



COMMANDER'S CORNER

It was an honor and privilege to attend the 50th Anniversary of Operation Homecoming at Travis AFB last month. The ceremony commemorated the former POWs and Travis Air Force Base pilots, crews, and personnel that served during Vietnam and carried service members from the Hanoi Hilton to freedom. The Air Mobility Command commander acknowledged the sacrifices, dedication, and respect, of all involved and highlighted, with the pride and gratitude, the ongoing care and loyalty demonstrated by America's never-ending commitment to bringing home our MIA/POWs from all conflicts and operations. The American Legion Mt Diablo Post 246, Vietnam Veterans of Diablo Valley, and the VFW Post 75 jointly sponsored the event luncheon for the guests of honor, their families, invited guests and dignitaries (see newspaper article [here](#)).



Michelle Lee and Mark Heinemann check out the retired C-141 similar to one that flew POWs home during Operation Homecoming in 1973



Commander Lee, Ist VC Heinemann, MSgt Angela Duff, and Maj Kaitlyn Kraemer, admire the commemorative Operation Homecoming emblem on the C-17A Globemaster.

As we enter the month of May, our thoughts turn to other celebrations and commemorations including Mothers' Day, graduations, and Memorial Day. Originally known as Decoration Day, Memorial Day originated from citizens decorating graves of fallen soldiers from the Civil War era; and today, as Congressionally established in 1971, it is a national day of remembrance for those who have given their lives in service to our nation. I invite you to wear a red poppy as a symbol of remembrance of our fallen comrades, share the poppy's significance with your neighbors, and raise a glass in memory of the men



Girls State Ambassador Stephanie Hunt (CHS) prepared ALA District 9 Delegates for Girls State to be held at CSU Sacramento in June. (TAL Boys State and Girls State Orientation was held virtually)

and women who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in service of our country. Remembrance ceremonies are planned in the City of San Ramon and the Town of Danville (see Events on page 2).

This month's Post meeting is on **Wednesday, 03 May, at Noon** at the Veteran's Memorial Building of San Ramon Valley, upstairs. Finally, a hearty thanks to Millie Hill for her annual donation in memory of her husband Gerald Hill in support of the Boys & Girls State Programs and Scouting. Kind support invests in our future leaders and makes these youth programs thrive! – Michelle Lee

The American Legion | Mt. Diablo Post 246

Meets Monthly | 400 Hartz Ave, Danville, CA 94526

Mailing: P.O. Box 133, Danville, CA 94526 | 925.272-8480

<https://www.americanlegionpost246.org>

Email: CommanderPost246@gmail.com



THE SALVO

MAY 2023

AMERICAN LEGION MT DIABLO POST 246 – CONTINUING TO SERVE

MEETINGS

Always RSVP for regular meeting luncheon and dinner events by leaving a message at **(925) 272-8480** or sending your email confirmation to commanderpost246@gmail.com **3 days** in advance. Please bring cash for meeting meals.

New Schedule 2023:

General Meetings are first Wednesdays
–Odd Months from 12:00-2:00 p.m.
–Even Months from 6:00-7:30 p.m.
In the Second Floor Meeting Room, Veterans Memorial Building of San Ramon Valley (VMBSRV), except where noted (June – Thursday at 6 p.m.; August – No Meeting; October 1st Sunday at 1:00 p.m.). EXCOM business meetings, 3rd Saturdays, 8:30 a.m. at VMBS.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

**** Every Saturday 8:00 a.m. to noon, all Vets Coffee at the VMBSRV, 400 Hartz Ave, Danville.

03 May, Noon, General Membership Meeting at VMBSRV, Speaker: Commander Sean Gannon, Chief of Naval Forces Korea staff member and Navy Reserve member

08 May, 7:00 p.m. Veterans Voices, "Veterans and Higher Education," Watch on Comcast Channel 27 or Facebook: veteransvoices1

10 May, 9 a.m.-1:00 p.m. VA Palo Alto Medical Care Outreach, Las Positas

College, Parking Lot B. Contact: (925) 424-1570

15 May, 6:15 p.m., T-60 Eagle Court of Honor, Diablo Vista Middle School, 4100 Camino Tassajara, Post members welcome

20 May, 8:30 a.m. Phillips 66 Refinery and Carbon Plant, Walk of Honor for Vets, Crockett Community Center

21 May, 1:00 p.m., High School Students Swearing-in, Town Green (front of Danville Library)

29 May, 9:00 a.m. San Ramon Memorial Day Program, 5001 Bollinger Canyon Rd, San Ramon, Speaker: Mark Armstrong, SR City Council, COL (Ret) USA

29 May, 10:00 a.m. Danville Memorial Day Program, Music, Program 11:00 a.m. Oak Hill Park, 3005 Stone Valley Rd, Speaker: Jim Taylor, VNV DV Member MOH Recipient

05 June, 11:30 a.m. Post 246 Women Veterans Tea, Contact Michelle Lee, Leave a message at 925-272-8480 with contact info, or at commanderpost246@gmail.com RSVP Required

08 June, 6:00 p.m., General Membership Meeting at VMBSRV, Speaker: Braydon Drevlow, International travel perspectives

04 July, TBD, Kiwanis 4th of July Parade



05 July, Noon, General Membership Meeting at VMBSRV, Autry James, Past Department (CA) Commander

August, No Meeting

06 September, Noon, General Membership Meeting at VMBSRV
01 October, 1:00 p.m. TAL Boys & Girls State, and ALA Girls State Recognition Luncheon, VMBSRV, (this is in lieu of our regular monthly meeting)

OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(Third Saturday of the Month from 8:30-10:00 a.m. in the Second Floor Meeting Room). For 2023:

- 20 May
- 17 June
- 15 July
- August No Meeting
- 16 September

DISTRICT 9 MEETINGS

District 9 will hold its next regular meeting on 17 May at 7:00 p.m. at the Pittsburg Post 151. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. Bring \$15 bring cash/check for dinner.

COMMUNITY

A LEADER IN PROGRESS

One area of youth development that we have grown in the past few years is our *continuing* connection to youth. We featured a Scout article recently about our active support of youth

character and leadership development. Below we are proud to feature an update from one of our Boys State Alumni now at the US Naval Academy. *From the desk of 4/C Matthew JAO (USNA):*

Here is an update of my 4/C (Plebe) year so far:



Matthew Jao (USNA) with Sean Jao (USAFA)

I would like to start out with how nervous I was for I-day to begin (I day Picture). My brother (USAFA'18)

thought he could be funny and show up in his PT gear at the Naval Academy, and it was the absolute last time I said goodbye to someone who I knew. Plebe Summer was one of the hardest yet most accomplished events that I have ever done. Yes, I was inducted into the new military lifestyle, but the physical and most importantly, the mental challenges developed a new perspective of what it truly meant to live with honor, courage, and commitment. I have also attached two more photos of plebe summer

Moving onto the academic year was football season. The games were fun and being in our summer whites uniform just felt cool. First semester was kind of rough having to balance academics, a sport, and all of the other plebe tasks that made time management difficult. As the days were



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shorter and the nights were longer, the dark ages were coming up as well as preparation towards Sea Trials. Our battalion conducted a mini Sea Trails version called, "Ice Trials" where we spent a long time PTing out in the cold and heavy rain. Down below are pictures of me in Summer Whites at a football game and post Ice Trials.

Following second semester was more preparation for Sea Trials and a surprise from Congressman Swalwell. Me along with a couple others whom he nominated were invited to attend lunch with him. We



U.S. Representative Eric Swalwell (D-CA 14th District) visits USNA

remember him saying how it was great to see how well we were doing here, and how he was happy that the right people were chosen to attend the Naval Academy. As for Sea Trials preparations, many evolutions

took place and one of them included us doing the Endurance Course (E-Course) with our Sea Trials squads by running 3.4 miles through the forests with obstacles along the way.

Most recently, as we approach the end of the semester, my company hosted an event known as Dining Out to boost our morale and to remember to keep going strong as we end the semester.

I could go for hours and hours talking about my plebe year experiences. I have to say that I am extremely thankful to be given the opportunity to develop leadership and

character throughout my journey here.



One of many obstacles surmounted in my Plebe year

Although this year has been extremely tough and rigorous, you tend to look on the bright side when you are with people who are going through the same thing as you are.



In Whites cheering for the team

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or anything else you would like to talk to me about. Thank you so much for reaching out to me and asking about how I am doing. I'm doing my best here and hope to represent everyone back home as a future naval officer. – Matthew Jao



LPC VETERANS FIRST GARNERS ACCOLADES FROM STUDENTS

Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard veterans attributed their success and smooth



Honoring Women Veterans

military/academic transition to the Veterans Resource Center at Las Positas College at the "Honoring Women Veterans" event held at the end of March. The 11th annual event included student testimonials and stories of military service, certificates of achievement, scholarship awards, reading of the CA Governor's Proclamation, welcome by the Livermore Mayor John Marchand, honor quilts, and a delicious lunch catered by Bruno's Italian Cuisine in Livermore.

In other LPC Veterans First News, the Veterans Graduation and Scholarships Celebration will be **Friday, 19 May, 4:00-6:00 p.m., LPC Cafeteria (Bldg 1600)**. Post 246 members are warmly welcome and encouraged to attend.

FREE GOOGLE CLOUD TRAINING AVAILABLE FOR VETERANS

Google is providing free Google Cloud services training to veterans. To participate, you must be a member of The American Legion Family, 18 years of age, and committed to completing the self-paced program in 6 months.

For more information, contact Autrey James or Roberto C. Arnold to enroll. <https://calegion.org/google-cloud-training/>

WALK OF HONOR FOR VETERANS

The Phillips 66 Refinery and Carbon Plant are hosting its Walk of Honor in-person on **20 May**, Crockett Community Center, 850 Ponomo Street, Crockett. Check-in begins at 8:30 a.m. and the Walk begins at 10:00 a.m. Our Post is an event Star Sponsor. Post members may email commanderpost246@gmail.com for one of the two complimentary walk registrations. First come, first served.

AUSA MG DEAN CHAPTER PRESENTS THE BAY AREA MILITARY BALL, 10 JUNE 2023



COMMUNITY EMBRACES CAMP PARKS (PRFTA) AND VICE VERSA

Camp Parks Hosted a Community



Relations Working group meeting last month, attended by our 2nd Vice Commander Alan Scharlach. Camp Parks leadership highlighted the broad engagement activity between the East Bay garrison and the surrounding communities. The Public Affairs Officer (PAO) Jim O-Donnell facilitated the dialogue where numerous examples of Community engagement between Camp Parks and other civil organizations were cited. These activities include Civil Air Patrol, supporting homeless vets, the food pantry delivering food to Camp Parks, Moffett Field and Fort Hunter Liggett, having reservists meet with members of the San Jose Earthquakes, observing Black History Month, and Women's History month, being visited by representatives of the Golden State Warriors, assisting in the Vibe volleyball club, participating in the ceremonies at the military ocean terminal concord, visit by the Alameda County Sheriff's Aviation Office and hosting A Holocaust Remembrance Day event at Camp Parks.

Camp Parks reservists participated in the Dublin Saint Patrick's Day parade with a military Humvee, and the Dougherty Valley San Ramon Rotary's Truck Time Community Event to the delight of thousands of families. Future events will be wildfire training, participating in Memorial Day events throughout the Bay Area, participating in the annual port Chicago commemoration, seeking scholarship opportunities and developing housing

opportunities for reservists at Camp Parks, and restoring the Camp Parks historical sign with the help of the city of Dublin.

POST OPERATIONS

POKER TOURNAMENT

Ready to work on your poker face? Or better yet, your poker hand? Mike Yura, Michelle Lee and the whole crew will be working on planning, coordinating, and directing this upcoming event. Willing to lend a hand? We'd sure appreciate it! Contact Mike Yura at (925) 366-4684 or email: commanderpost246@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Renewal

We are very close to reaching 100% renewal 1) go to www.legion.org and click on the RENEW button, fill out the form, and you are done; or, 2) send the Post a check for \$45 to P.O. Box 133, Danville, CA 94526. Dues will increase to \$50/yr. in July 2023.

Welcome new members: John Burke and Sanford Severin! Glad to have you aboard, and we look forward to getting to know you.

TAL BOYS AND GIRLS STATE ALA GIRLS STATE SELECTIONS

Thanks to Eric Ardell, Michelle Lee, Harvalee Grimm, and Heidi Kenniston Lee, all The American Legion (TAL)



Boys and Girls State and American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Girls State selections are completed and the selected Delegates will attend the programs in the 3rd or 4th week in June. These signature American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary national programs have helped millions of young people understand local government, develop their leadership skills, and inspire their life-long civic engagement.

FLAG & EMBLEM STORE

Want AL wear or supplies? Contact Alan Scharlach. See what's available [here](#), then Tel: 925-858-4199 or send email cab1ho@sbcglobal.net include the item number, quantity, color, and size; etc. and telephone number. Send or give him a check for your items.

POST OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

Post Officers for 2022-2023:

Commander: Michelle Lee
1st V. Cmdr: Mark Heinemann
2nd V. Cmdr: Alan Scharlach
3rd V. Cmdr: Eric Ardell
Adjutant: Bob Landy
Finance: Phil Connolly
Chaplain: Mary O'Donnell
Historian: Gerald Lindahl
Judge Advocate: Mary O'Donnell
Service Officer: Leroy Vares
Sgt. At Arms: Floyd Cox
Past Commander: Mark Heinemann

Executive Committee:

Neil Giles, Gary Soto, Mike Yura

Appointed Officers & Committee Chairpersons

Asst. Adjutant: Open
Asst. Finance: Raoul Miranda
Asst Sgt-at-Arms: Raoul Miranda
Supply Officer: Alan Scharlach
Boys State: Eric Ardell
Girls State: Michelle Lee
Oratorical: Neil Giles
Scouting Rep: Alan Scharlach
Asst. Scouting Rep: Mike Yura
VMB Ops Committee: Bob Landy
Museum Committee: Bob Sada
Protocol Officer: Floyd Cox
IT Coordinator: John Farmer
Asst. IT Coordinator: Neil Giles
Board of Trustees: Ron Lowe / Eric Ardell / Alan Scharlach
East Bay Stand down Rep: Mark Heinemann
Veterans Outreach: Mark Heinemann
Program Dir: Mike Yura
Salvo Editor: Michelle Lee
Asst. Editors: Mark Heinemann, Eric Ardell, Bob Landy, Alan Scharlach, Adriana Santos
Post Webmaster: Rusty Orvik and Sons

HELMETS FOR HEROES DONATIONS



Bring some loose change and bills to our next meeting for [Helmets for Heroes](#). Thanks, again, to Charlie Jursch for his

generous donation!