

American Veterans  
United, Inc.

P.O Box 249

Moorpark, CA 93020

Fein: 46-1323725

**January 2019**

***VETNEWS***

A Publication of  
American Veterans United Inc.



## American Veterans United, Inc.

Santa Maria, CA \* Moorpark, CA \* Orange County  
"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**

<p>Henry Alfaro - President          Frank Renteria - Vice President Area 2          Clettus McDonell -Vice President Area 1          Gail Woodworth – Vice President Area 3          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          Tommy Lara – Director Area 1          Loren Manes - Director Area 1          Manuel Medina - Director Area 1          Blas Sanchez - Director Area 1</p>	<p>Jim Hughes - Director Area 2          Larry James - Director Area 2          Tony Bacolot -Director Area 3          Art Cordova – Director Area 3          Dan Hinojosa -Director Area 3          Jim La Rue - Sergeant at Arms Area 2  <b>(Updated 1/29/19)</b>   <b>WELCOME AREA 3!</b></p>
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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: (updated 1/2/9/19)***

**Area 2 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month *(starting in February 2019)***

**Santa Maria General Meeting:**

**11 AM– 12 PM**

**Lompoc Veterans Memorial Building**

**100 E. Locust Ave, Lompoc, CA 93436**

**Orange County General Meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of every month**

**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 **Roy L. Hale**. I am originally from Sacramento, California, but was raised in Santa Barbara until my enlistment in the U.S. Marine Corps. I enlisted the day after my 17th birthday. I left for recruit training on the 7th of July, 1980 and graduated with my Platoon #1069 on the 26th of September. I later assigned to the Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni, Japan, working in hazardous cargo. This gave me the opportunity to take courses and I graduated from High School on the same date as if I had graduated with my high school class back home.

I had been in the Marine Corps for a year and in Japan for 6 months. Having graduated from high school I was now eligible for special duty assignments and I was assigned to what is now known as the Marine Corps Embassy Security Group. I was assigned to Vienna, Austria, San Salvador and El Salvador. I covered the shift in Managua, Nicaragua while that detachment conducted weapons training. Later I spent 11 months in Jamaica where I was honorably discharged. I found I did not associate well with civilians so I re-enlisted in the Reserves. I was assigned to the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. I was trained as an intelligence analyst. Over the next 6 years I worked on projects that demanded many periods of extended active duty, which brought me to the Korean Peninsula on a couple of different occasions.



I left the military for good in May of 1990. I returned to Santa Barbara County but this time I settled in Santa Maria. I trained for and then became an emergency medical technician (EMT) for 3 years going on to Paramedic training and I worked as Paramedic, then Field Training Officer over the following 20 years, ending only after a career ending injury. In the middle of those 23 years I also trained as a firefighter. I fought fires and answered medical and trauma calls for both the Orcutt and Guadalupe fire departments. I earned my Associate of Science in Emergency Medical Services from Allan Hancock College, where I then taught and helped develop an Academy style training program in emergency medical services.

In July 1990, I met and then married my wife Tina on October 3, 1992. We have 4 adult children and two grandsons, Sebastian and Bentley. I am studying for my BA degree in Intelligence Studies with a minor in International Relations and a Concentration in Terrorism Studies from the American Military University. I was recently voted in as a Director for AVU's area 1. I am also Sergeant at Arms for the Coastal Valleys Detachment 1340 of the Marine Corps League.



*Photos courtesy  
Of  
Roy Hale*



**WELL DONE:**

At our Area 1 General Meeting on Saturday, December 22nd, several members were recognized for their contribution and hard work throughout 2018.

**Thank you all.**

More pictures can be found on our website.



Clettus McDonnell,  
Vice-President Area 1



Sandy & Blas Sanchez,  
(Director Area 1)



Martin Lopez,  
Member Area 1



Tony & Silvia Bacolot were also honored for their help. Tony is our # 1 DJ at our events and Silvia is our Treasurer.

**Congrats!**

Area 1 bought a 20 passenger bus from the Santa Ynez Transportation Dept. This will enable our members to get to their appointments and meet their needs.



## ***AVU CHRISTMAS PARTY 2018:***

Approximately 52 people attended our annual AVU Christmas Party which was held on Saturday, December 15 at the Rancho Susanna Community Center in Simi Valley. We enjoyed a delicious chicken/rib dinner along with all the fixings' provided by Green Acres Catering.



***Family & Friends!***



***White Elephant Gift Exchange!***

**More photos on our website!**



***Let's Party! Party! Party!***



**MEMBERSHIP:**

**Over 1100 STRONG!!!**

**902 VETERANS**

**230 NON VETERANS**

**1132 TOTAL MEMBERS\***

**\*209 VETERAN LIFE MEMBERS  
are included in TOTAL**

**\*This means that 18% of our Veteran members are  
Life Members!**

**Count as of 1/14/19**



**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](mailto: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)***

## ***AVU CARES – AVU SHARES:***

At our Annual BOD meeting in December 2018, a motion was approved to donate \$500 to Operation WEBS, a local non-profit that builds tiny homes for homeless women veterans.

\$500 was also donated to Honor Flight, Central Coast California.



**WELCOME HOME WOMEN VETERANS**

## **Honor Flight Mission Statement**

Our Mission is to honor all of America's veterans by taking them to Washington D.C. on their "Tour of Honor" as our guest. Once there, they can visit and reflect at their memorials which have been built to honor their service.

Currently over 135 local veterans are waiting to go on their Tour of Honor. With both WWII and Korea war veterans, time is not on our side.



***Do you know of a veterans group that can use AVU's help?  
Please contact your local Vice-President or any board member.***

## ***DID YOU KNOW?***

There are Blue Star and Gold Star Families?

**A Blue Star Family** consists of the immediate family member(s) of a service member during a time of conflict.

A Blue Star Family can display a Blue Star Service Flag. The number of blue stars on the flag corresponds to the number of individuals who currently serve in the Armed Forces from that immediate family.

The Blue Star Service Flag was patented and designed by WWI Army Captain Robert L. Queisser who, at the time, had two sons serving on the front line. The flag quickly became the unofficial symbol of a child in service.



**A Gold Star Family** is the immediate family member(s) of a fallen service member who died while serving in a time of conflict. A Gold Star Family can display a Gold Star Service Flag for service members who were killed or died, while serving in the Armed Forces, from causes other than dishonorable. The number of gold stars on the flag corresponds to the number of individuals who were killed or died. A gold star is placed over the blue star on a Blue Star Service Flag so that the blue forms a border and creates Gold Star Service Flag. The U.S. Department of Defense also issues Gold Star lapel pins to immediate family members of a fallen service member of the military. These pins are worn by spouses, parents, and children of service members killed in the line of duty and contain a gold star on a purple circular background.



President Wilson authorized a suggestion made by the Women's Committee of the Council of National Defenses, that mothers who had lost a child who served in the war could wear a traditional black mourning armband with a gold gilt star in 1918. This approval led to the tradition of a gold star covering the blue star on the Service flag to show that the service member had passed. It's believed Wilson coined the term "Gold Star Mother."

*Condensed from Hope For the Warriors website*

*Hope For The Warriors is an independent non-profit organization not affiliated with Wounded Warrior Project.*

***Have a story or an item of interest to share?  
Please contact Suzanne "Sam" de St. Jean, AVU Newsletter Publisher at  
[samdestjean@verizon.net](mailto:samdestjean@verizon.net) or 1 805 925-2195.***

***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



## ***US DEPT. VETERANS AFFAIRS***



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! [www.cdva.ca.gov](http://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.

#### **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:**

**4/28/19 Area 3 - Sunday Dance**

**7/20/19 Area 2 - 6<sup>th</sup> Annual BBQ, Oak Park**

**8/10/19 Area 3 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Fundraiser**

**8/24/19 Area 1 - 3rd Annual Family BBQ, Waller Park**

**9/1/19 Area 3 - 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Car Show – Area 3**



**10/20/19 Area 2 - Appreciation BBQ - Moorpark**

**10/20/19 Santa Barbara County  
Veterans Stand Down – Santa Maria Fairpark**

**12/15/19 Annual Christmas Party**



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

**GOOD NEWS!**

**HOMETOWN  
BUFFET**

A promotional graphic for Military Mondays. It features a stylized American flag on the left side. The text reads: "Military Mondays FOR YOUR SERVICE, LET US SERVE YOU", followed by a list of eligible groups: "ACTIVE DUTY", "VETERANS", "RESERVE MEMBERS", and "PLUS, THEIR FAMILIES!". At the bottom, it says "Every Monday ENJOY SPECIAL MILITARY DISCOUNTS".

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Military Mondays**  
FOR YOUR SERVICE, LET US SERVE YOU  
• ACTIVE DUTY  
• VETERANS  
• RESERVE MEMBERS  
• PLUS, THEIR FAMILIES!  
\*\*\*\*\*  
**Every Monday**  
ENJOY SPECIAL MILITARY DISCOUNTS

Restrictions apply. Must show U.S. Military ID or proof of service. \*Good only for 1 family member including U.S. Military member (active or reserve or retired) - \*Not being defined as 18 years of age or younger. All participating restaurants only. Limited time only. Beverage and tax not included. \*Not valid for alcohol. ©2019 Darden Brands.

**Updated 1/29/19**



**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](http://www.military.com/discounts)**