



The American Legion Twin Cities Post 313, Inc.
Larkspur & Corte Madera, California

www.americanlegion313.org



The Almost Monthly Times

OUR MISSION: TO HONOR, SERVE AND SUPPORT OUR ARMED FORCES, VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES, WHILE PROMOTING PATRIOTISM IN THE COMMUNITY

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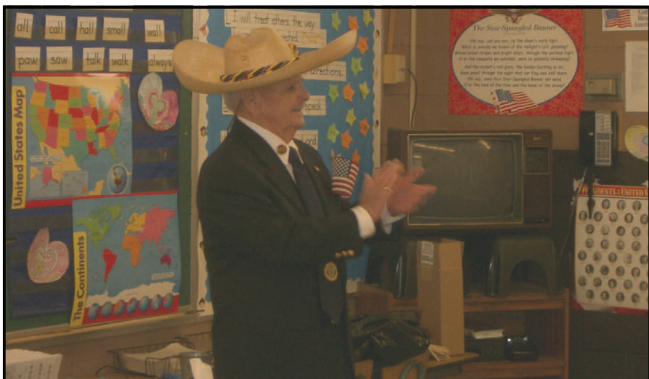
March 1, 2009

Legionnaires Visit St. Peter's School

On February 20th, Cecil Green and I visited a second grade class at St. Peter's Grammar School in the San Francisco Mission District. The teacher is a close friend to Mary and me. She had shown us her empty classroom last summer as she was preparing for 35 students which she would teach with no assistant. I was impressed as she decorated her classroom with an American Flag, posters of the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Star Spangled Banner. That visit set the stage for an invitation for the American Legion to join the class during the school year.

Cecil and I entered the classroom with every student standing and giving us a warm "Good Morning". After introductions we handed out small American flags to to the class. Soon the room was filled with children waving their own flags. We then explained the symbolism of the flag.

Cecil led the students in "God Bless America" and several other patriot songs. He then asked the class if anyone spoke Spanish. Almost every student raised their hand. He then pulled out his magic sombrero and said that when he wore



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Commander's Message

WOW — 2009 has started off with a bang. We have a new adjutant, Rex Gardner, a new Finance Officer, Will Kaefer, and seven new members: Kurt Birkhahn, Dave Fletcher, Ronald Heinen, Dave O'Dell, Donald Ring, Larrice Stuart and Pat Williams. We continue our outreach to welcome new members.

We have taken direct control of the hall, the bar and the kitchen, and hired Lou La Gatta, a local realtor, to serve as our rental agent to negotiate short-term rental of our hall, bar and club room when they are not used for post activities. This rental program will help us raise funds to support programs for members and the community.

We continue to be a very active post helping veterans, the community and the youth. We serve coffee and doughnuts on Monday and Thursday at 9:00 AM. Come on down; it's free! We alternate serving breakfast and lunch on Wednesday — call first. Our post general membership meetings are on the first Monday of each month at 7:30 PM. We invite, welcome and need your predication.

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Sons of The American Legion (A squadron is forming)

Acting Commander
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Important!

**Attend General Membership
Meetings in March and April
for nomination & election of
officers**

March 2009

3/2/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
3/2/2009	7:30 PM	9:00 PM	General Membership Meeting - Nominations (Club Room)
3/4/2009	8:30 AM	10:00 AM	Breakfast (Club Room)
3/5/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
3/8/2009			Daylight Savings Time Begins
3/8/2009	9:00 AM	3:00 PM	5th Dist Meeting, Post 182, Suisun
3/9/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
3/10/2009	12:00 PM	2:00 PM	Auxiliary Unit Meeting (Club Room)
3/11/2009	12:00 PM	1:30 PM	Lunch
3/12/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
3/14/2009	2:00 PM	6:00 PM	Boy Scout Troop 59 Court of Honor (Hall & Bar)
3/16/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
3/17/2009			St. Patrick's Day
3/18/2009	8:30 AM	10:00 AM	Breakfast (Club Room)
3/18/2009	6:30 PM	9:00 PM	Marin Co. Vietnam Vets of America (Club Room)
3/19/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
3/19/2009	7:00 PM	9:00 PM	40 & 8 (Club Room)
3/23/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
3/25/2009	12:00 PM	1:30 PM	Lunch
3/26/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
3/26/2009	10:00 AM	12:00 PM	Executive Committee (Club Room)
3/27/2009	6:30 PM	10:30 PM	Lark Theater: Green Room (Club Room)
3/30/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)

April 2009

4/1/2009	8:30 AM	10:00 AM	Breakfast (Club Room)
4/2/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
4/4/2009	5:00 PM	10:00 PM	Post Dinner (Club Room & Hall)
4/6/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
4/6/2009	7:30 PM	9:00 PM	General Membership Meeting - Nomination & Election (Club Room)
4/8/2009	12:00 PM	1:30 PM	Lunch
4/9/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
4/10/2009			Good Friday
4/12/2009			Easter
4/13/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
4/14/2009	12:00 PM	2:00 PM	Auxiliary Unit Meeting (Club Room)
4/15/2009	8:30 AM	10:00 AM	Breakfast (Club Room)
4/15/2009	6:30 PM	9:00 PM	Marin Co. Vietnam Vets of America (Club Room)
4/16/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
4/16/2009	7:00 PM	9:00 PM	40 & 8 (Club Room)
4/20/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
4/22/2009	12:00 PM	1:30 PM	Lunch
4/23/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
4/27/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
4/30/2009	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Coffee (Club Room)
4/30/2009	10:00 AM	12:00 PM	Executive Committee (Club Room)

For updates see the club room bulletin board & the post Web site

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the sombrero he could speak Spanish. After he donned the hat he still continued in English and discovered that he had the sombrero on backwards. To great laughter and excitement and a correction of the hat, he began to converse in Spanish and sang "Rancho Grande". The children were ecstatic. The teacher then led the class in several more patriotic songs. We then had some Q&A. Every student eagerly participated. They asked questions about the American Legion and Veterans. After the group picture was taken, the students were excused to go to lunch. Still a many of them gathered around us asking us more questions.

It truly was a heartwarming experience for both of us to see these well behaved children eager to participate and learn.

Cecil and I then walked three blocks down 24th Street to small restaurant for lunch. We were surprised and pleased as many people warmly said hello. Perhaps it was the uniform. This was a special trip for Cecil. In his youth Cecil attended St. Peter's School.

Will Kaefer

(continued from page 1)

Our first dinner of the year was on St. Valentine's Day, February 14, and that night we honored Lonnie Fugate who was celebrating her birthday. We awarded honors to Charlie Rickard and Dave McIntosh for their outstanding contributions to the Post. We introduced the new members who were in attendance, saluted Lou La Gatta and recognized Pauline Angleman and Oakley, who addressed the group.

Work has begun to develop our Post Web site. David O'Dell, one of our new members and an talented Web site designer, recently updated the welcome page, added an event calendar and directions to help visitors find the Post. Rex Gardner intends to keep the calendar updated so all of us will know what is going on. The schedule will be more important as we find rental clients and arrange more activities for members.

With the enthusiasm and ceaseless efforts of our executive team, 2009 will be a great year. Come on down and join us — it's your post.

Gene Plocki





American Legion family eligibility requirements

The American Legion

Any person is eligible for membership who was a member of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps or U.S. Coast Guard and assigned to active duty at some time during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917-Nov 22, 1918; Dec 7, 1941-Dec 31, 1946; Jun 25, 1950-Jan 31, 1955; Feb 28, 1961-May 7, 1975; Aug 24, 1982-July 31-1984; Dec 20, 1989-Jan 31, 1990; and Aug 2, 1990-present. Merchant Marines who served from Dec 7, 1941, to Dec 31, 1946, and have been deemed veterans are eligible for membership. Those who have left the service must have received an honorable discharge. Membership also is open to those who were citizens of the United States at the time of their entry into foreign armed forces that served with the United States during any of these periods. Service must have been terminated with an honorable discharge or honorable separation.

American Legion Auxiliary

All women who are eligible for membership in the Auxiliary fall into one of these categories:

1. The mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of members of The American Legion.
2. The mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great grand-daughters and grandmothers of those who served in the U.S. Armed Forces during any of the eligibility periods listed and who died in the line of duty during such service, or who, having received an honorable discharge, died after such service.
3. The mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers of those who were citizens of the United States and who served during any of the eligibility periods in the armed forces of any of the governments who were allies of the United States and who died in the line of duty during such service, or who, having received an honorable discharge, died after such

service.

4. Women who are eligible for membership in the American Legion in their own right. Eligibility includes step-relatives.

Sons of The American Legion

An eligible member must be a male descendant or stepson of a member of The American Legion. Others eligible to join include:

1. Male descendants, stepsons included, of any veteran who died in service during World War I World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama or the Persian Gulf War. See specific time period for service during these conflicts.
2. Male descendants and stepsons of a veteran who died subsequent to his or her honorable discharge from service in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama or the Persian Gulf War. The same eligibility periods apply.

Membership

S.O.S. It seems to me that all good Legionnaires interested in the growth of their Post (313) should give hearty support and effort to the recruiting of new members.

So I am asking you to seek out new members. Bring them to a meeting, or, if you participate in one of our recreational activities, invite him or her to an event.

The post you save may be your own!

Cecil Green
Member-at-large

room" bar, if we wish.

We hope to start a program to renovate the "main" bar in the near future.

Jim Hanretty
3rd Vice Commander

Adjutant

Hello everyone. I'm Rex Gardner your new Adjutant. I've been a member of the post for the 19 years. I especially enjoy the inexpensive meals and the reminder calls by Bill Brennen. Thanks Bill you do a great job. I have a Legionnaire brother in Blackfoot, Idaho and my father was one (World War I). Which reminds me of a Lawrence Welk joke. As you know, he used cue cards to announce numbers. On one occasion he said, "And now we will have a song from World War 'Eye Eye'."

As Gene Plocki mentioned on page 3, we now have a new calendar on the post Web site. Our intent is to keep changes posted and make the online calendar the most current schedule for the post. A current printed copy is available on the club room bulletin board.

I especially want to thank Charlie Rickard (incidentally Feb 16 was his birthday, Happy Birthday Charlie.) for his help and direction, also many others who have been patient with me. I look forward to becoming acquainted with each of you and being of service. Thank you.

Rex Gardner

Bar Manager

After two trips to Santa Rosa plus numerous phone calls to our contact at the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) office, State of California, it looks like we are going to get our request to transfer our liquor license from 12 Ward St. to 500 Magnolia. Saying this seems like no big deal -- not so! In addition to the trips and phone calls, it took all of Rex Gardner's considerable skills to work through the thirteen(13) forms ABC requires.

Commander Plocki, Adjutant Gardner and I received conditional approval from California ABC on 2/13/09.

What this means to the membership is that now we will operate our bar out of the "main" bar in the hall and that we will also be able to use the "club

Facility Manager

There has been a lot of activity in this area since the last newsletter. Let me bring you up to date on the major items. First, our contractor has completed termite damage repair on the floor supports under the dental lab next to the club house. That was "must do" work. Other less critical termite damage exists under the Hall. But for now, the termites have been exterminated.

As you may have heard, the Post has terminated the lease with Sweetwater Station and is now managing the hall, lounge and kitchen. In fact, there appears to be a strong demand in the community to rent the hall for a variety of events. We have already rented the hall for musical recitals. However, in order to bring the facility up to full vigor, it is necessary to complete some maintenance and repair long neglected by tenants over the years.

The Post business plan calls for leasing the kitchen to a caterer to provide a steady income for the Post. An in-house caterer will also enhance the desirability of the hall as an event site. We are planning to have the commercial range professionally restored to new condition and have the commercial dishwasher repaired. We must turn over a properly functioning kitchen to the future kitchen tenant.

Much discussion has been devoted to the main hall. Issues such as lighting, sound system, modifying the stage, floor covering, and the like, are front and center. It seems certain that the hall will not be primarily a venue for plays and musicals in the future. Therefore, the stage should be reduced in size or even removed. Increasing the floor space by shrinking the stage will increase the capacity of the room. We are exploring the options to determine the best configuration for the hall.

The business plan has the Post operating the lounge as a bar serving beverages for events in the hall. We are obtaining the necessary licenses and permits this very moment. The bar must be equipped with shelving, glasses, and all necessary fixtures to operate. Appropriate liquor inventory is also needed as is security for said inventory.

The purpose of all these changes, and others still on the drawing board, is to enable the Post prosper and grow. Additional revenue and free use of the facility will support our mission of service to veterans, our members and the community.

Bob Gonzalez

Financial Officer

Several years ago your Executive Committee decided to increase our capital reserves to hedge against the potential loss of our long term tenant.

The loss of Sweetwater Station as our major tenant occurred in late December. After many meetings, your Post decided to reclaim control of the main hall and manage the property with short rentals. This is a major undertaking as we anticipate some months going forward with negative cash flow.

The foresight of establishing a reserve fund will permit us to weather this financial period as we build our rental business.

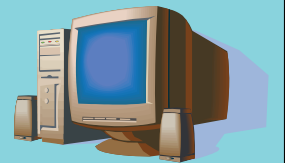
A major milestone was reached Friday February 13, when the Post signed an agreement with Marin Realty Group to list and manage our short term rentals. Not only will this relieve the Post from this management intensive activity, but we will benefit from the advertising and marketing expertise of the Marin Realty Group.

As our rentals increase there will be a continual property improvement process to upgrade our property. Going forward we must minimize our expendi-

tures where we can while being ever mindful of our spending to enhance our appeal for future rentals.

Will Kaefer

Computer Training Comes to Post 313



Our member Dave Fletcher is holding computer classes every Tuesday morning in the club room. There is no charge for post members. Space is limited.

Call Dave for information and to sign up
(415) 335-4870



Lou and Brit La Ghatta
Marin Realty Group



Bonnie Gonzalez at the
piano



Richie Guetter and Marie



Charlie Rickard received an
award from Gene Plocki



Cathy Plocki

Shinseki vows 21st-century service to veterans

Retired Army Gen. Eric K. Shinseki took the oath of office Jan. 21 as the nation's seventh secretary of Veterans Affairs, assuming the leadership of the Department of Veterans Affairs following Tuesday's confirmation by the Senate.

"The overriding challenge I am addressing from my first day in office is to make the Department of Veterans Affairs a 21st-century organization focused on the nation's veterans as its clients," Shinseki said. He plans to develop a 2010 budget within his first 90 days that realizes the vision of President Obama: to transform VA into an organization that is people-centric, results-driven and forward-looking.

Key issues on his agenda include smooth activation of an enhanced GI Bill education benefit that eligible veterans can begin using this fall, streamlining the disability claims system, leveraging information technology to accelerate and modernize services, opening VA's health-care system to veterans previously unable to enroll in it, and facilitating ac-

cess for returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

Shinseki, a former Army chief of staff, takes the reins of a 284,000-employee organization delivering health care and financial benefits to millions of veterans and survivors under a \$98 billion budget authorized this year, through networks of regional benefits offices and health-care facilities from coast to coast.

Born Nov. 28, 1942, on the island of Kauai, Hawaii, [Shinseki](#) graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1965. He served two combat tours in the Vietnam War and was wounded in action. His military decorations include three Bronze Stars and two Purple Hearts. He served with distinction in Europe, the Pacific and stateside, eventually becoming the Army's senior leader from June 1999 to June 2003.

Shinseki succeeds Dr. James B. Peake as secretary of Veterans Affairs.

© Legion Online Update 1/29/2009

To All Members:

Plan to attend our Post Dinner on Saturday, April 4th, 2009

Cocktails will be held in close proximity to the hall at 5:00 PM and dinner will be served in the hall at 6:00 PM.

You will receive complete details around March 15th.

Please

reserve this date and stand-by for additional information.

Eugene Plocki

Commander

The Almost Monthly Times

3/1/2009

Small Town Marin (a Twin Cities Tail)

On a recent morning Alice led me on a tour of our town searching for a grassy area to gambol. The day was sunny and warming from the morning 30's to the 60's in the afternoon.. It was unusually beautiful and sunny with the acacia in bountiful bloom and the eucalyptus dropping seed pods and blossoms. It seems spring arrived early.

Hall Middle School is where we found the heart of the community. It was Saturday. Little League was conducting trials for the 120 young athletes who were lining the bases catching fly balls and awaiting their turn at bat while groups of fathers were scoring their abilities: At bat, running bases, throwing and catching. It was a interesting view of small town life and what's important, more than twenty dads supervised the activities. Dads who otherwise would have been working or absent from the kids life. So the Little League is not only helpful for



You may be recognize Alice. She exercises Ron Gillis while patrolling the streets of Twin Cities

the kids, also for the fathers.

The boys and the fathers were a handsome lot and the dads were enthusiastically participating in the classification of potential players so that they could be assigned to the league teams in groups of balanced abilities. Outcome of the season will be the spirit of the boys and the effectiveness of the coaching by the volunteer dads.

Twin Cities Little League has constructed a professional appearing ball park with bleachers, snack bar and sound system. Base lines are not drawn in the sand, but striped with lime, the outfield is verdant mowed grass, not weeds, stickers and gopher holes.

Some of the fathers involved in the Little League are also with our Legion sponsored Boy Scout Troop 43. While trying to make a living they spend weekends, spring and summer evenings, herding boys in scouting and baseball. That says a lot about the values of the dads and the greater

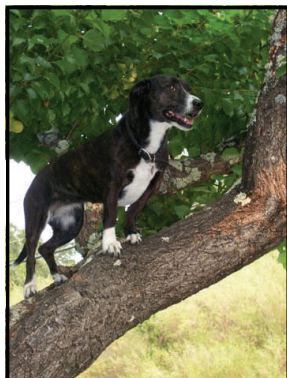
(Continued on page 8)

potential for the kids.

Around the corner of the gymnasium we were moved by the squeal of the McIntosh Pipe and Drum Corps. Today they had no audience, but they are the most exciting entry in the Fourth of July parade. The music was grand, *Scotland the Brave* and some laments that I didn't recognize.

We stayed for a few selections until Alice indicated she had enough of the squealing pipes, the boom and rat-a-tap-tap of the drums. She will cock her head, stare at you with her large brown eyes and lift her small ears so they are horizontal as that is her way of saying, "It's time to go,

Ron Gillis



Readers have asked for Alice's AKC pedigree information. You can see from this photo that Alice is not a common family pet. When did you last encounter a tree-climbing dog? We have asked Alice to present her papers. Watch for more in May.

— Ed.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD) COUNSELING

Fellow American Legion Members:

We as veterans are concerned about the effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder on veterans of our recent wars (WW II, Korean, Viet Nam, Afghanistan and Iraq) and on their families. We propose providing free counseling services to our fellow veterans and their families at the Twin Cities Post 313, Larkspur & Corte Madera, CA. Please contact either one of us to arrange a meeting:

Rev. Palmer Wilkins, Chaplain:
(415) 897-7859

H. Stuart Bacon, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist
(415) 924-2712