

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

July 2018

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 McDonell Suzanne "Sam" de St. Jean - Secretary Linda Alfaro - Assistant Secretary Silvia Bacolot - Treasurer | Glen de St Jean - Director Area 1 Roy Hale – Director Area 1 Manuel Medina - Director Area 1 Blas Sanchez - Director Area 1 Jim Hughes - Director Area 2 Larry James - Director Area 2 Loren Manes - Director Area 2 | Tom Lara- Sergeant at Arms Jim La Rue - Sergeant at Arms (Updated 7/3/18) |
|---|--|--|

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

My name is Larry Caro and I was born in Kalamazoo, Michigan on April 2, April, 1947. My family moved to Stockton, California in 1954. I joined a local American Legion sponsored Junior Drum and Bugle Corps in 1962 then the American Legion California State Champion, Joaquin Caballero Senior Drum and Bugle Corps.



In the mid 1960's I became a marching member, as a Soprano Bugler, of the Chicago Royal-Airs Junior Drum and Bugle Corps. In 1965 they won first place at the following Junior Drum and Bugle Corps National Championship competitions. The American Legion National

Convention, held in Portland, Oregon, The Catholic Youth Organizations, (CYO) Invitationals held in Boston, Massachusetts and the Veteran of Foreign Wars National Convention, held in Chicago, Illinois. They have the distinction of being the only Junior Drum and Bugle Corps to have ever won all three of these National Championships in the same year.



DD 547 U.S. S. Cowell photo and band photo courtesy of Larry.

I entered the U. S. Naval Reserve in 1966 and served on the DD 547 U.S.S Cowell. Then after working with the Canadian Travel Industry for 32 years I returned to the U.S. I have three children and three grandchildren living in Canada. I am retired and now live in Santa Maria, California.

Locally I was for five years a Bugler for the the "Santa Maria Valley Veterans Honor Guard" performing at Military Funerals and the last two years have been asked as a member of "Buglers Across America" to play Taps at the Santa Maria Police, National Police Recognition Day Ceremony.

I have been a member of AVU since October 2017. I played taps at our November 2017 General Meeting and again at our March and June General Meetings. I hope to continue to play at future meetings and any special Military events.

WELL DONE:

Manuel and Erika Medina, AVU Scholarship Committee members presented each winner with a \$625.00 check and a \$25 gift card. **Congratulations to our Winners!**

AVU provides scholarships to graduating high school students who have been accepted to an accredited vocational, technical school, college or university and helps them strive to achieve their goals to attend and graduate college.

Eligible applicant must be direct descendant (child or grandchild) of a United States Military veteran. They must include the following: a high school transcript and have a minimum high school grade point average (GPA) of 2.5, two letters of recommendation preferably one from school official (teacher, counselor, administrator, etc.), an employer or community member, and a brief resume with topics (student activities, special awards, community/work involvement, hobbies and interest, accomplishments and/or challenges. The Scholarship Committee made up of the Medina's and Glen and Suzanne "Sam" de St. Jean chose the winners based on the above criteria including their original essay titled:

"How do our country's veterans inspire you to create your own goals in life?"



Orcutt Academy Amanda Dhoedt



Ernest Righetti HS – Cassi Colangelo



The other two winners ***Kyle Borges and Erica Arredondo*** (no photos available) were from Pioneer High School.

Photos courtesy of Erika Medina

MEMBERSHIP:

Over 1000 STRONG!!!

848 VETERANS

213 NON VETERANS

1061 TOTAL MEMBERS*



***191 VETERAN LIFE MEMBERS**

are included in TOTAL

***This means that 23% of our Veteran members are
Life Members!**

Count as of 7/11/18

**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 print 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 red poppy has served as an official symbol of remembrance for the American Legion Family for nearly a century? After World War I, the poppy flourished in Europe. Scientists attributed the growth to soils in France and Belgium becoming enriched with lime from the rubble left by the war. From the dirt and mud grew a beautiful red poppy. The red poppy came to symbolize the blood shed during battle following the publication of the wartime poem “In Flanders Fields.” The poem was written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, M.D. while serving on the front lines. McCrae penned his famous war poem in 1915 for the funeral of a fellow friend and soldier, Alexis Helmer, who died during the Second Battle of Ypres.



Lest we forget

Surviving soldiers came to see the poppy as more than a flower — it became a symbol of their sacrifice; a tribute to the price of freedom. Although all WWI veterans have since passed, 100 years later, the poppy has become a universal display of the sacrifices made by Americans and allied service members around the world.

Historically, Americans have worn poppies in observance of Memorial Day and Veterans Day. While other nations honor veterans in their own way, this year, Congress introduced House Simple Resolution 309 to proclaim the Friday before Memorial Day as National Poppy Day in the United States. National Poppy Day (May 25) is a strong renewal of our nation’s commitment to a powerful reminder of the cost of our freedom with 100 years of rich tradition. Millions of people worldwide wear the poppy as a call to honor living veterans and those who lost their lives.

The custom can be traced back to 1918 when Moina Michael popularized the idea of wearing a poppy flower in memory of the lives lost in WWI. She drew inspiration from the poem In Flanders Fields, written by WWI Colonel John McCrae in his sorrow at looking at rows and rows of graves where his comrades had been recently buried. In the decades that followed, poppies have been worn, displayed and distributed for fundraising efforts for veterans service organizations around the world.

On September 27, 1920, the poppy became the official flower of The American Legion family to memorialize the soldiers who fought and died during the war. In 1924, the distribution of poppies became a national program of The American Legion.

The last stanza “In Flanders Fields.”
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Condensed from the American Legion Magazine and Auxiliary

MERCHANDISE:

(Available at all meetings & AVU events)

Men's Short Sleeve T-Shirt

Sizes **Small - Large** \$20

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

Men's Long Sleeve T-Shirt

Sizes **Small - Large** \$20

Sizes **X-Large and up**



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

Patches

Small Patch \$15

Large Patch & Small Patch combo \$50

**AVU Pens Free
to Members!**



Coffee Cups \$5



***US DEPT. VETERANS AFFAIRS NEWS RELEASES:
(Courtesy of VA. GOV)***

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

VA Partnership with National Cancer Institute Will Boost Veteran Access to Clinical Trials - WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it has formed a partnership with the National Cancer Institute (NCI) which will provide more access to the latest treatment options for VA patients with cancer. (7/10/18)

VA Provides Reorganization Plan to Strengthen and Modernize Department - WASHINGTON — Today the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced specific recommendations in the President’s “Delivering Government Solutions in the 21st Century” - Reform Plan and Reorganization Recommendations.” (6/21/18)

VA Showcases New Medical Advancements in Veteran Care on Capitol Hill - WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) Office of Research and Development hosted a Research Fair at the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill to share new medical advancements in improving health care and quality of life for Veterans across the nation. (6/19/18)

VA Issues New Policy to Protect Veteran Homeowners from Predatory Lending - WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has issued a new policy implementing the May 2018 Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act, to protect Veteran homeowners from predatory lending practices when obtaining a VA-guaranteed refinance loan. (6/15/18)

VA Extends Record of Transparency with First-Ever Posting of Annual Nursing Home Ratings - Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) extended its unprecedented 18-month record of transparency disclosures by making public for the first time its annual nursing home ratings. The data show that, overall, VA’s nursing home system – composed of more than 130 community living centers – compares closely with private sector nursing homes, even though the department on average cares for sicker patients in its nursing homes than do private facilities. (6/12/18)

VA and PsychArmor Institute Offer Online Suicide Prevention Training - WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), in collaboration with PsychArmor Institute, a national nonprofit that provides online education and support to Americans who work with, live with or care for military service members, Veterans and their families, recently launched an online suicide-prevention training video, titled “SAVE,” which is designed to equip anyone who interacts with Veterans to demonstrate care, support and compassion when talking with a Veteran who could be at risk for suicide. (6/12/18)

VA’s Veterans Crisis Line Improves Service With Third Call Center Opening in Topeka, Kansas - WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it has opened its third Veterans Crisis Line (VCL) call center in Topeka, Kansas on the campus of the Colmery-O’Neil VA Medical Center. (6/8/18)



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:

**8/4/18 Ventura County Parade -
Ventura**

**8/25/18 2nd Annual Family BBQ
Area 1 - Waller Park**



**8/4/18 5th Annual Golf Tournament
Elkins Ranch Golf Course - Fillmore**

10/20/18 Area 2 Appreciation BBQ - Moorpark

**10/20/18 Santa Barbara County
Veterans Stand Down – Santa Maria Fairpark**

10/27/18 Orange County BBQ Fundraiser – La Habra

**Look for more information about these fun events at
our meetings, emails & Newsletters.**

GOOD NEWS!



10% off eligible purchases. Visit their website for more information.



*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*