

American Veterans
 United, Inc.
 P.O Box 249
 Moorpark, CA 93020
 Fein: 46-1323725

Spring 2024
VETNEWS
 A Publication of
 American Veterans United Inc.



American Veterans United, Inc.

Central Coast, Moorpark, Orange County
 "A California Non-Profit Corporation" FEIN: 461323725
 "God Bless You and the United States of America"

Our Organization

We are committed to work with veterans and our active duty military that served or are currently serving in a combat or non-combat status from all US military service branches and with their families. Our primary efforts are focused towards obtaining benefits working with the Veterans Administration (VA), Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), and California Department of Veterans Affairs (CALVET) organizations for veterans, regardless of when or where they served, or the branch in which they served.

THESE ARE YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS & TEAM MEMBERS.

Frank Renteria - President	Tommy Lara-Director Area 1 & Sergeant at Arms
Clettus McDonell -Vice President Area 1	Blas Sanchez - Director Area 1
Vacant-Vice President Area 2	Colleen Graven– Director Area 2
Tom Munoz-Vice President Area 3	Danny Golson- Sergeant at Arms Area 2
Henry Alfaro - Coordinator	Tony Bacolot -Director Area 3
Linda Alfaro - Coordinator	Art Cordova – Director Area 3
Suzanne “Sam” de St. Jean - Secretary	Raul Guzman -Director Area 3
Silvia Bacolot - Treasurer	Al Mares - Director Area 3
Anabel Gutierrez - Assistant Secretary	Joan Mercado - Director Area 3
Fred Cobb– Director Area 1	Mark Rodriguez- Sergeant at Arms Area 3
Glen de St Jean - Director Area 1	(Updated 3/28/24)
Roy Hale - Director Area 1	
Rusty Hobbs-Director Area 1	

MEETINGS:

**Area 1 on the 4th Saturday of every month
Central Coast General Meeting
11 AM– 12 PM
American Legion Post 534
145 W. Clark Ave. Orcutt, CA 93455**

**Area 2 on the 3rd Saturday of every month
Moorpark General Meeting
11AM—12 PM
Tierra Rejada Golf Club
15187 Tierra Rejada Rd, Moorpark, CA 93021**

**Area 3
Orange County General Meeting on the 2nd Saturday of every month
11 AM—12 PM
American Legion Post 132
143 S. Lemon, Orange, CA 92866**

Board of Directors:

(Please see monthly AVU Calendar on our websites for dates, times and locations).

Attention Area 1 Members:

**The following need your vote to be elected at
our General Meeting on Saturday, April 27th.**

Earl C. McDonell, Vice President

Fred Cobb, Director

Glen de St. Jean, Director

Roy L. Hale, Director

Thomas Lara, Director

**ALL Members must be in
good standing to vote.**



**Area 1 Directors who submitted their
Letter of Intent and were voted in by our members will be sworn
at our May 4th BOD Meeting.**

MEMBERSHIP:

OVER 700 STRONG!!!

476 VETERANS*

240 NON VETERANS

716 TOTAL MEMBERS

**YOUR
MEMBERSHIP
MATTERS**

JOIN OR RENEW!

***342 VETERAN LIFE MEMBERS are included in our TOTAL**

***This means that 48% of us are
Veterans Life Members!**

Count as of 4/3/24

Attention Vets & Members:

**Any changes to email, address or contact numbers
please call Colleen Graven
Home: 805 338-5582**

*We encourage you to send us your stories, newsy articles
& photos.*

(Subject to space and approval)



Newsletter contact:

Suzanne “Sam” & Glen de St. Jean
805 925-2195 Cell 805 868-4855

samdestjean@verizon.net

WELL DONE

Ronnie Imel, Area 1 Lifetime Member is a decorated Vietnam Veteran who was inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame in 2017.

He is the founder of *Veterans Paying it Forward* that is based out of Mountain Center. It is an advocacy group that specializes in helping veterans file claims relating to service-connected disabilities, much like he does for the American Legion and VFW.

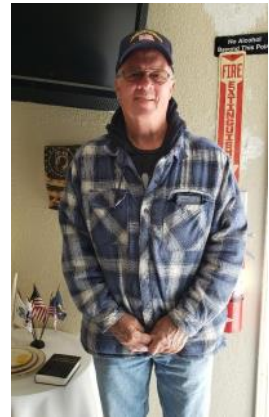
He and his wife, Sally were invited by Valley Congressman, Raul Ruiz to join him as guests at the State of the Union address in Washington, D.C. on March 8th.

When asked by Peter Daut, Channel 3 KESQ, why he was invited, Ronnie said that he met the congressman 2 years ago and introduced him to the Pact Act. Ronnie added that it was an opportunity of a lifetime and that he never dreamed he would be there to watch the State of the Union.

**To listen to the full interview, type in the search bar
“Ronnie Imel State of the Union KESQ”**



Terry Stafford, Area 1 Lifetime Member and his son, (guardian) Kenneth were selected to be part of the Honor Flight Central Coast California. They left on Sunday, October 2nd 2023 for a 3 day trip “Tour of Honor” to Washington, D.C.



Terry served in the U.S. Army for three years during the Vietnam War era in Germany as a supply clerk armorer Special 4th class. Although he visited Washington D.C in 2017, he was excited to go back along with his fellow veterans.

He and his son visited many sites, including the Vietnam wall and the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial (pictured here).

**We encourage our Veterans and their families to go on this trip
of a Lifetime!**

**For more information visit www.honorflightccc.org
Or call 805 610-4012**

AREA 1 VETERAN EVENTS & THANKS



Area 1 participated in the Santa Maria Elks Veterans Mini Stand Down event held at their lodge 1538 on Thursday, December 14, 2023.

Local Veteran Organizations are invited to share their resources with veterans and their families.

Please plan to attend the 2024 Veterans Mini Stand Down on Thursday, April 18th from 11 am - 2 pm at the Santa Maria Elks Lodge.

On Saturday, February 24, 2024 Stephen Mainville, Commander American Legion Post 534 awarded Area 1 a Certificate of Appreciation.

The certificate read
“In recognition of outstanding service and assistance to the advancement of the American Legion programs and activities dedicated to God and Country.”

GOOD JOB AREA 1!

Thank you Stephen for becoming an AVU member that day! We appreciate your support.



Several members attended the National Vietnam Veterans Day event on Friday, March 29 at the Vets Hall in Solvang. There were several veterans groups there to help veteran and their families. Local political representatives thanked our veterans for their service.

Chuck Hrehor, Green Beret along with Al Salge, Commander VFW and Steve Baird, founder of Echo Group handed out pins to Vietnam Vets.



The pins were provided by George Moran, Veteran Outreach Specialist at the SLO Vets Center.



AREA 2 THANK YOU



At their General Meeting on Saturday, March 16th, a special plaque was presented to Dale Long, Area 2 Life Member.

Henry Alfaro, AVU Coordinator is holding the plaque which reads

Dale Long
“For your generous contribution
to American Veterans United”
Sempre Fi
2024

(Semper Fi is Latin for “always faithful and is the motto of the United States Marine Corps)

CONGRATULATIONS DALE!

In addition to the plaque, Frank Renteria, AVU President presented Dale with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Dale purchased a Trike that was donated by Marlene Nickerson, whose husband Conrad, Area 1 Lifetime Member passed away in 2022.

The proceeds from that sale helped with AVU finances.

We are forever grateful to Dale and to Marlene.



AREA 3



Frank Renteria, (standing) AVU President attended Area 3's General Meeting on Saturday, February 10th at the American Legion Post 132 in Orange. Seated are Area 3 BOD and Team Members.



Special thanks to Maggie Bell for taking photos of Area 3 events and meetings. She is soon to be installed as a Board of Director and will be in charge of Membership and Merchandise

**THANK
YOU AL,**
you signed up
12
New AVU
Memberships.

**GREAT
JOB!**



**Al Mares,
Area 3
BOD**

AREA 1 MEETINGS & MEALS



Several Board of Directors folded a flag in honor and memory of Dave Skinner, Life Member who recently passed away. The flag was presented to his widow, Candy at their General Meeting January 27th.

From right to left:

Clettus McDonell, Roy Hale (back), Tommy Lara and Blas Sanchez.

Following the meeting, Mexican food prepared by Area 1 BOD was free to members.

Area 1 Members enjoy Hot Dogs and Chips at their February 24th General Meeting.



March 23rd General Meeting. After the meeting, members were treated to chili prepared by Jim Trask, biscuits made by Glen de St. Jean and delicious chocolate chip cookies by Cathy Heim. **YUMMY!!!**

US DEPT. VETERANS AFFAIRS & CALVET



**Access and manage your VA benefits and health care
Health Care - Disability – Education -Records**

If you want more information please visit their website: <http://www.va.gov>



**Register with CalVet to get veteran benefit and service
recommendations just for you!**

Visit their website.: www.calvet.ca.gov

CalVet strive to **serve** and **honor** all California veterans by connecting them and their families with their earned benefits through education, advocacy, and direct services.

**County Veterans Service Offices (VSO)
throughout the state help
veterans and their families file VA claims.
CalVet provides claims review and representation
for appeals services at their District Offices.**

REMINDER:

American Veterans United is here to serve you as Veteran Advocates. Although AVU does not currently staff an accredited Veterans Services Officer or Attorney, we have officers who are very competent and successful in consulting with Veterans and their family members to obtain the benefits they have earned, deserve and are 100% entitled to.

VETERANS HELPING VETERANS & VETERAN FAMILIES

EVENTS 2024

**Thursday, April 18th
Santa Maria Elks Veterans Mini Stand Down
1309 S. Bradley, SM Elks Lodge
11 am—2 pm
(Area 1 plans to participate)**



**Saturday, April 20th
Area 3 Fundraiser
Irene Salcido Scholarships Ceremony & Dance
American Legion Post 132
140 S. Lemon, Orange
3—11 pm**



**Saturday, July 13th
Area 3 Car Show
Suavecito Parking Lot
2831 W. 1st Santa Ana**



**Saturday, July 20th
Area 2 Annual BBQ
Oak Park, 901 Quimisa Dr. Simi Valley
12—3 pm**

**Saturday, September 28th
Area 1 Veterans Fundraising BBQ
American Legion, Post 534
145 W. Clark Ave. Orcutt, CA
12—3 pm**



**Saturday, October 26th
Santa Barbara County
Veterans Stand Down
Santa Maria Fairpark
(Area 1 plans to participate)**

***Look for more information about these
fun events at our meetings & website.***