

September 2017

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

VETNEWS

A Publication of
American Veterans United Inc.



American Veterans United, Inc.

Santa Maria, CA * Moorpark, CA * Bakersfield, CA
"A California Non-Profit Corporation" FEIN: 461323725

"God Bless You and the United States of America"

Mission Statement

American Veterans United (AVU) believes in the United States of America. We believe this nation remains great because of the military men and women who risk their lives to protect it and its people.

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. We also help and support community Veteran Centers in Sepulveda, Ventura, San Luis Obispo, and Bakersfield, Our mission is "to help other veterans obtain the benefits they have earned and deserve through their military service to our country". Many veterans are simply unaware of the compensation and health care available to them. These benefits can be life changing, and sometimes life saving, for a veteran and their family.

Advocacy of "Veteran issues" is our priority and includes government accounting of POW's/MIA's, Agent Orange issues, veteran rights, benefits, and personal welfare. We will continue to work closely with communities within California and throughout America to provide assistance to veterans and active duty members through programs within the above organizations and our organization.

We know and understand the daunting claims process required to successfully obtain these VA benefits. So we help our fellow vets complete the necessary paperwork and connect them directly with the appropriate VA professionals who will properly evaluate their health and process their claims, in a more timely manner. Perhaps most importantly, we remain available throughout the entire determination process for guidance or simply to offer encouragement during the processing period. If necessary, we will assist the veteran with an appeal in the event the VA denies their initial claim.

AVU has the actual experience of walking thousands of veterans through the VA process to get the benefits they have earned and deserve. As a result, we have established a unique presence and reputation with the Veterans Administration. This helps our veteran members go through the process as seamlessly as possible. Where necessary, we coordinate transportation needs for our members to enable them to make the VA appointments.

AVU conducts regular informational meetings and hosts social events that are designed to help veterans and their families understand the various procedures, policies and laws that can affect them. These meetings and events also foster relationships and establish contacts and camaraderie with our veterans' brothers, sisters and their families. We maintain a website (avuinc.org) that provides all types of relevant information to our membership.

We support the local communities in which we operate through our hardship and scholarship programs.

Updated 2/2/16

**Preamble
"BOND TO SERVE"**

*We, as veterans united, have served our families, our country, our God, in mortal contest against our Nation's enemies. Be we men or women, Duty called upon us to step forward and serve. And serve we did then and now for our fellow brothers and sisters of blood that are forgotten, displaced and misplaced.
We are bonded by history to help each other as no others can do for us.
To this, I step forward once again to serve.*

Our Organization

Henry Alfaro - President Frank Renteria - Vice President Area 2 Vice President Area 1 - Clettus Mc Donell Suzanne "Sam" de St. Jean - Secretary Linda Alfaro - Assistant Secretary Silvia Bacolot - Treasurer	David De Arcos -Director Area 1 Glen de St Jean - Director Area 1 Erika Medina - Director Area 1 Blas Sanchez - Director Area 1 Fred Siordia - Director Area 1 Jim Hughes - Director Area 2 Larry James - Director Area 2 Loren Manes - Director Area 2	Pete Torrez - Sergeant at Arms Jim La Rue - Sergeant at Arms (Updated 9/1/17)
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No matter where in California and throughout America our organization of veterans, active duty members and their families live, we strive to serve and support them. "So, please join us!" As you elect to join us, we look forward to any suggestions you may have for improving the effectiveness of this organization.

You will realize the sense of pride that is justifiably yours for the significant contribution you have provided to the defense of our country.

MEETINGS:

Area 2 on the 3rd Saturday of every month

Moorpark General Meeting

11AM – 12 PM

Clinicas Building 1279 Tierra Rejada, Moorpark, CA 93021

Board of Directors:

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

Area 1 on the 4th Saturday of every month

Santa Maria General Meeting:

11 AM – 12 PM

Rancho Nipomo Deli &BBQ

108 Cuyama Lane, Nipomo, CA (Hwy 166 & Hwy 101 – exit 175)

Orange County General Meeting on the 2nd Saturday (Every other month, check monthly calendar for dates) 11 AM –12 PM

American Legion Post 132

143 S. Lemon

Orange, CA 92866

Meetings dates are subject to change.

Please check monthly calendars.

**Please visit our website
or Facebook page to see
more of our event photos
and what's happening!
Like us on Facebook!!!**



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT (Were you there?)



Ken Burns Vietnam Series

Premieres September 17 8/7c

Marines marching in Danang. March 15, 1965

Credit: Associated Press

Article courtesy of pbs.com

In an immersive narrative, Ken Burns and Lynn Novick tell the epic story of the Vietnam War as it has never-before been told on film. *THE VIETNAM WAR* features testimony from nearly 80 witnesses, including many Americans who fought in the war and others who opposed it, as well as Vietnamese combatants and civilians from both the winning and losing sides.

Will there ever be a “right” time for Americans to talk about Vietnam? The nation’s involvement there began as an ill-considered but contextually understandable effort by Presidents Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower to come to the aid of an ally, France, as it battled the restive, independence-hungry population of a land it had colonized, and to prevent the spread of Communism, which was then considered the most pernicious threat to the American way of life. But by the time John F. Kennedy was president, the French were well out of the picture, having been routed at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, in 1954, and Vietnam was America’s headache. Cut to 1975 and the ignominious sight of evacuees being lifted by chopper from the roof of an apartment building in Saigon: a lasting image of American humiliation.

In the years since, the Vietnam War has periodically been the subject of waves of cinematic reckoning—in the late 70s, with such films as *Coming Home*, *The Deer Hunter*, and *Apocalypse Now*, and again in the late 80s, with such films as *Platoon*, *Full Metal Jacket*, *Casualties of War*, and *Born on the Fourth of July*. But by 2006, when the filmmakers Ken Burns and Lynn Novick were finishing up their World War II documentary series, *The War*, they felt that the timing was right for *them* to take a crack at Vietnam. For one thing, they had found themselves racing against the clock with their World War II subjects, talking to veterans in their 80s and 90s, and realized that it would behoove them to reach out to Vietnam vets sooner rather than later. For another, they believed that enough time may have elapsed for tempers to have cooled and for perspective to have been gained. Burns and Novick also surmised, correctly, that their Vietnam project would carry them well into the following decade, by which time the crucial years of the war would be a half-century in the past.

Novick added, “There’s no agreement among scholars, or Americans or Vietnamese, about what happened: the facts, let alone whose fault, let alone what we’re supposed to make of it.” Now, at long last, comes *The Vietnam War*, more than 10 years in the making. The series premieres on PBS on September 17, its 10 episodes totaling a whopping 18 hours.

AREA 1 BBQ:

Fun day with family and friends on Saturday, August 26th at Waller Park in Santa Maria



Delicious Tri-Tip BBQ & fixings
Thank you Frank & BBQ Crew!



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Great Raffle Baskets – Thanks
to Linda Alfaro &
Sandra Sanchez.



Congratulations to our
Winners!
50/50 Keith Ward \$153!



*Thank you all for your support and help in making our
BBQ a success! More pics of Area 1 and 2 BBQ on our website!*



AVU Band of Brothers!



Lots of fun & magic by
Joey Kabosius AKA
The Magic Man

WELL DONE:



On July 27th, the Santa Maria Bonita School District invited Veteran Organizations to their event titled "Honoring Our Military" which was held at the Veterans Community Center in Santa Maria. There was dinner and a parade. Mr. Mark Mueller, Santa Maria Bonita School District Assistant Superintendent thanked all of those who served and are currently serving our country today. Fred Siordia from AVU presented a certificate to Mr. Mueller and the staff of the school district.

After dinner the parade lined up in front of the Veterans Community Center, with all the Veterans" in attendance forming behind the Santa Maria Police Department Color Guard. Every Veteran in formation had their name and branch of service announced.....and the crowds cheered us on. This was indeed a touching momentyou could feel it.



Thank you Erika Mendoza, BOD member for inviting Christine Espinoza and Letitia Morales from the World Financial Group to our Area 1's General Meeting on Saturday, July 22nd. They gave our group an overview on how their company can help families and individuals with Retirement Plans, Wills and Living Trusts, Life Insurance. Long Term Care and more. For more information please call WFG at 805 757-7715

Santa Barbara Annual Stand Down October 21 2017.

Thank you Clettus and volunteers for helping with this special event! Volunteers still needed.
Please contact Clettus McDonell 805 598-4260
Email classicclet@aol.com.
(See back of Newsletter for Thank you Letter)



MEMBERSHIP:

ALMOST 1000 STRONG!!!

753 VETERANS

197 NON VETERANS

950 TOTAL MEMBERS*



***151 LIFE MEMBERS
INCLUDED IN TOTAL**

**Attention Vets & Members:
Any changes to email, address or contact numbers
please call Linda Alfaro
Home: 805 529-1313 Cell: 805 744-9218**



Newsletter contact:
Suzanne “Sam” & Glen de St. Jean
805 925-2195 Cell 805 868-4855
samdestjean@verizon.net

**Special Thanks to Sam & Glen de St. Jean
who prints our Newsletters for Area 1
and Jim Hughes and Bill Amaraz for Area 2!**

***We encourage you to send us your bios, stories, newsy articles.
(Subject to space and approval)***

DID YOU KNOW?

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES ONE DOLLAR BILL by O.C. Hughes

Take out a one dollar bill, and look at it. The one dollar bill you're looking at first came off the presses in 1957 in its present design. This so-called paper money is in fact a cotton and linen blend, with red and blue minute silk fibers running through it. It is actually material. We've all washed it without it falling apart. A special blend of ink is used, the contents we will never know. It is overprinted with symbols and then it is starched to make it water resistant and pressed to give it that nice crisp look.

If you look on the front of the bill, you will see the United States Treasury Seal. On the top you will see the scales for a balanced budget. In the center you have a carpenter's square, a tool used for an even cut. Underneath is the Key to the United States Treasury. That's all pretty easy to figure out, but what is on the back of that dollar bill is something we should all know. If you turn the bill over, you will see two circles. Both circles, together, comprise the Great Seal of the United States.

The First Continental Congress requested that Benjamin Franklin and a group of men come up with a Seal. If you look at the left-hand circle, you will see a Pyramid. Notice the face is lighted, and the western side is dark. The Pyramid is uncapped, again signifying that we were not even close to being finished. Inside the capstone you have the all-seeing eye, an ancient symbol for divinity.

'IN GOD WE TRUST' is on this currency. The Latin above the pyramid, ANNUIT COEPTIS, means, 'God has favored our undertaking.' The Latin below the pyramid, NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM, means, 'a new order has begun.' At the base of the pyramid is the Roman Numeral for 1776. (MDCCLXXVI). If you look at the right-hand circle, and check it carefully you will learn that it is on every National Cemetery in the United States.

The Bald Eagle was selected as a symbol for victory for two reasons: First, he is not afraid of a storm; he is strong, and he is smart enough to soar above it. Secondly, he wears no material crown. We had just broken from the King of England. Also, notice the shield is unsupported and at the top of that shield you have a white bar signifying congress, a unifying factor. The Eagle's beak reads, 'E PLURIBUS UNUM' meaning, 'one from many.' Above the Eagle, you have thirteen stars, representing the thirteen original colonies. Notice what the Eagle holds in his talons. He holds an olive branch and arrows. This country wants peace, but we will never be afraid to fight to preserve peace. The Eagle always wants to face the olive branch, but in time of war, his gaze turns toward the arrows.

They say that the number 13 is an unlucky number. This is almost a worldwide belief. You will usually never see a room numbered 13, or any hotels or motels with a 13th floor. But think about this:

13 original colonies, 13 signers of the Declaration of Independence, 13 stripes on our flag, 13 steps on the Pyramid, 13 letters in, 'Annuit Coeptis,' 13 letters in 'E Pluribus Unum,' 13 stars above the Eagle, 13 bars on that shield, 13 leaves on the olive branch, 13 fruits, and if you look closely, 13 arrows.

And finally, if you notice the arrangement of the 13 stars in the right-hand circle you will see that they are arranged as a Star of David. This was ordered by George Washington who, when he asked Hayyim Solomon, a wealthy Philadelphia Jew, what he would like as a personal reward for his services to the Continental Army, Solomon said he wanted nothing for himself but that he would like something for his people. The Star of David was the result. Few people know that it was Solomon who saved the Army through his financial contributions died a pauper.

I always ask people, 'Why don't you know this?' Your children don't know this, and their history teachers don't know this. Too many veterans have given up too much to ever let the meaning fade. Many veterans remember coming home to an America that didn't care. Too many veterans never came home at all.

Story suggested by Joey Kabosius AKA "The Magic Man/Fish Guy"

MERCHANDISE:

(Available at all meetings & AVU events)

Men's Short Sleeve T-Shirt

Sizes **Small - Large** \$20

Sizes **X-Large and up** \$25

Men's Long Sleeve T-Shirt

Sizes **Small - Large** \$20

Sizes **X-Large and up** \$25



Polo Shirts Men's & Women's

Sizes **Small - Large** \$25

Sizes **X-Large and up** \$30

Women's V-Neck or Crew Neck T-Shirt

Sizes **Small - Large** \$20

Sizes **X-Large and up** \$25

Hats

Mid Crown \$15

High Crown \$15



**AVU Pens Free
to Members!**

Patches

Small Patch \$15

Large Patch & Small Patch combo \$50



Coffee Cups \$5

POLITICAL NEWS:
(Courtesy of VA. GOV)

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

VA Awards Grants to Help Homeless and At-risk Veterans and Families - WASHINGTON – Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it has awarded \$343 million in grants to 288 nonprofit organizations to help low-income Veterans and their families. (9/13/17)

VA Awards \$188 Million in Grant Funding to Help Homeless Veterans - WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced \$188 million in grants for two programs benefiting homeless Veterans. (9/11/17)

VA Unveils Claims Submission Option That Promises to Complete Claims within 30 Days - WASHINGTON — Today, as part of the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) continued efforts to improve timeliness of services for Veterans and their families, VA unveiled the Decision Ready Claims (DRC) initiative, a disability claims submission option with accredited Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) that promises to deliver faster claims decisions to Veterans and their families. (9/7/17)

VA to Revise State Veteran Home Construction Regulations - Today, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin announced that VA plans to propose changes to regulations for its State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program to make it easier to for States to receive VA funding to construct Veterans homes in rural areas. (8/21/17)

VA Extends Funding to Groups Impacted by Grant and Per Diem Program Changes - VA Secretary David J. Shulkin announced an extension of funding to organizations that applied for Fiscal Year 2018 grants under VA's Homeless Providers' Grant and Per Diem Program, but would be found ineligible due to new program guidelines. (8/4/17)

Statement by VA Secretary David J. Shulkin - Passage of the Forever GI Bill - Congress has spoken with a strong voice in support of our Veterans this afternoon. The Forever GI Bill expands the success our Veterans have had with the GI Bill providing opportunities that otherwise would not be possible (8/2/17)

Statement by VA Secretary David J. Shulkin - Congressional Approval of VA Choice Funding Legislation - Congress took an important step last night in helping the VA to continue to build an integrated system that allows Veterans to receive the best healthcare possible, whether from VA or the private sector. The \$2.1B in Choice funding ensures there will be no disruptions to quality care for our Veterans. (8/2/17)

VA Answers Governor Christie's Call on Opioid, Launches S.T.O.P. P.A.I.N. Advices and Guidelines - When it comes to treating pain and substance abuse, the Department of Veterans Affairs is recognized by many as a leader in the pain management field and the responsible use of opioids across the VA healthcare system. (8/1/17)

BENEFITS & SERVICE:



Register with CalVet to get veteran benefit and service recommendations just for you! www.cdva.ca.gov

Veteran Services / Benefits

California is home to 1.8 million veterans, representing eight percent of the total U.S. veteran population. California anticipates receiving an additional 30,000 discharged members of the armed services each year for the next several years – more than any other state. Historically, the largest demand for benefits and services for veterans occurs immediately after discharge and again as the veteran population ages and requires greater access to medical facilities and long-term care services.

With the substantial number of veterans under the age of 30 leaving the military after deployments to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, coupled with a considerably large population of Vietnam veterans who are now approaching a period in their lives where they will need greater access to medical and long-term care, California is preparing for a sustained spike in earned services and benefits.



<http://www.va.gov/>

About VBA

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) provides a variety of benefits and services to Service members, Veterans, and their families. VBA has been undergoing a major transformation that is people-centric, results-oriented, and a forward-looking integration of solutions that will ensure total lifelong engagement with Service members, Veterans, and their families. To learn more please go to <http://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/media-publications.asp>

EVENTS:

See Flyer for more information



1st Annual OC Fundraiser BBQ
Saturday, September 30
11 AM – 5 PM

Saturday, November 11, 2017

11am - 2pm, Madonna Expo Center, 100 Madonna Rd. SLO
THIS EVENT IS FREE TO ALL VETERANS AND RESERVISTS!
REGISTER TODAY! (DEADLINE EXTENDED TO SEPTEMBER 30TH.)
All veterans and reservists eat free. Guests pay \$10 per meal.
Seating is limited. Please contact Michael Knight 805-689-2576,
cprslo@sbcglobal.net immediately to register
so that we can reserve your seat and a meal.

*We hope to have a Christmas Party in
December.
More information to follow.*



GOOD NEWS!

**HOMETOWN
BUFFET**



*Do you know of any other military discounts?
Please let us know.*

*Find other discounts to national parks, events, stores, etc. at
www.military.com/discounts*

*Don't forget Vets eat for free on
Veteran's Day!*