



# SALVO - MT DIABLO POST 246 JUL 2021

## COMMANDERS CORNER

As I sit down to write my final Commander’s Corner, I want to thank all of you for your support and assistance. It has been a great team effort in growing our membership by about 30%, conducting our yearly fundraising events, participating in American Legion, Veterans Memorial Building, and community events, and gaining financial stability thanks to Admiral Russell Gorman.

I turn over command of the post to Mark Heinemann who I am sure will build on our progress and continue to make the post a great place to participate in many veteran programs and events. I encourage all of you to give Mark your full cooperation and support.

One thing you can all do, give us your suggestions for speakers, for post activities, or how you might help with current activities.

Be sure to see our new website at [www.americanlegionpost246.org](http://www.americanlegionpost246.org). Check it out!!

Stay safe and wear your masks (a little bit longer)!!!

Eric, Commander

## UPCOMING EVENTS

\*\*\*\* Every Saturday 8:00 am to 12:00 pm

June 19<sup>th</sup>, Saturday

June 19<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>

June 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>

June 28<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup>

July 4<sup>th</sup>, Sunday

July 7<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday

July 17<sup>th</sup>, Saturday

August 4<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday

August 21<sup>st</sup>, Saturday

September 1<sup>st</sup>, Wednesday

September 4<sup>th</sup>, Saturday

September 6<sup>th</sup>, Monday

September 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, Friday-Monday

September 18<sup>th</sup>, Saturday

October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sunday

October 16<sup>th</sup>, Saturday

October 31<sup>st</sup>, Sunday

**Coffee at the Vets Hall IS BACK!!**

Executive Committee meeting, 8:30 am

California Boys State (virtual)

Dept of California Convention (virtual)

California Girls State (virtual)

Independence Day

Kiwanis Parade (**CANCELLED**)

Regular meeting w/speaker, 12:00 pm **RAdm Mary O’Donnell, USCG**  
**In-Person Installation of Officers, District Commander, Mike Clement**

NO Executive Committee meeting

NO Regular meeting

Executive Committee meeting, 8:30 am

Regular meeting with speaker, 12:00 pm **TBD**

Kiwanis “4<sup>th</sup> of July” Parade

Labor Day

Standdown on the Delta, CCC Fairgrounds, Antioch

Executive Committee meeting, 8:30 am

Boys & Girls State Recognition Luncheon, 1:00 pm

Executive Committee meeting, 8:30 am

Halloween



## **SALVO - MT DIABLO POST 246 JUL 2021**

### **SPEAKER FOR JULY**

**Our speaker for our July 7 regular meeting is Rear Admiral Mary O'Donnell, US Coast Guard (Ret.). She was commissioned on April 13, 1973.**

**She graduated from Ohio State University where she received a Bachelor of Science degree in English Education; from Michigan State University with a Master of Arts in Comparative Literature, and from the University of Michigan's School of Business, completing studies in Strategic Human Resources Planning. She also attended Golden Gate University, completing the course work for a Master of Public Administration and attended the Naval War College, the National Defense University, and completed the CAPSTONE program for flag officers.**

**Her military awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Korean Theater Medal, and the Meritorious Service Medal with 3 gold stars.**

**In September 2009, President Obama appointed Rear Admiral O'Donnell to the Military Leadership Diversity Commission.**

**In her civilian capacity, Rear Admiral O'Donnell is the Director of Mission Support Services at National Security Technologies, LLC, Las Vegas, Nevada. Her home is in Danville, California, with her husband, Claes Elfving, and two daughters.**

**Mike Clement, 2021-2022 District 9 Commander will also speak and give us an update on District 9 and his plans for the year.**

### **MAJGEN DAN HELIX MEMORIAL SERVICE**

**Korean War Purple Heart Recipient - Former Mayor of Concord - Veterans Advocate - VMB Advisory Board during redevelopment**

**A memorial service for MG Dan Helix will be held at the Concord Pavilion on June 26th at 11am. The family requests, in lieu of flowers, if you would like to send memoriam, please send to United States Volunteers, 815 Fulton Shipyard Rd, Antioch, CA 94509, or to your favorite charity.**

### **NOTE FROM NATHAN JOHNSON**

**Thank you for this very generous donation to the Martinez Veterans Service Office on behalf of Veterans Voices. AL Post 246 will be recognized as a sponsor on the upcoming Veterans Voices episodes (next episode is June 14<sup>th</sup> @ 7pm).**



## SALVO - MT DIABLO POST 246 JUL 2021

### KEEP YOUR VA MEDICAL RECORDS UPDATED

If you received a COVID-19 vaccine outside of VA, please help keep your medical records updated. How can you do that?



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

1. Bring your COVID-19 vaccination card to any VA NorCal location and present it to one of our

clerks.

2. Take a picture of your COVID-19 vaccination card. Send a copy of the card to your care team in a Secure Message on the [My HealtheVet website](https://myhealthvet.va.gov).

3. Fax a copy of your COVID-19 vaccination card to 916-366-5376.

If you have questions, please call 1-800-382-8387. Thank you for your service!

### STAND DOWN ON THE DELTA

Stand Down on the Delta 2021 "Volunteer Registration" is open. To Volunteer time



September 7-17, 2021, click the link or go to [www.deltaveteransgroup.org](http://www.deltaveteransgroup.org) and click the "The Big Red Button" to pick your area and time you want to Volunteer. This year's theme is "Unity" and the 20th Anniversary of September 11, 2001, will be recognized with a special ceremony.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**  
**STAND DOWN ON THE DELTA 2021**

STAND DOWN ON THE DELTA is a four-day, three-night event in which Veterans are provided medical and dental, court and legal services, DMV, housing, addiction and mental health counseling, employment, and a myriad of other community services. September 10<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at the Contra Costa County Fairgrounds located in Antioch, CA.

Thank you for your contribution to Delta Veterans Group. Your support will help out veterans and their families, in the greatest need to make the toughest transition of their lives.

We will be remembering 9/11 during this event at a special 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary ceremony on Saturday

Delta Veterans Group is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.  
Tax ID #462650624. Your contribution is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

REGISTER ONLINE AT:  
[WWW.DELTAVETERANSGROUP.ORG](http://WWW.DELTAVETERANSGROUP.ORG)  
REGISTRATION OPEN UNTIL 9/1

### Stand Down On The Delta 2021 Volunteers Needed!

September 10-13

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[CLICK HERE](#) to register



## **SALVO - MT DIABLO POST 246 JUL 2021**

### **CCC VETS SERVICE OFFICE EARNS NATIONAL ACHIEVMENT AWARD**



Martinez VSO was recognized with an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo). The award honors innovative, effective county programs that strengthen services for residents, highlighting the virtual VSO for its innovativeness in extending claims representation to Veterans and their families. The virtual office is accessible from the County's Veterans Service Office website at [contracosta.ca.gov/vets](https://contracosta.ca.gov/vets). In the virtual office, Veterans can receive assistance from an accredited Veterans Service Representative with filing for VA benefits.

### **DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA CONVENTION**

The Department convention will take place 25-27 June 2021 (Friday to Sunday) virtually. Eric Ardell, Mark Heinemann, Randy Reid, Michelle Lee, Raoul Miranda, and Bob Landy will be the Post 246 delegates.

### **UNIFORM ITEMS AVAILABLE**

We have the following Legion uniform items available for purchase (no shipping or taxes required):

Plain Short-Sleeved Uniform Shirt with patches (size Med) (2) - \$20.00 ea  
(These shirts are new but purchased from a local uniform shirt company years ago; patches are sewed on)

Legion Metal Collar Devices (10) - \$10.95 ea

Navy Blue Polo with white neck trim (Medium) - \$29.95

Black Polo with white neck trim (Medium) - \$29.95

Navy Blue Polo no trim (X-Large) - \$29.95

Navy Blue Polo no trim (X-Large) - \$29.95

Legion Cap (size 7) new - \$49.95

Legion Cap (size 7) used - \$19.95

Call Eric Ardell if you would like to make a purchase!!

### **FLAG & EMBLEM STORE**

Alan Scharlach is our post "Supply Officer" and will order items for individual post members. Go to <https://emblem.legion.org/> to do your shopping; then email Alan with the item number, quantity, color, and any other item details needed to purchase the item you want.



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## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

*“I predict future happiness for Americans if they can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people, under the pretense of taking care of them.”*

--

*Thomas Jefferson*

## POST OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

### Post Officers for 2021-2022:

Commander: Mark Heinemann  
1<sup>st</sup> V. Cmdr: Michelle Lee  
2<sup>nd</sup> V. Cmdr: Alan Scharlach  
3<sup>rd</sup> V. Cmdr: Randy Reid  
Adjutant: Bob Landy  
Finance: Phil Connolly

Chaplain: Jon Heinson  
Historian: Gerald Lindahl  
Judge Advocate: Ron Lowe  
Sgt-at-Arms: Floyd Cox  
Service Officer: Leroy Vares  
Junior Past Commander: Eric Ardell

### Executive Committee:

Gary Soto  
Dick Seavey

Ron Roe  
Neil Giles

### Appointed Officers & Committee Chairpersons

Asst Adjutant: vacant  
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  
Pgm Dir: Michelle Lee

Scouting Rep: Alan Scharlach  
VMB Ops Committee: Bob Landy  
Museum Committee: Ron Farrell  
Protocol Officer: Floyd Cox  
Board of Trustees: Ron Lowe / Eric Ardell  
East Bay Standdown Rep: Mark Heinemann  
Veterans Outreach: Mark Heinemann

Post Website: [www.americanlegionpost246.org](http://www.americanlegionpost246.org) Post Webmaster.....Rusty Orvik  
Salvo Editor: TBD  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 133, Danville, CA 94526 Message Center: (925) 272-8480

Keep saving your pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters for Helmut for Heroes at a future live meeting!!







## **SALVO - MT DIABLO POST 246 JUL 2021**

### **A P-51 STORY (I could not help but share)**

**This 1967 true story is of an experience by a young 12-year-old lad in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. It is about the vivid memory of a privately rebuilt P-51 from WWII and its famous owner/pilot.**

In the morning sun, I could not believe my eyes. There, in our little airport, sat a majestic P-51. They said it had flown in during the night from some U.S. Airport, on its way to an air show. The pilot had been tired, so he just happened to choose Kingston for his stop over. It was to take to the air very soon. I marveled at the size of the plane, dwarfing the Pipers and Canucks tied down by her. It was much larger than in the movies. She glistened in the sun like a bulwark of security from days gone by.

The pilot arrived by cab, paid the driver, and then stepped into the pilot's lounge. He was an older man; his wavy hair was gray and tossed. It looked like it might have been combed, say, around the turn of the century. His flight jacket was checked, creased and worn - it smelled old and genuine. Old Glory was prominently sewn to its shoulders. He projected a quiet air of proficiency and pride devoid of arrogance. He filed a quick flight plan to Montreal ("Expo-67 Air Show") then walked across the tarmac.

After taking several minutes to perform his walk-around check, the tall, lanky man returned to the flight lounge to ask if anyone would be available to stand by with fire extinguishers while he "flashed the old bird up, just to be safe." Though only 12 at the time I was allowed to stand by with an extinguisher after brief instruction on its use -- "If you see a fire, point, then pull this lever!", he said. (I later became a firefighter, but that's another story.) The air around the exhaust manifolds shimmered like a mirror from fuel fumes as the huge prop started to rotate. One manifold, then another, and yet another barked -- I stepped back with the others. In moments the Packard -built Merlin engine came to life with a thunderous roar. Blue flames knifed from her manifolds with an arrogant snarl. I looked at the others' faces; there was no concern. I lowered the bell of my extinguisher. One of the guys signaled to walk back to the lounge. We did.

Several minutes later we could hear the pilot doing his pre-flight run-up. He'd taxied to the end of runway 19, out of sight. All went quiet for several seconds. We ran to the second story deck to see if we could catch a glimpse of the P-51 as she started down the runway. We could not. There we stood, eyes fixed to a spot half way down 19. Then a roar ripped across the field, much louder than before. Like a furious hell spawn set loose -- something mighty this way was coming. "Listen to that thing!" said the controller.

In seconds the Mustang burst into our line of sight. It's tail was already off the runway and it was moving faster than anything I'd ever seen by that point on 19. Two-thirds the way down 19 the Mustang was airborne with her gear going up. The prop tips were supersonic. We clasped our ears as the Mustang climbed hellishly fast into the circuit to be eaten up by the dog-day haze. We stood for a few moments, in stunned silence, trying to digest what we'd just seen.

The radio controller rushed by me to the radio. "Kingston tower calling Mustang?" He looked back to us as he waited for an acknowledgement. The radio crackled, "Go ahead, Kingston." "Roger, Mustang. Kingston tower would like to advise the circuit is clear for a low-level pass." I stood in shock because the controller had just asked the pilot to do an impromptu air show! The controller looked at us. "Well, What? I can't let that guy go without asking. I couldn't forgive myself!" The radio crackled once again, "Kingston, do I have permission for a low-level pass, east to west, across the field?" "Roger, Mustang, the circuit is clear for an east to west pass." "Roger, Kingston, I'm coming out of 3,000 feet, stand by."

We rushed back onto the second-story deck, eyes fixed toward the eastern haze. The sound was subtle at first, a high-pitched whine, a muffled screech, a distant scream. Moments later the P-51 burst through the haze. Her airframe straining against positive G's and gravity. Her wing tips spilling contrails of condensed air, prop-tips again supersonic. The burnished bird blasted across the eastern margin of the field shredding and tearing the air. At about 500 mph and 150 yards from where we stood, she passed with the old American pilot saluting. I felt like laughing; I felt like crying; she glistened; she screamed; the building shook; my heart pounded. Then the old pilot pulled her up and rolled, and rolled, and rolled out of sight into the broken clouds and indelible into my memory. I've never wanted to be an American more than on that day! It was a time when many nations in the world looked to America as their big brother. A steady and even-handed beacon of security who navigated difficult political water with grace and style; not unlike the old American pilot who'd just flown into my memory. He was proud, not arrogant, humble, not a braggart, old and honest, projecting an aura of America at its best.

That America will return one day! I know it will! Until that time, I'll just send off this story. Call it a loving reciprocal salute to a Country, and especially to that old American pilot: the late-JIMMY STEWART (1908-1997), Actor, real WWII Hero (Commander of a US Army Air Force Bomber Wing stationed in England), and a USAF Reserves Brigadier General, who wove a wonderfully fantastic memory for a young Canadian boy that's lasted a lifetime.