you all. As it’s been said…The Forms are Ours and they’re Good! Even Chesty likes them! (it’s a Marine thing!)

Communications with its members is vital to any organization, and the American Legion is no different. With issues, events and information being constantly created, we feel that keeping our members updated in a timely fashion benefit all of us. With our web-site and our weekly email blasts, information is provided to our members on a constant manner. Our Web-Team is constantly updating and making changes to the Department website www.calegion.org. Comments and suggestions from our members are always welcome to make sure the web-site and email blasts benefit you, the member of the Department of California.

Mentoring and training are being increased in the many areas identified as needing more help, such as membership, Post membership renewal procedures, Post membership retention, new member recruitment into our leadership and posts and many other subjects. We want your participation in these training courses as we enter our second 100 years of service to our veterans, their families and to our communities and our country. More educational training subjects will be developed to prepare our future leaders and enhance the skills of our current leaders as we move forward. California has its own American Legion College; the next class session will be in South Gate Post 335 on March 22-24. Before you can attend the California American Legion College (CALC), you must take the National “Basic Training” course beforehand. Applications for the next CALC course is available from Department Headquarters. This a perfect opportunity for excellent training, please take advantage of it.

Our Department Commissions current activities are far less than I expected. While some commissions are working hard to make up for their March 22-24, Before you can attend the California American Legion College (CALC), you must take the National “Basic Training” course beforehand. Applications for the next CALC course is available from Department Headquarters. This a perfect opportunity for excellent training, please take advantage of it.

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Earlier, I mentioned safety of our Headquarters Staff. Immediately after my election to the position of Department Commander, I sat down with our HQ Staff to discuss issues, problems and observations as well as concerns. One of the concerns that came to mind was demonstrated to me as I walk through the Headquarters’ Lobby door. They were locked and a remote buzzer was installed so visitors and newly elected Department Commanders would have to be “buzzed in” and the staff would open the door. I asked about this practice and was told that homeless people would come in and help themselves to the restrooms, and our breakroom refrigerator and others like one veteran came in very irate, claiming that WE messed up their VA claim, Our staff being professional during these incidents would calm the person down and explain we are not the VA. We are advocates for veterans and here to help. The point being, we don’t know what those people entering our building are there for or their state of mind. We need to protect our staff against whatever happens. I asked a staff member who has a family member that is a Sheriff Deputy if they could conduct an “Active Shooter” class for our staff, not that we expect a gunman to show up at our door, but any person that becomes combative, irate for medical or other reasons. The protective recommendations of an Active Shooter training work well for other confrontations that could turn violent. I also asked that the Sheriff Department evaluate the best way to insure our members and staff can protect themselves while they are in our building. The training was completed, suggestions were made and we will be implementing these suggestions as time goes on.

As we prepare for the Spring DEC and our annual Department Convention, we have time to make our Department better, more prepared, more knowledgeable and more engaged, it’s up to you as a member of this organization to be a participant and not a spectator. We can do the impossible if we all work together as one.

WE ARE TEAM 100
By the Numbers: 100 years…Four Pillars….One Team
Thank you.
Wild fires and wilder weather have wreaked havoc in Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 in Area 1. For several weeks beginning in November of 2018 both fires and the weather have closed highways, disrupted travel, closed schools [Snow Days the schools will need to make up], cancelled church services, forced the rescheduling of meetings and events in Districts 2, 3, 4, and 7, and caused power outages in many parts of the North State, especially in the High Sierra – and during some of the coldest temperatures that have been experienced this winter. I’m told that the snow pack exceeds 150 feet of normal – great news for skiers, but not so much for the rest of us.

Chester, Harry Doble Post 664, received more than four feet of snow in this last winter storm that roared through in late February; Westwood had almost five feet, while Susanville [Thomas Tucker Post 204] got rain – and Greenville [home of Indian Valley Post 568] got snow and rain, more snow and more rain. Even Lake Post [Post 162] got some snow – about two feet, though the water for filling the Lake was welcome, as was the water for filling Lake Almanor between Chester and Greenville. Chester was without power for four days during one of the coldest periods this winter.

Much of Plumas County [home to posts in Portola, Greenville and Chester] was without power in early November as a result of the Camp Fire in Butte County. Several communities in Plumas and Lassen Counties [District 3], and Shasta County [District 2], Sutter, Tehama and Yuba Counties [District 4] have taken in and welcomed refugees from this fire – the most devastating fire in State History with regard to both properties lost or damaged and lives lost. Churches, county agencies, and private individuals in many communities are reaching out to those who lost homes and other property and/or loved ones in this fire. District 4 Commander John Leach’s home post, Raisin Post45 in Corning, has started an emergency relief fund and is helping all Veterans affected by the Camp Fire. Commander Leach has also provided more information to both Department of California and National on the Camp Fire recovery efforts.

Rick Cooper, District Commander for District 1, reports that Mendocino, Humboldt and Del Norte Counties survived weather and fires and there have been requests for help, though none have been forwarded to me.

On a ‘BRIGHTER NOTE’, two posts in District 6 hosted the annual visit to California by the newly elected National Commander – Brett Reistad, and his entourage, which included California Department Commander Larry Leonardo, Department Adjutant Paul Brown, and Department Sergeant at Arms Eric Kurtz. On a rain-swept January day for Sacramento and its neighbors, Sacramento Post 447 served lunch following a tour of the CHP training course, while Yolo Post 77 in Woodland provided dinner at the Elk’s Lodge across the street from the Memorial Hall in Woodland [the Legion Hall was undergoing repairs for a water leak]. It was MY privilege as Department Vice Commander for Area 1 to share a dinner table with Dept SAA Eric Kurtz, Dept Adjutant Paul Brown, District Commanders William Boles [D6] and his wife, and James Beswick [D7] and his wife, along with Department ALR President Mick Sobczak. I appreciated the opportunity to meet and visit with Commander Reistad, and to learn from his messages to us and I enjoyed the cross-the-table sharing about restoring antique cars.

Hello Team California,

We started the year off pretty good, making our first two target dates and only missing the third by 44 members, but the fourth target date was not so close. It was about 800 members. We got back on track in January and February and it looks close for March, so continue to work membership and hopefully we’ll make it. When talking about membership we have to talk about teamwork, and that’s because as a team we can always accomplish more. I’m reminded of the acronym “TEAM” Together Everyone Accomplishes More. Have you ever watched Survivor? They start out as teams, and as members are voted off, they create one team. When there’s one team they create alliances within the team. Teamwork is utilized until they’re down to two. Teamwork works! If you need help, ASK!

We’re in the fourth quarter of the membership year and in order to meet our goal of 100% membership, we have to become and remain “Mission Focused”.

What does that mean? It means making a commitment to your success and doing whatever it takes to reach your post, district, area and department goals. This includes being signed in on my legion.org and using all the tools available, also placing a membership table at every possible event. Then calling, texting emailing or writing a letter to everyone that didn’t renew, and follow up. The National Commander wants us to make a concerted effort to do buddy checks, which is something we should be doing all year round.

Also don’t forget renewing expired members from 2014, 2015, and 2016, will get your post 5 dollars for each member renewed, by the May 8th 100% target date.

It’s important that you to realize 15 to 20 percent of our current members won’t renew. That’s unacceptable and we have to find out why. We know that each post is unique, so that answer will vary post to post.

Just as important, talk to your current members and ask them what keeps them coming back.

A good example of why we need to focus on renewing our members, can be illustrated by using CPR as an example.

You go somewhere and you see a person that’s not breathing. You don’t just start breathing for a them. You have to check their airway and see if it’s still intact. That’s because, if their throat is cut, the air is just going to leak out. So how does that relate to getting a handle on renewals because quite frankly, our membership threat has a leak.

There’s some good news though we have a lot of help at Department.

They’re committed to our membership success! Department can put members in the system now and they get them in fast. So, don’t hesitate to send them to Department if you’re trying to make a target date or 100% by the deadline.

Just like previous years, we’ll give 100% plaques to all posts that make 100 percent on 7 June 2019 membership report. That’s the hard cut-off so don’t wait.

Now let’s finish the year strong and make things happen for Team California!

Remember a rising tide floats all boats.

If you want to be a CHAMPION, victory will never just be given to you. YOU have to go and TAKE IT.

Keep looking for the Gold.

God bless America and God bless the American Legion.

By Marij Goosey, DVC/Area 1

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER — AREA 1

AREA 1 PLAGUED BY WILD FIRES AND WILDER WEATHER

On a sad note, Eagle Lake Post 162 [District 3] said ‘farewell’ to longtime post commander Theodore ‘Ted’ Cook, who passed to post everlasting in November of 2018. He will be missed.

The next meeting for Area 1 will be March 23 and 24 at Glenn E. Wilson Post 746 in Cottonwood (District 2). The last meeting of this term will be June 1 and 2 at Clifford Harter Post 163 in Alturas [District 3]. We are all praying that neither the weather nor Cal Trans will hinder travel on these two weekends.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

Deadline for the next issue of the California Legionnaire is May 7, 2019
Big Changes in the Appeals Process
Legacy & RAMP Appeals replaced by AMA (Appeals and Modernization Act of 2019)

By Marc Jenkins
Department Service Officer

At the writing of this article, I have just returned from four day attending DSO (Department Service Officer School) in Washington, D.C. The course brings DSOs and VSOs from across the world to ensure we are providing up to the minute information to veterans, their families and care givers.

The accepted number of veterans in the state of California are approximately 1.8 Million (+ -). Without considering the family members, relatives, and care givers, the American Legion target audience is somewhere closer to six million system participants. When talking about annual calls for service or assistance, we frequently deal with family members and care givers who are the individuals.

Frequently when dealing with some veterans, their family members and care givers the appointments take hours, or we must have multiple appointments for any one veteran claims event.

As of the 19th of February 2019, the Veterans Administration has thrown out the last appeals process called “RAMP”.

Presently there are approximately 500,000 claims cases on appeal in the Legacy System. That means the case has been waiting for a decision for so long, the case must remain in the legacy system or risk losing their old award date which could cost veteran thousands of dollars in compensation benefits.

One of the largest shortfalls in the cases that are denied by the Veterans Benefit Administration is the presence of evidence. Either the VA has lost the veteran’s MTR (Military Treatment Records)

What are the new options for review?

You have three options for review:

Option 1: Higher-level Review
Your claim is reviewed by a more senior claims adjudicator and involves:
• A higher-level de novo review (new look) of the decision
• No submission of new evidence allowed
• The possibility of overturning the decision based on:
  • A difference of opinion
  • A clear and unmistakable error

The reviewer, who identifies or learns of a duty to assist error, can return the claim to the regional office for correction. You or your representative can request an informal phone call to identify specific issues.

Option 2: A Supplemental Claim Lane
You can submit or identify new and relevant evidence to support your claim. VA will provide assistance in developing the evidence.

Option 3: Appeal Lane for Appeals to the Board
This option allows you to appeal directly to the Board of Veterans’ Appeals. You can choose between three options:
• Direct review: You have no new evidence and do not want a hearing.
• Evidence submission: You have new evidence, but do not want a hearing.
• Hearing: You have new evidence and want to testify before a Veterans Law Judge.

Please remember that once your case has been denied you can’t simply go back and file again. You must present new and substantial evidence. It must be something the VBA has never seen before, and when added to the original case. The new information or evidence should create a more compelling argument for the VBA to reconsider facts and conditions that will hopefully return a favorable decision on the veteran’s behalf.

Sacramento - While immigration continues to dominate the national news

By Michael Patty-Chairman, Naturalization Commission

The McClellan Conference Center hosted the fourth Citizenship Ceremony. The citizens to be started arriving at the Center as early as five in the morning for the days’ event. The citizenship event is free and open to the public for guests. The swearing in ceremony takes place at least once a month at the McClellan Conference Center in North Highlands.

Over 900 people from over 70 different countries became new US citizens at the Citizenship Ceremonies in the McClellan Conference Center.

The citizens-to-be come from countries all over the world, ranging from Albania to Zimbabwe. Today they live in various communities in and around Sacramento. They have waited a long time averaging five to seven years for this opportunity to prove their commitment to the American way. They have shown competence in the English language and passed successive interviews and an intensive test on the U.S. government.

The American Legion Naturalization Commissioner Michael Patty, Ramona Tafoya American Legion Auxiliary Unit 521 and Richard LaFontaine a lifetime member of Puerto Rico Post 61 assisted in the event. As representatives of The American Legion their role is to help with seating and general directions. They performed a vital part of this commemoration by leading the “Pledge of Allegiance,” after the oath of citizenship was administered. The American Legion Naturalization Commissions’ mission is to promote naturalization among un-naturalized residents of the State of California; to urge the broadening of the program now established in schools for the education of un-naturalized residents so that they can pass the required tests for naturalization, including the teaching to un-naturalized persons of the history and background of the United States of America, and through the Posts and Districts to cooperate with the officials of the Naturalization Department of the United States and the courts when classes of persons are naturalized.
Four Chaplains Inter-Faith Ceremony 2019

By John Aldridge,
Department Chaplain

Blessings everyone,

Religious Emphasis week for the American Legion was alive. The Department Officers and staff along with District 14 put on a Four Chaplains Day Inter-Faith service program at St. Mary’s Church in Sanger. To briefly highlight the program, distinguished guests’ speakers were Pastor John Bruno of St. Mary’s Church, Ian Coolbear from Assemblyman’s Jim Patterson’s office, Sanger City Mayor Frank Gonzales, and Department Commander Larry Leonardo. The special presentation started with a short video about what happened aboard the U.S.A.T. Dorchester when a torpedo hit it, followed by a live demonstration of how the Chaplains transferred their life Jackets to the (four crew members) recipients.

Program:

The program began with a prelude by Efren Rubio, Musician/Soloist; The Opening Ceremony and Pledge of allegiance was conducted by Eric Kurtz, Dept. Sergeant at Arms; The Procession of Colors by SAL 12th District Reigning 11 times SAL National Champion Color Guard & 2018 American Legion National Champion Color Guard: David Smith Sr., John Saenz, Roy Santiago, and Walt Butler.

The Wreath Presentation was performed by The American Legion Auxiliary, District 14: President Geri Lefler and Chaplain Barbara Novak; Opening and closing Prayers were by John Aldridge, Dept. Chaplain; The National Anthem by Sanger High School Concert Choir Trio, Robert Zamora, Marcos Espinoza, Natalie Zamudio-Pita.

Welcome to St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Sanger was by Pastor John Bruno; The Introductory into the presentation was given by Larry Leonardo, Dept. Commander; Greetings by Frank Sanchez, Sanger City Mayor; Scripture reading by Pastor John Bruno. “My Country Tis of Thee” and “God Bless America” was led by Efren Rubio and sung by Sanger High School Concert Choir Trio.

The Religious Emphasis message was given by John Aldridge, Dept. Chaplain. The Four Chaplains Ceremony and Prayer was by Mike Brogdon; Representing the Four Chaplains were: Lionel Moreno, District 18 Chaplain, Robert Heinisch, Past Dept. Commander, Lt. Keith Ritter, Chaplain Lemoore NAS, and Rabbi Werner. The Life Jacket recipients were Sanger High School NJROTC Cadets. And, the Lords Prayer was read by Joseph Meraz, SAL Detachment Chaplain. The Department and the Auxiliary provided a reception immediately following the program.

Behind the scenes there were many individual helpers. The Department thanks all who helped make the Four Chaplains Inter-faith memorial service a special and memorable event.

American Legion Baseball

By Robert Boyd,
Chairman

Baseball season is getting underway and looks like a very promising year. Petaluma won the state tournament and went on to Denver Colorado to compete in the Regional Eight Tournament. Unfortunately, they were eliminated and did not go to the World Series.

This year looks like we will have more than 51 teams participating in our state tournament. The Senior tournament will be July 26 through July 29, 2019 and the Junior division will be from July 19 through July 22, 2019.

I am very excited about having the regional eight tournament here in Fairfield for the next two years. This would definitely renew the interest in baseball in California and would also bring a lot of revenue to Fairfield and surrounding areas.

Area 4 is in the process of getting their Senior teams registered for this season and also starting (4) Junior teams with the Los Angeles Dodgers and South Bay Post 184 sponsoring them.

At this time, I would like to acknowledge the super effort that the Sons of American Legion have demonstrated the last five years. At our tournaments they do all the cooking for the teams. They also have one or two evening dinners. I also would like to thank the legionnaires for all their help and donations.

ON THE WEB AT WWW.CALEGION.ORG

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Stockton Karl Ross Post #16 Meet-n-Greet

By Michael L. Emerson

American Legion Karl Ross Post 16 in Stockton, California put on a “meet-n-greet” event for American Legion California Department Commander Larry Leonardo and California Auxiliary President Joan Cannon on Saturday, 23 February 2019. We all had a good time getting to meet, talk, and learn about these two great Americans. The event included some really nice live music, excellent food and good comradeship with many of our Post members attending. Our District #11 Commander Paula Bibby and District #11 Auxiliary President Deborah Straight also attend. We also celebrated the upcoming 100 Year Anniversary of our American Legion. Happy 100th Anniversary to all of our brother and sister Legionnaires from Karl Ross Post 16 in Stockton, California, we are all looking forward to continuing to help veterans and our community for the next 100 years.

_—LEGION, from page 1_ organizes events such as the annual Veterans Day ceremony.

“He’s been in the Moorpark Legion well, to me, for forever,” said Paul Barron, Post 502’s vice commander.

Duncan is also involved with the Legion at the district, county, state and national levels. He is a member of the Legion’s Ventura County Council and serves on the National Membership and Post Activities Committee, which focuses on membership recruitment and retention.

In Moorpark, Duncan speaks with legislators about issues affecting veterans. He spearheaded a city program that installed street light banners recognizing residents who are active-duty military.

“He was responsible for getting the banner program started that they have around town on the light poles,” Barron said.

Peter Duncan, a more than 30-year member of the American Legion and a former U.S. Marine, poses for a portrait at the American Legion flagpole on the corner of Los Angeles and Moorpark Avenues March 13 in Moorpark. MICHAEL COONS/Acorn Newspapers

For the past six years, Duncan has run the Thursday bingo program for senior citizens at the Moorpark Active Adult Center.

“The city was looking for someone to help and I thought it would be a great opportunity to make people more aware of what we’re doing and to do some fundraising,” he said.

Duncan’s dedication to the Legion stems from his desire to continue serving and his recognition of the impact the organization has made in other people’s lives since its founding in 1919.

The Legion’s storied history dates back to the end of World War I when high-ranking Army officers created the group to boost troop morale and advocate for veterans’ rights. Today, the Legion is the largest veterans’ organization in the country, serving about 2.4 million at 14,000 posts.

The Moorpark Post was chartered in 1966 and is open to all honorably discharged veterans who served on active duty during times of conflict.

In high school, Duncan wanted to follow in his brother’s footsteps and join the Marine Corps, but he was told he had to wait until he graduated. A few years later, when Duncan was in college, he returned to the recruiter’s office to volunteer for the Marines. He served 13 months of his four-year deployment in Vietnam.

“It was one of the scariest times of my life and very rewarding. I met a lot of people I had a lot of respect for and I enjoyed the camaraderie,” Duncan said of his time in Vietnam, which lasted from 1967 and 1968.

“We weren’t looking at each other as what we were but who we were. We depended on each other because we got out of there together.”

Today, Duncan continues to connect with vets. It gives him the same sense of camaraderie he found in the service.

“The Legion is made up of a lot of different people . . . It gives you a feeling of family and that’s important from my perspective,” he said.

Moorpark Post 502 will observe the Legion’s centennial during a community gathering and barbecue tomorrow, March 16, at 11 a.m. at Poindexter Park, 500 Poindexter Ave.

The event is open to all veterans, active or reserve members, families and friends. The event will give the community a chance to meet veterans in different military branches and to learn what Post 502 does in Moorpark.

To reach Post 502, email moorparkpost502@aol.com

This article is courtesy of The Acorn.

Deadline for the next issue of the California Legionnaire is May 7, 2019
**DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN**

Post Chaplain Reports: Please begin preparing your Post Chaplain reports. They are due to me no later than May 30th. The Post Chaplain of the Year report form can be obtained from the Department HQ. Be sure your services are included in your Post activities report as well. The Department does present a “Post” Chaplain of the Year Award at the Convention.

**Upcoming Holidays and Religious Observances:** There are a few holidays and observances approaching in April and May, but I’m just going to name a few.

Good Friday is a Christian holiday commemorating the crucifixion of Christ and falls on April 19th this year. Easter Sunday commemorates the resurrection of Christ and falls on the 21st of April this year. It is also called resurrection Sunday. Our National Day of Prayer is observed on May 2nd. Americans are encouraged to give thanks to God in prayer.

Cinco de Mayo is May 5th and is celebrated in the US and Mexico commemorating the victory of the Mexican Army against French forces during the Battle of Puebla. May 18th is Armed Forces Day. We honor men and women who served in the US Armed Forces. And, Mother’s Day is Sunday May 12th.

May the Lord Bless you and keep you; may the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; may the Lord lift up His countenance upon you And give you peace.

**Numbers 6:24-26**

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**DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER — AREA 3**

Greetings & Happy Centennial to Team 100!

We had great success so far with the promise of more to come. Our Revitalization effort this month should bring in a great deal of Post 1000’s in our local posts. The best thing a Post can do for retention is be a truly functional and productive.

Posts should welcome new members and encourage them to assist us in our programs and participate in activities. Enroll them in Legion Insurance Trust. Challenge your members to take the online Legion Boot Camp (ALED). Some may not know our customs and traditions nor our rituals or even how meetings should flow with the use of parliamentary procedure and Roberts Rules. Take advantage of these teachable moments and instill the love of community, state and nation.

We could use any assistance in our Commissions and Committees. This applies to our new recruited members as well. Expand their horizons and bring them to your District/ Area meetings. Our next Area 3 Meeting will be April 20th at Post 491 Ceres.

Time is now to compile the deeds of your membership through Consolidated Post Reporting. Time for our nominations (1st & 2nd rounds) for Post & District officers (Legion & SAL) and of course the Certification of Officers, both Post & District (Legion & SAL). Post should invite their District Commander to Install officers as well.

Let’s get ready for Convention in Ontario in June. Let’s do this!

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**DEPARTMENT SERGEANT-AT-ARMS**

Greetings to my American Legion Department of California Family. I’ve been enjoying my time and travels as your Department Sgt-at-Arms, especially since the start of the year. There are still a few short months left until the Annual Department Convention. I’m looking forward to the next chapter in my life after convention which will still include service to my fellow veterans and their families through the resources of the American Legion, as well as other resources that are available. This year seems to have gone by very quick with everything that is going on throughout California.

I had the privilege recently to hear some fine young men and women speak at the Department Oratorical Contest at Clovis at the Clovis Veterans Memorial District Building. It was good listening to these young men and women who are part of our future in our local communities as possible leaders. I also enjoyed the comradeship prior to and after the contest making new friends, and reconnecting with other friends.

I’m looking forward to the last few events/meetings during the final three months between the Spring DEC in Santa Maria and the Department Convention in Ontario. I have enjoyed all the hospitality and comradeship so far throughout the year, and through the close of Convention.

For God and Country,

Semper Fi.

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**DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT**

The first four months as Department Adjutant has been a unique experience. I want to thank the staff at Department Headquarters for making this transition process as smooth as it has been.

As we continue to identify department expenses in need of adjustment (see CA LEGIONNAIRE article), a proposed operational budget will be submitted to the Department Finance Commission allowing for us to operate within our revenue streams and provide funding for the following issues:

- Restore our reserve account to previous levels
- Make much needed capital improvements to Department Headquarters building
  - Upgrade equipment and software at Department HQ and Department Veteran Service Offices
  - Financial options for upcoming “balloon” mortgage payment (five years out)
  - Training to deliver best practices to post leaders to help with member retention
  - Adequate staffing to provide effective department operations and events
  - Additional, starting this month, department will be contacting administrative post members throughout the state to transfer them into local posts. Thank you to our posts (in recent phone calls with department staff) for providing additional information and permission to conduct these transfers. We are using this information to best promote our Revitalization effort into local posts should be contacted and vetted quickly to fully engage them in post activities. If the transfer is not a good fit, contact department and we can transfer the member out of a post upon request.

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**LEADERSHIP COMMISSION**

By Ken Newman

Most people, especially volunteers, appreciate being acknowledged for the service they perform, or the goals they have achieved. Recognition for a ‘job well done’ often inspires and motivates us. One key trait of an effective leader is the advancement of that acknowledgement, whether in private or in public. Sometimes a simple ‘Thank You’ is enough; other times a certificate or a plaque is appropriate. The Leadership Commission offers two programs each year for honoring the accomplishments and contributions of Legionnaires: the Lifetime Achievement and Legionnaire of the Year Awards.

The Legionnaire of the Year award is intended to recognize a Legionnaire for their accomplishments during the current Legion year, while the Lifetime Achievement award shows gratitude to a Legionnaire for 25 or more years of service to the American Legion. The Legionnaire of the Year nominee for example, may have run a successful VA&R fundraising campaign, worked to help the Post meet a membership goal, or created an American Legion Centennial celebration. A nominee for the Lifetime Achievement award has typically risen through the ranks of the Legion, performing service in positions at the Post, District, and Department levels.

Give credit where credit is due and participate in these award programs. Nomination instructions can be found on the Leadership Commission page of the Department website. 300 words or less is all we ask! Need assistance or have questions? Contact your District Leadership Chairman or Area Leadership Commissioner.

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**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE CALIFORNIA LEGIONNAIRE IS MAY 7, 2019**
Move To Electronic Delivery Of The California Legionnaire

By Paul Brown, Department Adjutant

One of the first tasks I undertook as Department Adjutant was to assess department operations and identify areas we could realign our spending to better serve the organization, our members, and the veterans of our state. This important because we have been operating the department in a deficit for the last few years and have had to dip into our reserve each year to cover our expenses. While the foresight of former leaders to establish this reserve was prudent, continuing to utilize this safety net to bridge the gap in our budget will put the organization at risk and not allow us to react to true fiscal emergencies.

Our annual budget is based on revenue streams between 1.5 and 2 million depending on our membership and fundraising levels. While I have found numerous spending areas which will, collectively, save us between $30,000-50,000, we have an issue which needs to be immediately resolved. This fiscal issue is the costs surrounding the printing and distribution of the CALIFORNIA LEGIONNAIRE.

Every year we spend $175,000 to print and mail six issues of the CA LEGIONNAIRE to our 80,000-105,000 active members. This means that 10% of our operating budget is spent on printing and postage to our members when we can be communicating with our members in a more financially effective way. This is not a practice we can, or should, continue. The CALIFORNIA LEGIONNAIRE is a benefit of membership in our department and, therefore, it is required we make it available to our members. It is currently available online on www.calegion.org.

In the past we have encouraged members to “opt-out” of having the CALIFORNIA LEGIONNAIRE mailed to them to reduce our costs. Maintaining this list has created numerous staff hours to maintain while resulting in only 1,200 members “opting out.” This method has not resulted in any significant savings.

To eliminate the majority of the costs connected to distributing the postcard mailed未来 editions only to active members who “opt-out” by returning the postcard inserted in this issue. The remaining distribution will occur through email to members, containing a link to the CA LEGIONNAIRE page on www.calegion.org.

The inserted postcard can also be used to provide us with your email. We currently have accurate emails for over 60% of our members, but we need to increase this level to above 75% to move our organization forward. Please consider sharing your email information rather than selecting the mailing option. As a member, you can always go to www.legion.org to update your own information on the national American Legion member database.

Based on typical response rates, our physical distribution of the CALIFORNIA LEGIONNAIRE should be reduced to approximately 5,000. This would bring our annual expenses connected to the printing and distribution of the newsletter to below $15,000 (less than 1% of our annual budget) rather than 10% saving the department over $150,000. With this savings we will be able to restore our reserve account, make capital improvements on Department Headquarters, hire staff to more effectively serve our members, fund training to improve post operations to better engage and retain our members, and ultimately better serve the military veterans, their families, and our communities.

In addition to sending in the postcard, members can always choose to “opt-out” at our department website www.calegion.org to receive the CALIFORNIA LEGIONNAIRE by mail.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding as we make this distribution change in future issues.

To help reduce costs associated with producing and distributing the California Legionnaire by mail, starting with the June 2019 issue, it will be distributed by Email.

Please select one of the options below, complete the requested information and return this cut-out to Department Headquarters.
If you take no action, the California Legionnaire will not be forwarded to you.

CALIFORNIA LEGIONNAIRE
To help reduce the costs associated with producing and distributing the California Legionnaire, starting with August 2019 the publication will be distributed by Email.

☐ Here is my current email address.

☐ or, I want the California Legionnaire mailed to me.

Name _______________ Member ID __________
Address ___________________________
City __________ State __ Zip ________
Lt. "Rose Bowl" Miller Graduates from Gridiron Glory to WWII Legend

By Dave Werner, U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

The USS Strong (DD 467), a WWII destroyer sunk by a Japanese torpedo in July 1943 in the Battle for Kula Gulf, has been located on the Pacific seabed by the Research Vessel Petrel. The wreck serves as a watery grave for at least 46 U.S. Navy Sailors. Its discovery has revealed a unique American story of remarkable resiliency, grit, fearlessness and resolve.

The story of Lt. Hugh Miller and the USS Strong is best told in Stephen Harding’s, “The Castaway’s Way: One Man’s Battle Against Imperial Japan.” Decades ago it was the subject of a Life Magazine article and “This is Your Life” episode, hosted by a young Ronald Reagan.

If you haven’t heard of the USS Strong or its famed crewmember before, you probably will soon. A production company has acquired rights to his story and a major movie is reportedly in the works. Its leading man is out of central casting.

Born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to a well-to-do family, a young Hugh Barr Miller was especially active. He spent considerable time as an adolescent hunting, fishing, trapping and generally being an outdoorsman on an expansive estate his family owned in Mississippi. His fitness in the field paid life-saving dividends later in the war, but proved highly beneficial even before that.

A hometown hero, the 140-lb. Miller played for the Alabama Crimson Tide football team, and even started two games as quarterback. The Tide went undefeated in 1930, and won the famed Rose Bowl in the Washington State in 1931 by a score of 24-0. The Crimson Tide were named national champions.

After college, he went on to begin a career in law, until joining the Navy in support of the mounting war effort. Stuck stateside in Florida assigned to a staff position, he would bump into Navy Cmdr. Joseph H. Wellings. Wellings was on his way to assume command of the soon-to-be-commissioned USS Strong (DD 467), being built in Bath, Maine.

After some convincing and cajoling by Miller, Wellings saw to it that the lawyer-would-be-surface-warfare officer would join the wardroom. The commissioning took place on August 1942, and Miller would serve as the 20 mm and stores officer. His posting was topside on the flying bridge. His role in battle was to direct the aim of the anti-aircraft guns against incoming aircraft. A college-level quarterback, he had a keen eye for blitzing foes, and could quickly yet effectively communicate to his teammates where to focus their aim — while under fire. Besides, his fellow crewmembers would not let him forget his ‘glory days,’ affectionately nicknaming him “Rose Bowl.”

USS Strong had an impressive, but short, service record. She earned three WWII battle stars for action in the consolidation of the Marianas Islands, the New Georgia Rendova-Vangunu Occupation, and destroying RO-43. She had less than one year of active service.

Ultimately, her end came on July 5, 1943. American forces were landing at Rice Anchorage supported by Strong, USS Honolulu, USS Helena, USS St. Louis, and USS O’Bannon. They were headed for Kula Gulf to shell Japanese shore installations. Strong and Nicholas entered the harbor and opened fire not long after midnight. The burst lasted about ten minutes. Minutes after the salvo, Strong was struck by an 88 mm long Lancier torpedo. The successful torpedo strike is thought to be from one of the greatest distances ever in warfare.

Within a few minutes, Strong was listing and going down. Surrounded by cliffs and in the heat of enemy and friendly fire from ships and shore bombardment, things appeared desperate. In a bold move, the USS Chevalier (DD 451) rammed Strong. The crew’s cast nets and lines over the two co-mingled ships to effect a deck-to-deck rescue. The abandon ship order was given on Strong. In approximately seven minutes, under chaotic, hazardous combat with enemy submarine lurking, in the firing range of hostile enemy bases, and explosions all around, 234 enlisted men and seven officers, about three-quarters of the ship’s company, made it across onto Chevalier. As enemy fire rained in, the Chevalier pulled away.

Strong, possibly splitting in two, was slipping below the surface. As Strong became awash, her depth charges exploded, killing and injuring some of the Sailors in the water. The blasts were so powerful they rendered Chevalier’s radars and sound gear useless.

Miller, who was working to disentangle a few Sailors from netting on the Strong’s deck was unable to get to the Chevalier before they withdrew, and slipped unharmed into the water. He was not so fortunate once the Strong’s armed depth charges exploded. He incurred significant internal injuries.

He awoke on a float net with a small number of Sailors. He drifted in and out of consciousness for days, until he was landed at Arundel Island. Once marooned there, it became clear his condition was hindering the group’s options. He ordered the three surviving Sailors to leave him and seek refuge and rescue. Given his grave condition, he even provided his boots to one of them.

Armed Japanese squads were patrolling the island, and despite his injuries and days of malnutrition and dehydration, he was able to evade being discovered. He assumed he would succumb to his injuries, but he fought to survive. At one point, while hidden, he watched as one Japanese soldier stepped directly over his position. As his luck held out and his physical condition stabilized, his hopelessness began to ebb.

Fortunate smiled on him again when the body of a dead Japanese soldier washed ashore. Miller recovered a grenade, bayonet and even some moldy but edible rice. He put each to good use. He ate the submarires to sustain himself. During a rainstorm, he was able to retain water in a small tin he possessed.

As the days wore on, his health actually improved, and he was emboldened with a rejuvenated determination. Using guerrilla warfare tactics, he waged a one-man war against the enemy. In the next few weeks, he killed as many as 15 Japanese according to accounts, using captured bayonets and grenades. He attacked three Japanese machine gun nests. Some of his remarkable success throwing grenades might be attributed to his University of Alabama quarterback experience. His younger days spent outdoors in Mississippi as a tireless sportsman clearly proved vital in evading capture and surviving in the elements — injuries notwithstanding.

After 39 days on the island, he was finally re-united with U.S. forces and provided important intelligence regarding Japanese positions on the island.

Miller was awarded the Navy Cross, personally bestowed on him by Eleanor Roosevelt who was on a Pacific swing with the American Red Cross.

For his war service he was awarded the Navy Cross, two Silver Stars, six Bronze Stars, two Purple Hearts, and 27 other individual and unit decorations. He retired as a Navy Captain before passing away in 1978.

He is not the first citizen from Alabama to make his mark on the Navy and nation. In fact there have been at least 34 ships named for the state or its residents. Today, the submarine USS Alabama (SSBN 71) quietly prowls the seas.

Editor’s Note: A very special thanks to Mr. Stephen Harding who was generous with his time, detail and photographs in sharing Lt. Miller’s story. His book “The Castaway’s Way: One Man’s Battle Against Imperial Japan” has much greater detail and many more images. When he learned of the discovery of the USS Strong, Mr. Harding said of Miller: “I don’t believe any World War II American service member was better suited to survival on an enemy-occupied island than was Hugh Barr Miller. Tough, determined, resourceful and an outdoorsman since childhood, he not only survived on Arundel Island, he took the war to the Japanese. The intelligence he gathered on enemy movements while awaiting rescue proved immensely valuable, and his determination to do his duty despite grievous injuries and the constant threat of capture are a credit to him, the Navy and the nation he so proudly served.”

Photo Caption: Wearing the Navy Cross and a Purple Heart with Gold Star that Eleanor Roosevelt has just pinned to his newly issued khaki uniform, Hugh Miller shakes hands with the First Lady as Admiral Harold E. Stark (right) looks on. The ceremony — held at the naval hospital in Noumea, New Caledonia, on September 15, 1943 — was conducted at the foot of the bed occupied by Electrician’s Mate 2nd Class Willard G. Langley, the sole known survivor of Strong’s forward engine room. (National Archives. Courtesy Mr. Stephen Harding)
By Nestor Aliga, Manuel L. Quezon
Post 603 Historian

On March 12, Mayor Bob Sampayan and the Vallejo City Council proclaimed March 15 as The American Legion Centennial Day. Officers and members of Vallejo Post 104, Mare Island Navy Yard Post 550, and the Manuel L. Quezon Post 603 proudly display the City’s proclamation at the Vallejo Veterans Memorial Building.

WHEREAS, On March 15, 1919, The American Legion was founded in Paris, France, by members of the American Expeditionary Force occupying Europe after World War I, who were concerned about the welfare of their comrades and communities upon their return to the United States; and on September 16, 1919, Congress chartered The American Legion, which quickly grew to become the largest Veterans service organization in the United States that is dedicated to four pillars of service and advocacy, namely, care for Veterans, a strong national defense, Americanism, and children and youth; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has played a leading role in initiatives and breakthroughs that have affected the lives of Americans in every community, from the U.S. Flag Code to the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, better known as the G.I. Bill of Rights, the democratization of higher education, home ownership for average people, better Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals, business and farm loans for Veterans, and the ability to appeal conditions of military discharge; and deriving those who argued the G.I. Bill would break the Treasury, it provided a tremendous return on investment of $7 to the United States economy for every $1 spent on the program which helped catapult a half-century of prosperity in our great Nation; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion fought to see the Veterans Administration elevated to Cabinet-level status as the Department of Veterans Affairs ensuring support for Veterans would be set at the highest level of the Federal Government; and they fought for other landmark legislation including the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 and the VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks (MISSON) Act of 2018; and

WHEREAS, The three posts in the City of Vallejo, namely, Vallejo Post 104, Mare Island Navy Yard Post 550, and the Manuel L. Quezon Post 603 have faithfully fulfilled The American Legion’s outstanding mission by helping make our beloved city to “Stand Out.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that I, Bob Sampayan, Mayor of the City of Vallejo, and the Vallejo City Council, do hereby declare March 15, 2019 as “American Legion Centennial Day” and we encourage every member of our community to learn more about The American Legion’s various programs and activities that honor and serve our Veterans and Troops, as well as all members of our beloved community.

ON THE WEB AT WWW.CALEGION.ORG

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MyLegion.org Member Account Training

By Richard Pushies,
Webmaster Post 66

Including training on the MyLegion.org Member
Accounts in our post is a smart idea. The benefits of
a Member Account are worth understanding.

Accurate and up-to-date member information is
important for any organization. This is becoming more and more
important every day when it comes to making dues payments easier
to help improve member retention and ensuring an accurate e-mail
address is on file.

Legionnaires are fortunate because we can take an active
role in keeping our personal information accurate and up-to-
date 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, with a Member Account in
the MyLegion.org members-only web portal. This is a powerful tool
for all our Legionnaires.

Having a current e-mail address on file for all our Legionnaires
is becoming more and more important. Currently it is estimated
that over 200 billion e-mails are
sent every day in America, with
expectations this number will
soon grow to over 250 billion.

Communication via
e-mail is expanding
because e-mail can be
sent very quickly and
at a much
lower cost than
traditional printed
communication.

Keeping personal information
up-to-date, ensuring a current
e-mail address is on file and setting
up an automatic on-line
renewal option are all good things
Legionnaires can do
in MyLegion.org Member Account.

These are all good reasons
to include the Member Accounts in
MyLegion.org in the training
we conduct in our post.

The following explanation of
how to set up a Member Account
and what can be done in the
account could, easily be adapted for a training handout.

Establishing a Member Account in MyLegion.org is rather easy. To
establish your account, visit the home page of The American Legion web
site (legion.org) and click on the MYLEGION.ORG link at the top of the
home page.

Once your personal MyLegion.org account is established, in the “My
Profile” option you can print a copy of your current membership card and
edit your personal user profile.

In the “Edit Profile” option Legionnaires can change:
- Name, Address, City, Zip
- Gender, Date of Birth, Phone Number
- Branch of Service, War Era, and
- E-Mail Address

Within the Member Account of MyLegion.org is a horizontal navigation
bar. In addition to updating personal profile information in the “My Profile”
option of their Member Account, Legionnaires can also:
- Subscribe to electronic newsletters
- View past editions of the Legion Magazine
- Make donations in the “Giving Made Easy”
option
- Find out about special offers available to
Legionnaires, and
- Select dues payment options;
The dues Renewal Option within the Membership tab allows you to set
up an Automatic On-Line Renewal for your membership dues. We highly
recommend this automatic payment option.

I want to setup automatic payments for future annual membership renewals.

Automatic On-Line Renewal is an easy and smart way to keep your dues
current. It also has a very positive impact on member retention.

CALIFORNIA LEGIONNAIRE
ON THE WEB AT WWW.CALEGION.ORG

ON THE WEB AT WWW.CALEGION.ORG
La Société des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux

OFFICIAL PROMENADE CALL

NINETY-NINTH (99th) GRANDE PROMENADE

GRANDE VOITURE du CALIFORNIA Inc.

In accordance with the Constitution of the Grande Voiture du California, the Ninety-Ninth (99th) Grande Promenade is hereby called to convene July 12 & 13, 2019 in the City of Fresno, CA.

HOUSING

Wyndham Garden Fresno Airport Hotel
Reservations cut-off: 1 June 28, 2019
Rate of $99.00 + tax per night; free parking
Group: American Legion 2019 Grande Voiture

MEETINGS

All Promenade events will be held at Fresno Federal Post 509
Breakfast and Lunch available both Friday and Saturday @ Post 509; the Bar will be open only during non-business sessions.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Friday, July 12, 2019, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Cheminot @ 4:30 pm, followed by the Opening of the Grande Promenade

Saturday, July 13, 2019, Business Meeting from 9:00 am to till adjournment
Cheminot upon adjournment of Promenade
Banquet & Installation
Saturday, July 13, 2019 @ 6:00pm

PURPOSE

The Grande Promenade is called for the purpose of electing Officers for the ensuing year, amending the Grande Voiture Constitution and By-Laws, adopting a balanced budget for the ensuing year, and for the transacting of such other business as may be brought before it.

BASIS OF REPRESENTATION

Each Voiture Locale in good standing, (having Ten (10) or more paid up members reported for the current year) is entitled to Five (5) Delegates and Five (5) Alternate Delegates for their Charter, and One (1) Delegate and One (1) Alternate Delegate for each Twenty-Five (25) current members, or major fraction thereof.

The Grande Promenade Roll Call shall be based upon membership reports received by Grande Voiture Headquarters up to and including June 21, 2019. Any Voiture Locale in arrears with either the Grande Voiture or Voiture Nationale shall be denied representation until all such fees have been paid in full.

All Officers of the Grande Voiture shall be ex-official members of the Grande Promenade, and shall be entitled to all privilege and right to vote as fully accredited delegates, if present in person, and the registration fee has been paid. All Souls Grand Officers shall be Alternate Delegates. All Grand Chefs de Gare Passe, present in person, are allowed voice and vote, if duly accredited and registered.

All Voiture Locales will be officially notified as the number of Delegates and Alternate Delegates they are entitled to approximately three (3) weeks prior to the Grande Promenade.

CREDENTIALS

CREDENTIALS for Delegates and Alternate Delegates will be mailed to all Voiture Locaux on June 24, 2019. These must be signed by the local Chef de Gare and Correspondant and shall be distributed to the Delegates and Alternate Delegates by the Correspondant Locale. CREDENTIALS for Grand Officers and Grand Chefs de Gare Passe will be mailed directly to them, and shall be signed by the Grand Chef and Grand Correspondant.

REGISTRATION FEE for DELEGATES

Article II Section 5 of the Grande Voiture By-Laws calls for a registration fee (currently set at Five Dollars ($5.00) per Delegate) (including Grand Officers and Grand Chefs de Gare Passe) who are entitled to vote at the Grande Promenade which shall be charged to each Voiture Locale. This registration fee must be paid prior to the opening of the Grande Promenade so that representation of the delegates may be allowed.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS and RESOLUTIONS

Proposed amendments to the Grande Voiture Constitution and By-Laws and all resolutions must be submitted in writing to the Grand Correspondent not later than June 08, 2019 so that proper distribution to committees can be affected.

PROMENADE COMMITTEES

Correspondants Locaux shall, not later than June 28, 2019, submit to the Grand Correspondant a list of all Delegates, Alternate Delegates, Delegation Chair, and Delegation Secretary on the proper form provided by the Grand Correspondant. Don’t forget your Delegate Fee Check!

ALL GRANDE VOITURE ACTIVITIES WILL TAKE PLACE per the following schedule:

THURSDAY July 11, 2019 Early Bird Registration 3:00pm – 5:00pm Post 509
FRIDAY July 12, 2019, Post 509 Registration 8:00am
9:00am Committee Meetings: (in the following order, modified as necessary) Americanism, Carville Star, Child Welfare, Loco & Box Car, Membership, Nurses Training, POW/MIA, Public Relations, Ritual, Special Awards, VAVS, Voiture Activities, Ways & Means, Youth Sports, Budget & Finance, Constitution & By-Laws, Insurance, Time & Place. Trophy, Past Chef’s Club, any others? Since all meetings will be in the same room, Grand Directors are expected to conduct THEIR business and solicit input from everyone as necessary, given the Time available.

4:00pm GRANDES CHEMINOTS Meeting. Grand Cheminots & Directeurs shall report any delinquencies or money’s owed in their Programs for the 2019 Year, followed by the Official OPENING of the 99th GRANDE PROMENADE (probably around 4:30PM)

SATURDAY July 13, 2019
8:00am Registration till noon
9:00am Grande Promenade Business Session. Followed by election of Officers & Grand Delegates to National Promenade. Grandes Cheminots Meeting following adjournment of Promenade. Delegates, Newly Elected Grande Officers, and Past Grand Chef’s meet with Grand Correspondant for National Promenade assignments
5:00pm Get acquainted
6:00pm Banquet Full Buffet. $25.00 ea. PAID reservations by June 28 payable to Post 509 and sent to Mildred Wright-Pearson, c/o Fresno Federal Post 509, 3509 N First St, Fresno CA 93726. Late reservations $30.00, if available.

ON THE WEB AT WWW.CALEGION.ORG

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ATTENTION DEPARTMENT CANDIDATES FOR 2019-2020

If you are a candidate for the following:

Department Commander
Department Vice-Commander Area 1
Department Vice-Commander Area 2
Department Vice-Commander Area 3
Department Vice-Commander Area 4
Department Vice-Commander Area 5
Department Vice-Commander Area 6
Department Sgt-at-Arms

Submit a brief bio and (blue cap) campaign photo for the Pre-convention issue of the California Legionnaire. The deadline is May 7, 2019.

Official DEC photos for 2019-2020 will be taken on

Saturday, June 29, 2019
1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Sunday, June 30, 2019
8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

On the Convention floor (location will be announced)

If you are a candidate for the following:

Department Commander (Dept cover-white)
Department Vice-Commander Area (for blue cap)
Department Sgt-at-Arms (Dept cover-white)
(Incoming) District Commanders (District cover)
Department Adjutant (Dept cover-white)
Department Chaplain (Dept cover-white)
Department Historian (Dept cover-white)
Department Parliamentarian (Dept cover-white)
Department Judge Advocate (Dept cover-white)
Department Service Officer (Dept cover-white)
Department Membership Director (Dept cover-white)
(Outgoing) Department Commander (“blue cap” cover)
Women Veterans Outreach Coordinator (“blue cap” cover)
Editor, California Legionnaire (“blue cap” cover)

Please wear the appropriate Legion cover for this photo op. If you don’t have the proper cover, borrow one and leave the rest to the photographer.

Gentlemen, you do not need to dress in full suit. A dark suit coat (black or navy), dress shirt, and tie will be fine. This will be a head shot only. Ladies, please wear a dark suit coat as well. This will ensure that all DEC photos are uniform.

A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY AND SUPPORTING VETERANS SINCE 1919

By Frank Vail
Adjutant, Bakersfield Post 26

2019 is the 100th anniversary of the American Legion. Post 26 was chartered on August 7th, 1919 and is also celebrating its’ 100th anniversary. Additionally, 2019 will be the 100th Veterans Day Parade hosted by Post 26 and 2019 will be the 100th anniversary of the Post 26 Christmas “Food Baskets for Veterans”.

In 1924, Unit 26 of the American Legion Auxiliary was charted and, to this day, it continues to support Post 26 and the Bakersfield community. They support the Post with setting the room up and taking care of the ticket sales for meals and events hosted by the Post.

In the early 70’s the Post moved into its’ current location at 2020 H. St. The larger facility has allowed the Post to support multiple veteran and community activities directly and indirectly. All revenues generated by the Post (meals, hall rentals, etc.) are used to directly and indirectly to support Veterans and to support the Bakersfield community. This includes, but are not limited to; free meals for veterans, household items for homeless veterans transitioning into housing, clothing for eligible veterans, food baskets, and funeral escorts. Community support, spearheaded by the American Legion Auxiliary, include a Christmas Party with Santa where children in the Head Start program are fed, entertained, and given toys. School supplies are gathered and distributed to teachers for their students. A Cub Scout Pack and a Boy Scout Troop are sponsored by the Post. The Veterans Day Parade is organized and presented by the Post and community volunteers. The Post provides the facility and serves breakfast every morning for the Honor Flight.

The Post (for the boys) and the Auxiliary (for the girls) raises the funds, interview high school juniors (recommended by their councilors), and escorts those selected to Sacramento for Boys State and Claremont for Girls State. This year the Post is sending 8 young men and the Auxiliary is sending 11 young ladies.

Due to the size of the Post and central location of Bakersfield Post 26, is continually asked to host American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary activities. The Post has hosted several Department Conventions, several DEC meetings, Area Meetings, District Meetings, National Commander meet-n-greets and multiple fund-raisers for things like the Erskine Fire and Texas hurricane as well as Honor Flight breakfasts.

The focus today, as in 1919, of Post 26 is to support all veterans and to be an asset to the community.
THE AMERICAN LEGION
SCOUTING SQUARE KNOT AWARD

By Russell Mills

It was with great pleasure to present Commander Robin Hoyle of Post 266 Westminster, CA the American Legion Square Knot Award.

The American Legion Square Knot Award was awarded by the National Commander for her dedication to Scouting on Thursday January 31, 2019. Russell Mills, the Area 5 Scouting Commissioner, Michael Heckenlaible, the Scouting Technical Advisor, Martha Huff, the District 29 Commander and her staff as well as Angie Cano from the Orange County Scouting Council were all participants in the ceremony.

Scouting has many benefits for both the American Legion as well as the youth who are mentored by great leaders. Many of the units past scouts and families attended the ceremony, of which she had no idea she was being recognized, showing the tremendous impact she has had on those scouts and their families. Troop 167 did the opening flag ceremony with perfection. A video was shown of all the activities the Troop has participated in the last year followed by a video of Robin Hoyle’s history of participation as Charter Organization Representative. Keep up the great job Commander, representing the American Legion and Scouting USA.

Whittier Post 51 Celebrates Legion Centennial

By Fred Shacklett,
CALPA/NALPA

3/19/2019 Whittier, CA At the conclusion of its regular meeting, Whittier Post 51 officers and members celebrated the founding of the American Legion with a birthday cake and refreshments. “It was a significant milestone for not only our organization, but also the post”, said post Commander Louie Adame.” Whittier Post 51 also turns 100 this year and is planning a post birthday to be held in August or September.
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 Application
1601 7th Street,
Sanger, CA 93657
Please make your check payable to
TAL DoC Post 1000

NOTE: $0.95 of annual dues goes to the California Legionnaire, the official publication of The American Legion-Department of California, to help offset the cost.

BY CHUCK “Pitbull” Camarato,
Vice Chairman, CALVAR Foundation

Greetings Legionnaires! As we roll into our Legion’s 100th Anniversary, it’s time to start winding up Helmets for Heroes in time for Convention. So, let me lay down how this works.

First, each Post starts collecting Helmets and counting the contributions between March and the end of May. Be sure to give the empty helmet back so the member can start again for next year. All monies collected by the Post, from both members and businesses, goes into the Post bank account, restricted fund for Helmets for Heroes. Second, at YOUR Districts last meeting before Convention, each Post presents a check to the District Commander. Make the check payable to your District, restricted fund for Helmets for Heroes. Third, at Convention, when we have the VA&R March, each District Commander comes on stage and presents a District check totaling all contributions to the Department Commander. (Make sure the check is made out to the CALVAR Foundation and in the memo write Helmets for Heroes).

CALVAR will present a check after Convention to the Department for the VA&R Division. The reason this is important is we can’t build up the credibility of Helmets for Heroes if we don’t funnel our funds through the program.

Lastly, we have moved all helmets out to staging locations. There are not many left from our first production run of 10,000 helmets. The locations are the San Gabriel Valley in L.A., Stockton/Fresno Area, Sacramento Area and San Diego.

This program is designed for both members and local veteran friendly businesses to participate.

As I have told the District Commanders before, “there is no Goose that laid the golden egg”.

This program is definitely work. Our alternatives to meet the VA&R Budget are not easy to swallow. So, let’s get behind this program as our future.

Say Hello to Major Change……