

# THE AMERICAN LEGION -POST 117 SAN LEANDRO, CALIFORNIA

## EMAIL NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2021 VOL 2021 ISSUE #4



### Commander's Message



Don Reed  
Commander

We held our first hybrid regular meeting on May 28. It was a success. Members who wanted to attend in-person met at the Veterans Hall and members at home joined via Zoom. I encourage all of our organizations Leaders (Auxiliary, SALs and Riders) to provide this option to their membership.

Even though we were unable to join as a group at Lone Tree this year to remember and honor the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, I hope we were all able to take a long moment to pause, reflect, and remember those who gave all in service to our nation.

We will hold a Blood Drive in partnership with Vitalant on June 20. You can register to donate blood at [www.vitalant.org](http://www.vitalant.org). Click Donate then choose Donate Blood. Enter Sponsor Code "ALP117" and click Search then choose a time. There is a questionnaire to complete on the day of your donation. If you are not able to make an appointment in advance, walk-ins are welcome. I hope to see you there on June 20. We will be wearing masks and practicing social distancing.

The Department of California Annual Convention is June 24 – 27. It will be virtual. Our post Officer Installations will be held in July. Most Officers and Committee Chairs remain in their current positions. Please see a list of the current Officers in this Newsletter. Regular Post meetings will resume on August 27, Friday, at 7:00 pm, continuing as hybrid events.

### New Members

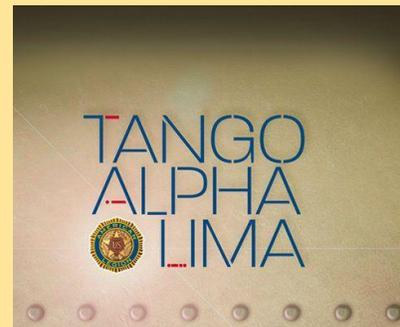
We extend a warm welcome to:

Mike Gonzales

to Post 117 and the District 10 Riders

### Give the Gift of Life.....Donate Blood

Celebrate Fathers on Father's Day by donating blood on June 20. See article and attached flyer.



The weekly podcast is produced by The American Legion. See inside for more information.

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### News from the Auxiliary



Madeleine Reed  
President

The Auxiliary members chose to continue to meet via Zoom until after summer break. Once we return, we will hold hybrid (meaning meeting via Zoom as well as in person) meetings to accommodate our membership. Our Officers and Committee Chairpersons will continue in their positions for another year. Thank you to everyone for continuing as a Leader!

Even though the Memorial Day Celebration at Lone Tree was virtual, and we were unable to distribute poppies; the members of the Auxiliary continue to share poppies and their story whenever we can. Thank you to everyone for your donations.

We have two areas of celebration this month. Our revised Bylaws were approved, and our membership is at 125%! Thank you to everyone for sharing the meaningfulness of our work!

### Connecting with the SALs



Dennis Zwicker  
Commander

Hello. We had an officer's meeting on May 24th to talk about membership, convention, and upcoming events. We picked 4 delegates for the 82nd annual convention in San Diego, CA on June 17-19, 2021. We have the choice of meeting in person or virtually by zoom.

We also received some good news from the county. The Veterans' hall has been opened up for Veterans groups only at this time. With this news, we will be having our regular meetings at the hall. We discussed having our meetings quarterly, and will get the word out for dates and times in the near future.

We now have 20 members paid up, with a few new people interested in joining. It would be nice to build our membership back up. If each one of us invites at least one new member, that will be great.

Be safe and stay in touch.

### Rolling with District 10 ALR



David J Leavitt  
President

The Riders participated in several events honoring Legion members and to commemorate Memorial Day.



Above: The District 10 Legion Riders lined up to participate in the Lone Tree virtual event filming.



The American Legion Riders Old Mule, Scout, Jet and Big Z at Valentine De Leon's Sr. memorial.

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Above: The District 10 Riders were present for the Tree Planting Ceremony at the Hayward Veteran's Building in honor of John D White.



Riding in honor of Memorial Day. L to R Mark Zwicker, friend of the Riders; District 10 Riders: David J. Leavitt (District 10 Riders' President); Don Reed (Post 117 Commander); Dennis Zwicker (SALs Commander).



District 10 Riders (pictured above) joined the District 9 Riders to represent the ALR to honor Service Members interred at the Mare Island Naval Cemetery during the 150<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day ceremony at that site.

### Flag Day: Celebrating the American Flag

This annual day celebrates the history and symbolism of the American Flag. Flag Day is not an official federal holiday, but the observance of Flag Day is traditionally proclaimed each year by the President of the United States.

There are no records of why these colors were chosen; however, the Congress of the Articles of Confederation chose the colors for the Great Seal of the United States with these meanings:

**Red** for valor and hardiness

**White** for purity and innocence

**Blue** for vigilance, perseverance and justice

There is a proper way to fly the flag as well as a proper way to retire an old or worn flag. The Legion store has a 32-page booklet for \$1.00 called Flag Etiquette. Click this link to find out more information: <https://tinyurl.com/2u2ftfak>.

Did you know there is an official flag retirement bill, SB1197. Provisions in the bill are in accordance with Section 8(k) of Title 4 of the United States Code section which states; "the flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning" Did you also know cremation of a flag or flags can only occur within one week before or after any of the following holidays: Memorial Day, Flag Day and Independence Day. Two local Mortuaries donate their cremation services to burn flags collected by our Post. The District 10 Riders escort the remains to Lone Tree Cemetery where they are placed in a spot donated by the Cemetery.

### Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Exposures

Denis McDonough, US Secretary of Veterans Affairs, announced two very important decisions that will affect millions of Veterans who served in the Vietnam War and in Southwest Asia, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan during the Persian Gulf

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War and after September 11, 2001. Secretary McDonough stated, "It is important to note that the process by which these decisions were made is just the first step; this will be an iterative, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)-driven process to identify potential presumptions of service connection.

Many of our Nation's Veterans have waited a long time for changes to presumptions of service connection for benefits, and I look forward to working with the VA Toxic Exposure team to implement changes such as the following as swiftly as possible.

The first decision concerns the addition of bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism to the list of those conditions presumptively associated with exposure to Agent Orange. This implements provisions of the William M. Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (P.L. 116-283), and VA will apply the provisions of court orders related to *Nehmer v. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*, which may result in an earlier date for entitlement to benefits for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam era. Vietnam era Veterans and their survivors, who previously filed and were denied benefits for one of these three new presumptive conditions, will have their cases automatically reviewed without the need to refile a claim and will receive a letter from VA on the status of their claim.

The second decision involves Veterans who served in Southwest Asia, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan during the Persian Gulf War and after September 11, 2001. After a thorough review of the scientific evidence around toxic exposures, including the report from the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine, I am directing initiation of rulemaking to consider creating presumptions of service connection for chronic respiratory conditions associated with exposure to airborne hazards during military service in Southwest Asia, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan during the covered periods of conflict, which may include asthma, sinusitis and rhinitis. Our approach to this process will be holistic, and we will base our decision on science, in fulfilling our responsibility to Veterans

who may have suffered disability due to their service.

These decisions will affect millions of Veterans and families, and I encourage everyone in VA to always keep in mind the tremendous impact that we will be making in their health and quality of life as we go through these processes. I look forward to working with you as we further our goal of improving the lives of all Veterans."

For more information, please go here: Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Exposures - Public Health <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/burnpits/index.asp>

#### **A Bit of San Leandro History**

Lt. Jack N. Parrott, World War II Casualty from San Leandro, California

Born: 27 July 1919 in San Leandro  
Killed in Action: 19 February 1945 in Germany  
He is buried in Golden Gate National Cemetery, San Bruno

Lt. Parrott served for three years with the Army Engineers. He was a graduate of San Leandro High School and attended the University of California, but before finishing was inducted into the Army. Parrott experienced a traumatic event which resulted in loss of life. Recorded circumstances attributed to: "KIA - Killed in Action". -  
★ Purple Heart ★ World War II Victory Medal ★ American Campaign Medal ★ Distinguished Unit Citation ★ Good Conduct Medal

There is a street in San Leandro named Parrott, wonder is there any connection to Lt. Jack N. Parrott?

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#### **Tango Alpha Lima**

If you are a fan of podcasts and have not listened to Tango Alpha Lima, give it a try. It can be accessed on the iPhone Podcast, Spotify, Youtube and other podcasts applications. On Youtube, search "Alpha Tango Lima" or "Tango Alpha Lima" Alpha Tango Lima is missing some episodes. You can also access via the Legion website at <https://www.legion.org/tangoalphalima>

On April 1, 2020, the American Legion debuted the twice monthly Tango Alpha Lima podcase. It is co-hosted by Mark Seavey (former Massachusetts Reserves and National Guard), Ashley Gorbulja-Maldonado (former Ohio National Guard) and Jeff Daly (former Michigan USMC), where they engage in vibrant comradery, playful joking and hot takes. Mark is podcasting from Indianapolis, Ashley from Virginia, and Jeff from Hollywood, California. The group explores current events, interesting trends and quirky stories of interest to the military community. If you want more background information about these 3 veterans listen to the April 1, 2020 podcast "Take Me to The Pilot".

The podcast (30-60 minutes) consists of 4 rounds of topics, one topic per host and the rapid fire round (hosts responses to current news/topics). Some of the podcasts have special speakers. For those of you who over think things (like the writer of this article) Tango Alpha Lima stands for The American Legion.

#### **Time for a Stop at the Bar!**

Need an inexpensive cocktail, beer, or soda; want to enjoy good, friendly company; maybe a round of Liars Dice, or test your hand at Poker come by the Bar on Friday nights! Bar opens at 6:00 p.m.

Who opens the Bar for us? Meet Lee Irwin!



Lee is a Korean War Veteran who joined the Army in 1949. Lee first served in the 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry regiment, 25<sup>th</sup> Division, the Wolf Hounds. He later transferred to Division Headquarters where he was the Assistant Driver to the General. Lee is a member of the revered group of U.S. armed forces members who have received the Purple Heart!

Lee has been a Legion Member for 37 years and has held several leadership positions. Lee is currently the Sgt. At Arms for the Post, part of the Honor Guard and serves at the District level. Not only is Lee active in the Legion; he also participates with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, The Elks, The Forty and Eight and the Disabled American Veterans to name a few.

Lee likes to do what he can to support the Legion. He took over bartender duties from Ron Galvan who was standing in for the previous Bartender who was on leave. He has been quenching our thirst for 20+ years now! You can find Lee at the building all of the time when the building is fully functional. He opens the building to allow renters to come and set up for their events. When there is a Division Meeting, Lee is there to have the bar open for discussion and friendly conversation before the meeting starts.

Lee does all of the shopping for the bar, liquor, soft drinks, and snacks. If you have ever enjoyed the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Breakfast, Lee purchases and donates the meats and opens the bar. Many people not only come for the breakfast but for Lee's 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Month Mary cocktail, aka a Bloody Mary!

Lee has 4 Stepchildren, 2 girls and 2 boys and a host of grandchildren and great grandchildren.

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When Lee was asked, what would you like people to know about you? He replied, he is a simple person and he does his best to get along with everyone. Getting along with everyone is an important quality for a bartender!

Thank you Lee for all that you do for the Post!

#### **Give the Gift of Life**

There will be a Post 117 Blood Drive on Sunday, June 20, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Veterans Hall. You can sign up for an appointment at [www.vitalant.org](http://www.vitalant.org) Click donate and make your appointment by selecting Blood Drive Code “ALP117” or walk ins welcomed!

Every few seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood, children or adults, the need is there. The need can be a result of illness or traumatic event. The need is urgent.

Morning and afternoon appointments are still available.

#### **The American Legion Officers 2021-2022**

##### **Post 117**

Commander – Don Reed  
Past Commander – Steven Johnson  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice – Mike Nettles  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice – Russ Parrington  
Adjunct – Jennifer Diaz  
Treasurer – Ron Galvan  
Chaplain – Terry Haberman  
Sgt. At Arms – Lee Irwin

##### **Auxiliary Unit 117**

President – Madeleine Reed  
Past President – Susan Mar  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice – Jasmine Crews  
Secretary/Treasurer – Marie Galvan  
Chaplain – Cecelia Cunningham  
Sgt. At Arms – Constance Harbour Matarrese

##### **SAL**

Commander – Dennis Zwicker  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice – John Teixeira  
Adjunct/Finance – Ron Galvan  
SAL Adviser – Mike Nettles

##### **District 10 Riders**

President – David J Leavitt  
Past President – Don Reed  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice – Willie McKissick  
Secretary/Treasurer – Jennifer Diaz  
Chaplain – Terry Haberman  
Sgt. At Arms – Rich Harrison

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#### What is Happening in June, July and August

##### June

- 6 – D Day
- 14 – Flag Day
- 14 – Army Birthday
- 20 – Post 117 Blood Drive – sign up at [www.vitalant.org](http://www.vitalant.org)
- 23 – Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday
- 22 – District 10 Rider Recess
- 24 – 27 – The American Legion and Auxiliary Conventions
- 25 – Post and Auxiliary Monthly Meeting Recess
- 27 – National PSD Awareness Day – for more information or help: <https://tinyurl.com/4vynk9mv>

##### July

- 4 – Independence Day
- 16 – 18 – Rider Convention
- 23 – Post 117 Office Installation
- 23 – Auxiliary Unit 117 on Recess
- 27 – District 10 Rider Recess
- 27 – Korean War Veterans Armistice Day

##### August

- 4 – Coast Guard Birthday
- 7 – Purple Heart Day
- 20 – Post Executive Meeting
- 24 – District 10 Rider Monthly Meeting
- 27 – Post and Auxiliary Hybrid Monthly Meeting
- 29 – Marine Forces Reserve Birthday

Thank you to the June Newsletter Contributors:

Jennifer Diaz  
Mike Nettles  
Don Reed  
Bob Vincent  
Sandy Wong  
Dennis Zwicker

Madeleine Reed, Editor