

American Legion Post 117 San Leandro, California

November/December 2020 Newsletter



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

November – Military Family Month, Warrior Care Month

November 10, 2020 – Marine Corps Birthday

November 11, 2020 – Veterans Day – Post activities cancelled due to COVID-19 health guidelines. USS Hornet holding a Veteran’s Day Ceremony on the flight deck. District 10 Riders along with District 9 participating in a Veteran’s Day Ride.

November 20-21, 2020 – Toys 4 Tots Event – Navy Operations Support Center, 2151 Clement Ave. 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Toy Drop Off Event. Visit [Post website](#) for detailed information

November 26, 2020 – Thanksgiving Day

***November 27, 2020 – Post 117 Monthly Meeting** – No meeting, enjoy family time.

***November 27, 2020 – Unit 117 Auxiliary Monthly Meeting** - Winter Break

DECEMBER

December 1 – [Giving Tuesday](#)

December 3 – [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#)

December 5 – International Volunteer Day

December 7 – National Pearl Harbor Day of Remembrance

December 10 – Hanukkah/Chanukah Begins

December 13 – National Guard Birthday

December 19 – [National Wreaths Across America Day](#)

December 25 – Christmas Day

***December 25 - Post 117 Monthly Meeting** – No meeting, enjoy family time

***December 25 - Unit 117 Auxiliary Monthly Meeting** - Winter Break

December 31 – New Year’s Eve

January 1, 2021 – Happy New Year

***Meetings resume Friday, January 22, 2021**

Commander's Corner



Dear Legion Members,

As we move into the Winter Season, shorter days and longer evenings, we are nearing the end of the year. This is a time to reflect on the year and to celebrate the achievements that we have made during these challenging times. We have been able to stay connected via monthly Zoom meetings; we took the opportunity to contribute to community organizations to continue their work supporting those in need; we were able to connect with Legion members who have not been in touch in a while. These are just a few achievements. Even though, not our regular avenues of outreach, we were still able to make a positive impact! And for that we need to celebrate these achievements. I applaud everyone!

We are taking a recess from our Post monthly meetings for the months of November and December. But our work does not take a recess. Please continue your buddy checks – reach out to others to make sure they are ok. Not only does the situation of this year have some feeling isolated, the holidays can have that same impact. Take one day out of the week and reach out to another Member.

Let me know how you and your family are doing. The trials and challenges of this year affects everyone. Let me know how you're doing, any thoughts you'd like to share and anything you need from me.

I wish you all a good end of the year. Cheers to a new and rewarding 2021.

Regards

Don Reed
Commander
Post 117

American Legion Auxiliary



We are very excited to launch the updated Auxiliary website. A big thank you to Luis Diaz for his expertise in making our website the best possible. Please go to the [website](#) or click <http://sl117.com/SL117/AUX.html> to learn more about the Auxiliary.

On October 23 we held our last monthly meeting of the calendar year. We will begin meeting again in January. At our last meeting we voted to contribute to the VA Livermore Holiday Fund to provide holiday gift bags to Service Women and Men who have served and are now living at the Livermore facility. It is an especially hard year for the residents as they have not been able to enjoy visits from family, friends, volunteers or service organizations. We were proud to make a contribution to make the holiday gift bags as nice as possible.

I would like to take this time to thank all of our Service Women and Men. We are grateful for your service on Veterans Day and always. You are our heroes!

I hope you and your family enjoy the holiday break. Be safe, stay healthy and prosper!

Madeleine Reed
President,
Unit 117 Auxiliary



Sons of the American Legion



Greetings,

My name is Dennis Zwicker. I'm the new Commander of the San Leandro Son's of the American Legion. I would like to take a minute to introduce myself. As some of you may not know me, I started coming to the Veterans Hall about 10 years ago by joining the San Leandro Sportsmens Club. Over time I met a lot of very nice people, including veterans that belong to the Sportmens Club. I love to cook and was asked if I wouldn't mind helping with the monthly dinners for the 40/8 and the VFW veterans' groups. This is when I met Mike Nettles, and I joined the Sons about a 1 1/2 years ago. As the new commander, I would like to try to revive our group with better communications and for the Sons to be more active in veterans' functions. As you know the COVID-19 virus has made it very difficult to get together, but if any of you have any ideas for future club functions or questions, we can still communicate via email, phone calls and possible Zoom meetings in the future. I look forward to meeting each of you.

Please don't forget that dues are due every July 1st in the amount of \$25.00 for regular members and \$15.00 for under 21 and dual members. We also started a \$250.00 life membership program. This would help avoid any future increases or late dues.

Our current officers are,
1st Vice -John Teixeira
Adjutant / finance - Ron Galvan
SAL Advisor - Mike Nettles

Dennis Zwicker, Squadron Commander
Cell 510-909-9185
Email wickedz@sbcglobal.net

American Legion Riders



Hello Post 117 Legionaries,

A lot has been happening this last month. We held our ALR District 10 meeting as usual. We are supporting and helping with the Marine Corps Toys for Tots program, donated \$200 towards the historic launch of the USS Oakland, a very modern bad ass warship that will be commissioned in Oakland next April. This is a very rare event to have a ship commissioned in the city it is named for. Very rare indeed!

We are also proud to donate to the VA Livermore Hospital Christmas Gift Fund. This fund is coordinated in conjunction with the VA Livermore Hospital Representative and our Auxiliary, Unit 117. As with all of the above, private or personal donations are also welcomed.

Last Sunday, a few of us District 10 Riders gathered in a Hayward City park to welcome Willie McKissick, US Army, into our District 10 Riders. Mandy, his wife and a US Army Vet, will also be joining us in the not too distant future.

On Wednesday, November 11, 2020, we will be joined by the ALR District 9 members to do a Ride of Honor for all Veterans, past and present. We hope to have well over 100 motorcycles, complete with flags flying, as we ride through Contra Costa and Alameda counties.

Thank you for your service. Have a wonderful holiday season and share your blessings with those less fortunate.

David 'just david' J. Leavitt
President, ALR District 10
Davidjleavitt116@gmail.com

Historically Speaking

Robert "Bob" Vincent
Post Historian

Debt of Honor For a Slain Iwo Jima Cameraman He Never Knew, Man Asks U.S. to Move Remains to Arlington Cemetery

Bob Bolus has a gold nameplate on his office desk that says "President" and a panoramic view of a junkyard. Above the filing cabinet there's an old World War II artillery map, and on a recent afternoon, Bolus stood inches away, peering deeply into its contour lines, searching.

"There it is," he said, as if pointing to an 'X' on a treasure map. "That's Hill 362A."

It wasn't much of a landmark. Hill 362A is a squat, unremarkable ridge, 362 feet at its highest point, on the northwest corner of Iwo Jima. Like much of the island, it was bombed, shot, burned and generally blasted to bits in 1945, when U.S. forces fought to drive out the Japanese from a network of tunnels and caves that crisscrosses its base. Entombed somewhere in those passageways, among the rocks and the rubble and the unexploded ordnance, are the remains of a Marine Corps sergeant and cameraman named William H. Genaust.

Bolus is not related to Genaust, but for the past two years he has been fixated with the Marine's fate. He has lobbied generals, politicians and ambassadors on Genaust's behalf. He has traveled to Hill 362A and drafted surveyors, archivists, military historians and forensic anthropologists to his cause. Bolus is resolute on recovering Genaust's remains from his anonymous grave. He calls this "my mission."

"He belongs at Arlington," Bolus said. "And I'm not going to stop until he's home."

Bolus's persistence has prompted Pentagon officials to begin consultations with the Japanese government about a recovery operation. It would be the first time the United States has searched for missing service members on Iwo Jima since returning control of it to Japan in 1968.

But perhaps what is most unusual to the Pentagon is that someone who is neither family nor a fellow service member has become so engrossed with a long-dead serviceman's remains.

"I believe he's the first," said Larry Greer, a spokesman for the Defense Department's Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office. "He has demonstrated a lot of energy and a lot of commitment to this."

Bolus, 64, is the owner of Bolus Truck Parts, Scooter's Hot Dawg Hut and a slew of other business ventures in Scranton, PA. Over the years, he has been a Democrat, a Republican, a trucking tycoon, a felon, a race car driver, a philanthropist and a failed mayoral candidate, among other things. Then, one Sunday

morning in February 2005, Bolus read an article about Genaust in Parade magazine, and he was seized. "I must have read it three or four times," he said. "I just couldn't believe that the man who gave us that image had been left behind." Genaust was among the Marines and journalists who climbed Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima's highest point, on Feb. 23, 1945, four days after U.S. forces landed.

Genaust, who was trained to fight -- and film -- at Quantico Marine Corps Base, captured footage for training videos, propaganda efforts and other military purposes. On that day, Genaust went up Suribachi to capture a flag-raising.

At the summit, he stood with a friend, Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal, cranking his Bell & Howell camera as a [makeshift flagpole was heaved into the wind](#).

Rosenthal took the photograph that would become the iconic image of the war -- and the Marine Corps -- and win him a Pulitzer Prize that year.

Within weeks, Genaust's [color footage](#) appeared on newsreels and in movie theaters across the United States. When skeptics claimed that the Rosenthal photograph was staged, Genaust's recording was used to confirm its authenticity.

But Genaust never saw the film. Nine days after the flag-raising, he was killed, shot dead in a cave on Hill 362A.

His Latest Challenge, Bolus Trucks Parts is a graveyard of rusting hulks and cannibalized diesel engines along the highway outside Scranton. "Bolus for Mayor" signs still decorate the sides of two freight trailers at the back of the junkyard, along with the campaign slogan: "Common Sense and Accountability." Bolus has lived in Scranton all his life. He came from a trucking family and started a towing operation after a brief stint in the Army in 1960. By the 1980s, he had built one of the largest hauling operations in Pennsylvania. But his trucking empire ground to a halt in 1991 when he was caught buying a stolen Caterpillar loader. Bolus served four months of work release. The conviction has nagged him ever since, most recently when he was deemed ineligible to serve as mayor, losing multiple court battles along the way. "I've been on the top, and I've been on the bottom, too," he said.

The endeavor to bring Genaust to Arlington National Cemetery is Bolus's new fight. To him, Genaust is a neglected hero with whom he associates his earliest patriotic inklings. "I don't know how many times I saw that image of the flag-raising at the Saturday matinees as a little kid," he said. "Every time I see it go up, I get a chill."

The postwar Scranton of Bolus's childhood was a different, more perfect place, when families of all nationalities seemed to share a single flag-loving American culture, and, to him, Genaust is the embodiment of that. "We've lost that camaraderie,"

Bolus said. "Look at all these computers now. Everyone is so goal-oriented and money-oriented."

To Bolus, Genaust's sacrifice is rivaled only by the injustice of his unceremonious end. And this is the wrong he wants to set right. "Sgt. Genaust knows that Bob Bolus is coming for him," he is fond of saying.

After reading the article on Genaust, Bolus loaded up on World War II books and became steeped in Iwo Jima lore. Then he started making calls. He found out that the United States and Japan hold a ceremony on the island commemorating the battle, and in March, Bolus got permission to travel there with a group of veterans and their families. He met three-star generals, diplomats, Iwo Jima veterans and even the grandson of Gen. Tadamichi Kuribayashi, who commanded Japanese forces during the battle. He talked about Genaust to anyone who would listen.

A sympathetic U.S. officer dispatched a group of Marines to take Bolus to Hill 362A. Access to the area was restricted, but Bolus went anyway. He pushed a path through thorny brush, tracing the route Genaust's 28th Marine Regiment probably followed March 4, 1945.

Genaust and another Marine had entered a cave that day along the base of 362A, looking for Japanese holdouts. The Marines' flashlights gave them away, and they were easy targets. When the shooting stopped, Genaust's unit demolished the cave's entrance. The opening was later sealed. Genaust was never seen again.

A hand-held global-positioning satellite device led Bolus to the base of 362A, but it was Genaust, he said, who was telling him where to go. "I'm probably the least superstitious guy in the world," he said. "But he's guiding me."

Bolus said his team has narrowed Genaust's location to a 150-yard area. "Two weeks," Bolus said. "I'd have a team and equipment ready in two weeks if they'd let me back on that island." Money is no obstacle, Bolus said, estimating that he has spent more than \$20,000 on the Iwo Jima trip and the consultants he has hired.

Renewed interest in Iwo Jima generated by Rosenthal's death in August and the release of two Clint Eastwood films, "Flags of Our Fathers" and "Letters From Iwo Jima," didn't help Bolus as much as he'd hoped. He's still waiting for Eastwood to call him back.

There have been other obstacles. For one, the U.S. military does not allow private citizens to disinter its dead, especially on foreign soil. That responsibility lies with the Joint POW-MIA Accounting Command, and it has a long queue of servicemen to search for, mostly from the war in Vietnam.

"We have thousands of cases being actively investigated," said Lt. Col. Rumi Nielson-Green, a spokeswoman for the command. Genaust is an "open case" for the agency, she said, but one of many. "We

can't quantify any one sacrifice as greater than any other."

But Bolus's research and lobbying efforts led the Pentagon to begin a study last summer into the possible whereabouts of Genaust's remains, according to Larry Greer of the prisoner of war office. The agency is analyzing the 362A site to determine whether other remains could also be recovered there and has consulted with the Japanese Embassy, U.S. diplomats and the Joint POW-MIA Accounting Command. "We have to be sure we have a reasonable opportunity to conduct a legitimate investigation," Greer said.

Keeping the Vision Alive Genaust would be 100 this year; he was 38 when he died. He and his late wife, Adelaide, had no children. A few months after his death, she received a Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts on his behalf.

"He was one of the most decent and honorable men I've ever known," said Tedd Thomey, who met Genaust on a battleship en route to Iwo Jima. Thomey later worked at the San Francisco Chronicle with Rosenthal and wrote a memoir about Rosenthal and Genaust's moment on Suribachi. In 1995, he helped add a plaque honoring Genaust to the U.S. memorial atop the mountain.

"He deserves to be at Arlington," said Thomey, 86, who lives in Long Beach, Calif. "That would be my wish."

A memorial to Genaust also decorates the American Legion Post in Effingham, Ill., thanks to his cousin Billy G. Genaust, who has handed out about 1,400 souvenir pens depicting the flag-raising scene, lest anyone forget his cousin's role. "Everyone in our area knows about him," he said. "Mr. Bolus said he was going to bring him back," said Genaust, 75, a retired state trooper. "I think that would be the greatest thing."

By Nick Miroff February 9, 2007

Nick Miroff covers immigration enforcement and the Department of Homeland Security for The Washington Post. He was a Post foreign correspondent in Latin America from 2010 to 2017, and staff writer since 2006.

A Salute to General John Archer Lejeune

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OR8KoPdFsH4&t=11s>

Post Historian - Bob Vincent Directed and Edited this 6-minute movie of General John Lejeune. Tom Graves is the Writer; P.T. Brent, the Producer; Tom Adams, Audio Engineer and Narrator.

A little bit of this and that.....

Fall is here and winter is around the corner! Looking for additional indoor activities? Try these few suggestions:

Remember before starting any new exercise routine, check with your physician!

Explore your neighborhood with a morning walk

[Chair Exercises](https://tinyurl.com/yy8949xp): <https://tinyurl.com/yy8949xp>

[Tai Chi for Seniors](https://tinyurl.com/y2s5phde): <https://tinyurl.com/y2s5phde>

[Chair Stretches](https://tinyurl.com/y382domg): <https://tinyurl.com/y382domg>

[Gardening](https://tinyurl.com/y4jbw8rj): <https://tinyurl.com/y4jbw8rj>
20 Vegetables you can regrow from scraps.

[Armchair Travel](https://tinyurl.com/y4zfuy5f): <https://tinyurl.com/y4zfuy5f>
Explore without leaving your home!

Fall and Winter also calls for comfort foods. Try these
[Comfort Food Recipes](https://tinyurl.com/y9f9w8): <https://tinyurl.com/y9f9w8>

Like showing your American Legion pride. Visit the [American Legion Store](#). You can now show you are part of the American Legion family while also being safe.



Message from the Editors

Thank you to everyone for your support of the monthly newsletter, either by contributing an article or through the review process. Your generosity of time is very much appreciated. We are on recess until next year, this is the November/December edition and the last newsletter for 2020.

The newsletter format is in transition, we will be back with a new look and feel in 2021! Until activities are up and running you will probably only see the Newsletter every other month or once a quarter. We will let you know the schedule in the first newsletter of 2021.

To stay connected, please visit the [American Legion, Post 117 website](#), the [American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 117 website](#) and/or the [District 10 Riders' website](#) often

Until then, stay safe and enjoy the holidays.

Madeleine Reed
President, American Legion Auxiliary
Senior Editor

Robert 'Bob' Vincent
American Legion Post 117 Historian
Editor



On the Road with District Ten Riders

Placerville Memorial Ride 10/10/20

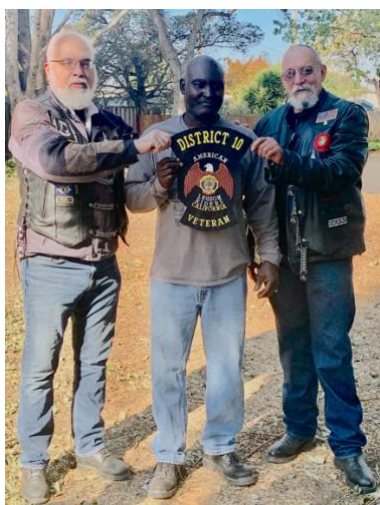


Bikes lined up after the ride

Welcoming the newest member to the Riders 11/1/20



From left to right: Don Reed, Jr. Past President; Willie McKissick, new member; David J. Leavitt, President, District 10 Riders



Final Thoughts

Many Restaurants offer Veteran's Day Discounts. Below are a few as listed on the Military.com website:

[Applebee's](#) -- Veterans and active-duty military receive a free meal from a special menu on November 11. Dine-in only.

[Bed Bath and Beyond](#) – **November 11, 2020** Active Duty U.S. military, Veterans and military spouses will receive 25% off your entire in-store shopping cart on November 11, 2020. Call or visit your nearest location for details.

[Black Angus Steakhouse](#) -- On November 11, veterans get the All-American Steak Plate for \$10.99. This deal is available for restaurant dining and takeaway orders.

[Buffalo Wild Wings](#) -- Veterans and active-duty service members get a free order of 10 boneless wings and fries on November 11. The offer is available for dine-in or takeout.

[Chili's](#) -- Veterans and active-duty service members get a free meal from a select menu on November 11. Available for in-restaurant only.

[Denny's](#) -- Veterans and military personnel get a free Build Your Own Grand Slam on November 11, from 5 a.m. to noon. Dine-in only.

[Dunkin' Donuts](#) -- On November 11, veterans and active-duty military receive a free donut at participating locations. Offer available in-store only

[Famous Dave's](#) -- Military personnel get a free Free Georgia Chopped Pork Sandwich + Side at participating locations on November 11. Valid for Dine-In, To Go, and Online Ordering. Not valid for call in orders

[Shari's](#) -- On November 11, veterans and active-duty service members get a free slice of pie, along with a "Buy One, Get One" free deal at all locations. The offer is valid for dine-in or take-out orders; online and delivery not included.

Enjoy Veteran's Day and **Thank You for Your Service!!!!**