

State Headquarters News Update



Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Department of California

Sacramento, California

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UNITED AS ONE – SERVICE FOR ALL



Nick Guest was elected State Commander at the 88th State Convention in Ontario, California in June 2008.

He has served on various Department and National Committees and served as the Community Service/Outreach Director in the 2005-2006 year. He also served as the Department Chaplain from 2003-2005 and went on to become the Department Jr. Vice Commander in 2006.

Nick joined the United States Army in 1967 and served two years on active duty and four years as a reservist. He served a tour of duty in the Republic of Viet Nam with the First Infantry Division, the famed "Big Red One," as a rifle squad leader. He earned the coveted Combat Infantryman Badge, two Bronze Star Medals with "V" device, two Purple Heart Medals, Army Commendation Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Medal, Viet Nam Service Medal, Viet Nam Campaign Medal, Viet Nam Cross of Gallantry Medal with Palm as well as four unit citations including a Meritorious Unit Citation and a Presidential Unit Citation.

He joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars in 1994 at Post 2111 in Chula Vista, California and became a Life Member in 1996. He transferred to Post 2805 in Canoga Park, California in 1998 and has served in all positions at the Post. He has served through the District Chairs and was one of only six All State District Commanders for the 2001-2002 year. He still serves his Post as the Post Service Officer and heads several Committees at the District level.

In addition to having been a decorated American Veteran, Nick was a Production Manager and Quality Engineer for Hughes Aircraft Company. He retired in October 2003, after 27 years of service.

Nick married his wife Sandy in 1998 and they reside in Chatsworth, California. Between them they have two daughters, one son, two granddaughters and two grandsons. Following are the 2008/2009 newly installed Officers of the Department of California:

2008/2009 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Nick Guest, Commander (US Army)
Jack Turner, Sr. Vice Cmdr (US Navy)
Denis Wells, Jr. Vice Cmdr
(US Air Force)
John Lowe, Q/M-Adjutant (US Army)

Ed Ford, Chaplain (US Navy)
Doug Carrington, Surgeon (US Army)
Walter Swanson, Judge Advocate
(US Army)
Dave Norris, Jr. Past Cmdr (US Army)
Everett Martin, Nat'l Council Member
District G (US Navy)

**FALL COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION
MEETING AND STATE COMMANDER'S
HOMECOMING**

October 3-5, 2008 the Department of California will hold its second Council of Administration at the Hilton Woodland Hills (818) 595-1000. Rooms are \$95/night plus tax. Please make your reservations directly with the Hilton Hotel.

State Commander Nick Guest will celebrate his Homecoming at Post 2805 (Canoga Park), District 7, on Saturday, October 4, 2008.

**109TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
ORLANDO, FLORIDA
August 16 – 21, 2008**

Visit www.vfw.org for more information

For those who are interested in purchasing banquet tickets, contact John Lowe, Dept. Adjutant, (916) 449-8850. Banquet is Monday, August 18, 2008, \$50/person.

POW/MIA PROGRAM

Department POW/MIA Program will be held on Saturday, September 27, 2008, 10:00 a.m. at Rancho Tapo Community Park and Veterans Plaza, 3700 Avenida Simi, Simi Valley. Following the program will be a lunch at VFW Post 10049 beginning at 1:00 p.m. (4242 Los Angeles Ave., Simi Valley). Hotel reservations can be made at Extended Stay America (805) 584-8880 (2498 Stearns, Simi Valley). Rooms are \$87.88/night. Any questions please contact Chairman Larry Stroud (951) 925-7009.

CALIFORNIA VETERAN

For those who do not have access to a computer or do not attend Post or District meetings, please contact the Department Officer, 1510 "J" Street, Suite 110, Sacramento, CA 95814 and

request that you be added to the hard copy mailing list.

**PRESIDENT SIGNS GI BILL FOR
21ST CENTURY.**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (June 30, 2008) – President Bush's signature today on a new GI Bill for the 21st Century is being hailed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. as a tremendous victory for a new generation of military servicemen and women who have been at war for almost seven years.

"This is a tremendous victory for America's veterans, military and their families," exclaimed VFW national commander George Lisicki, a Vietnam combat veteran from Carteret, N.J.

"I salute Sen. Jim Webb (D-Va.) for his determination to get this bill passed, the president for his strong support of our military, and the entire VFW membership for their untiring effort to get their congressional delegations to cosponsor S. 22 or its companion bill in the House, H.R. 5740."

The new 21st Century GI Bill will pay the highest in-state public tuition rate, and provide for books, fees, and a living stipend. It eliminates the \$1,200 enrollment fee, extends the use-or-lose benefit requirement from 10 to 15 years, and greatly enhances the amount paid to Guard and Reserve members. The new GI Bill automatically adjusts itself as tuitions increase, and provides a dollar-for-dollar tuition match for private colleges and universities who choose to participate in the program. A new provision added to the bill also allows reenlisting servicemembers to transfer their educational benefit to their spouse and/or children.

The VFW fought doggedly for more than a decade to bring an expanded GI Bill into reality. Lisicki said the long-awaited victory would not have been possible without strong bipartisan support in Congress, the dedicated staff work and grassroots lobbying efforts of the VFW Washington Office, VFW Legislative Committee members, VFW Action Corps, and the entire VFW and Auxiliary membership of 2.3 million.

In 1944, the VFW also played a leading role to shape and bring to fruition the original World War II GI Bill, which is widely regarded as one of the most significant pieces of legislation enacted in the last century. Almost half of the 16 million men and women who served in World War II took advantage of the education benefit, and they returned to

federal coffers \$7 for every \$1 dollar spent on their education in the form of higher taxes paid on the higher wages earned.

"Now, 64 years later, the VFW is proud to once again play a key role in the development and passage of a new GI Bill," said Lisicki, "because it's just one more shining example of the VFW fulfilling its mandate of service to others by backing the right piece of legislation that will have the most significant impact.

"Our voices – united toward a common cause – urged America's leaders to reward the gift of education to the men and women who protect our great country," he said. "This is why the VFW is just as relevant today as we were 109 years ago when we were founded. We make a difference."

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Bill Manes

The State Legislature has basically been marking time for the past couple of weeks waiting for someone to break the impasse over the State Budget. Both the Senate and the Assembly Budget Committees have their versions of a Budget but they are quite different – and neither one is moving. It is interesting that both versions have restored some of the Governor's proposed 10 percent across-the-board cuts. At this time, full funding has been restored for the subvention funding to Counties for the Veteran Service Offices, but it is by not means a certainty that these restorations will survive in the final version.

There are many bills waiting for floor votes in one house or the other, but it appears that most are going to be held until the usual final frantic days which would be expected to occur between August 25-31 – if there is a State Budget by then. There are a couple of bills that have been passed, and others that have been placed on hold by the Appropriations Committees. It is still possible that these bills can still be taken up again and passed. This normally happens after the Budget Bill has been passed.

1. Bills passed and signed by the Governor: SB 1572 Veterans Bond Act of 2008. (Mark Wyland, Escondido)

Authorizes a bond act to be submitted to the voters during the November 2008 election to provide for bonds to fund the California Veterans Home and Loan Program. The bill went through the

Legislature rather handily. Normally, such a bond act would be easily passed by the voters but this year may be different with the very large number of ballot measures, some of which may be highly controversial. Veterans should take specific steps to help support this measure which is, of course, aimed at the newest veterans of the Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan). I will be presenting more information concerning this as we get closer to the election.

SB 1482 Local government: forfeiture of office. (Lou Correa, Santa Ana) Provides that an elected official of a local government agency would forfeit the elected office if convicted of a crime under the federal Stolen Valor Act.

SB 1680 Student financial aid: Military and Veterans Office. (Mark Wyland, Escondido) Authorizes the Community Colleges and the State Universities to designate Military and veterans Offices and individuals to coordinate services for students who are veterans and members of the military services. The University of California would be requested to provide similar services. (Note: Most campuses already provide such services – this bill would make it a requirement for all.)

2. Bills placed on the Suspense File by the Senate Committee on Appropriations. AB 190 Vehicles: veterans: parking. (Karen Bass, Los Angeles). This is a bill that was started back in 2007 to allow vehicles to be parked free of charge in a metered parking space if they display the special license plates for Pearl Harbor Survivor, Legion of Valor, Former American Prisoner of War (POW), Congressional Medal of Honor, or Purple Heart. As the bill presently reads, local governments would be required to implement this provision unless the local governing body expressly passes a resolution to prohibit the free parking.

AB 2134 Employment discrimination: family and medical leave. (Sandre Swanson, Oakland)

Would conform State law to federal law that provides for an employee to take up to 26 weeks of unpaid protected leave in a single 12-month period to care for a servicemember who requires care due to an injury or illness incurred on active duty.

AB 2671 Prisoners: veterans. (Mary Salas, Chula Vista)

Creates the Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program to assist honorably discharged incarcerated veterans in successfully obtaining federal and state benefits.

3. Bill placed on the Suspense File by the Assembly Committee on Appropriations: SB 1450 Sales and use taxes: exemptions: thrift stores operated by nonprofit organizations on military installations. (Bob Dutton, Rancho Cucamonga)

This is one of two identical bills introduced this year which would exempt thrift stores operated by the Navy Relief Society from charging sales taxes. The other bill, AB 1919, was previously killed by this same committee. The possibility of this bill being brought back is practically zero. The problem is that if the exemption is granted to Navy Relief, it would be expected that other nonprofit thrift store operations would quickly have their own exemption bills introduced.

E-mail addresses have been updated for all District Commanders and Department Officers. Updates are still requested from the Commanders for your District Legislative Chairman to ensure that they receive this information. I do not have any update information available for the Posts, or for the Department offices of the Ladies Auxiliary.

Complete information on all state legislation involving veterans issues is available at the website: <http://www.califveterans.com>

WESTERN CONFERENCE
October 29 – November 1, 2008
San Diego, CA
For more information visit www.vfwca.org
(Upcoming Events)

COMMANDER'S ITINERARY
2008/2009

JULY 2008

4 Independence Day –
Headquarters Closed
11-14 Flying Squadron, Reno, NV
18-20 Open
25-27 Official Visit – District 20

AUGUST 2008

1-3 Open
8-10 Official Visit – District 17
15-17 National Convention – Orlando, FL
22-24 Official Visit – District 10
29-31 Official Visit – District 3

SEPTEMBER 2008

1 Labor Day – Headquarters Closed
4-7 Commander-in-Chief's
Homecoming, San Antonio, TX
12-14 Official Visit – District 18
13-17 National Legislative Committee
Meeting, Washington D.C.
19-21 Official Visit – District 11
23-25 National Auxiliary Presidents
Homecoming, Omaha, NE
27 POW/MIA Day

OCTOBER 2008

4 State Council of Administration
Meeting, Canoga Park, CA
5 Commander's Homecoming, VFW
Post 2805, Canoga Park, CA
10-12 Official Visit – District 12
13 Columbus Day – Headquarters
Closed
17-19 Official Visit – District 13
24-26 Open

NOVEMBER 2008

31-2 Western Conference, San Diego, CA
7-9 Open
11 Veterans Day – Headquarters Closed
14-16 Official Visit – District 16
21-23 Open
27-28 Thanksgiving – Headquarters Closed

DECEMBER 2008

5-7 Open
7 Pearl Harbor Day
12-14 Open
19-21 Open
25-26 Christmas Day – Headquarters
Closed

JANUARY 2009

1-2 New Year's Day – Headquarters
Closed
2-4 Official Visit – District 4
9-11 Official Visit – District 7
16-18 Open
19 Martin Luther King's Birthday –
Headquarters Closed
23-25 State Mid-Winter Conference
(Council of Administration meeting)

and Awards Banquet, Sacramento,
CA

30-1 Official Visit – District 1

FEBRUARY 2009

6-8 Open

13-15 Official Visit – District 25

16 Presidents Day – Headquarters
Closed

19-22 National Mid-Winter Conference,
Louisville, KY

27-1 Official Visit – District 15

MARCH 2009

6-8 Official Visit – District 14

13-15 Official Visit – District 9

20-22 Official Visit – District 6

22-25 Department Sr. Vice & A/Q
Conference, Kansas City, MO

27-29 Official Visit – District 22

APRIL 2009

4-8 National VOD and Legislative
Conference, Washington D.C.

10-19 Commander-in-Chief's
Membership Trip

24-26 Official Visit – District 23

MAY 2009

1-3 Official Visit – District 19

8-10 Open

15-17 Official Visit – District 21

22-24 Memorial Day – Headquarters
Closed

29-31 Open

JUNE 2009

5-7 Open

12-14 Open

19-22 State Convention, Ontario, CA

26-28 Open

2008/2009 ROSTER

You can access and download the 2008/2009
Department of California Roster by visiting
www.vfwca.org. Please note the following
correction to the Roster:

Doug Carrington, Department Surgeon

Fax: (619) 443-0932

E-mail: doug.carrington@cox.net

**APPOINTMENT OF EVENTS &
MEETING COORDINATOR**

The Department of California VFW is pleased to
announce the appointment of Dave Norris as Events
and Meeting Coordinator.

**LOOKING FOR NEWSWORTHY
ARTICLES FOR OUR PAPER**

Attention District Commanders – please
send a short summary of any highlights during your
official visits. I would like to publish in our
California Veteran (martin@vfwca.org). Also if
one of your Posts has a special program or events,
please get an article and pictures to me.

**CALIFORNIA FORTUNE RAFFLE
TICKET WINNERS**

Drawing was held on June 24, 2008

\$1,000 Prize Winner

James Mansu

Lodi, CA

Ticket Number: 457145

\$1,000 Prize Winner

Vicki Ecker

Kagel Canyon, CA

Ticket Number: 438065

\$1,000 Prize Winner

James Partoyan

San Bruno, CA

Ticket Number: 516415

\$1,000 Prize Winner

B. Richard Spiese

San Leandro, CA

Ticket Number: 136273

\$1,000 Prize Winner

Martin J. Smith

Oakland, CA

Ticket Number: 92600

\$5,000 2nd Prize Winner

Frank Sanchez

Frazier Park, CA

Ticket Number: 452323

\$20,000 Grand Prize Winner

Cheryl Conder

Hemet, CA

Ticket Number: 117919

\$1,000 Purple Heart Prize Winner

John O'Connor

San Jose, CA

ALL STATE COMMANDERS & QUARTERMASTERS – 2007/2008

COMMANDER	QUARTERMASTER	DIST	POST
Dale Smith	John Hine	1	3783
Earle Johnson	Richard Tanner	1	3787
Virgil Griffin	Stephen Pantoja	1	3795
Michael Elsten	James Thompson	1	5477
Donald Stonecipher	Charles Tomko	1	7907
Wayne Williams	James Abercrombie	1	9578
John Porath	Alvin Weaver	1	11044
Thomas Goodall	Casey Kleindienst	2	6024
Erik Duane	Edwin Conklin	2	9756
Franklin Tucker	William Manes	2	9934
Thomas Pugliese	David Schwartz	3	5551
Gerald Boddy	Leo Astgen	3	6552
Robert Tolliver	Steven Jacobs	3	9415
Phillip Grace	Alan Clark	3	12039
James Rosa	Jim Certain	4	1622
Gerry Blake	Lamont Duncan	4	2122
Martin Chacon	Paul Gonzalez	4	2967
Vernon Hollins	Charles Davis	4	5394
Richard Jimenez	Phillip Vallejos	6	7734
Ray Pollok	John Hutchens	7	2323
Robert Moran	Bennie Tipps	7	2805
Neil Baliber	Richard Healey	7	11508
Joseph McCormick	Ralph Widener	8	570
Robert Christensen	Glenn Sawyer	8	2814
Hughes Rue	Daumals Belte	10	9657
Haskell Stillman	Patrick Spencer	12	2421
Joseph Timar	Thomas Castillo	12	7895
Charles Woodson	Terence Reeder	12	10110
Jesse Sanchez**	Calvin Chaney	13	52
Bobby Edwards	Wilson Martin	13	7635
Ben Tapia Jr.	Ronald Moren	13	10293
Kariana Saavedra	Frank Smith	14	1917
Charles Herbert	Timothy Abel	14	2392
David Ham	John Percoraro	14	6298
Frederick Kroll	Robert Houchins	16	1123
Richard Jones	Robert Waddell	16	2333
Warren Hopkins	Raymond Forsythe	16	3237
Richard Smith	John Angier	16	7244
Robert McMahan	William Lower	16	8151
Charles Peterson	Kenneth Luck	17	1487
Leonard Hodgson	Alfred Brum	17	1985
Edward Cavazos	David Simpson	17	2073
Christopher Lucero**	Alexander Griffith	17	4647
Rudolph Taylor	William Snead	17	5991
Gary Reason	John Cox	17	5991
Gary Murawski	Robert Miller	17	9869
Floyd Clark*	Paul Whetzel Jr.	17	10125
Ronald Sanders	Michael Taylor	18	4218
Gregory Colunio	Gregory Colunio	18	10135
Ronald Harshman**	Chris Shatluck	20	5689
Fred Schlueter	Sam Frost III	20	9650
Dominick Tarantino	Hollis McCoy	21	2481
Thomas Ward	Harold Bressan	22	10149
Larry Sanders	Leonard Bartels	23	8547
Jaime Alvarez	Aron Hyson	23	12023

* = Captain

** = Co Captain

ALL-STATE TEAM DISTRICT COMMANDERS 2007-2008 Membership Year

Name	Post	Dist.
Eugene Cota	6298	14
Larry Spurlin *	1934	20
Patrick Johnson	9561	21

* = Captain All-State District Commanders

Program Awards for 2007/2008

Comrade Distributing the most Poppy's

POST	DIST	NAME
52	13	Jeff Drullard

Outstanding Inspector of the Year

DIST	NAME	RANK
18	John Bump	1 st Place
8	Jerry Cowins	Runner-up

Outstanding Scout Leader of the Year

POST	DIST	NAME
6024	2	Jim Clement

Outstanding Scout Project of the Year

POST	DIST	NAME
2600	13	Drake Walker
913	25	Randel Huber

Outstanding Achievements in Scouting

POST	DIST	NAME
10125	17	Jeffrey Michael Hays

Outstanding District Citizenship Education Program

DIST	RANK
4	1 st Place
12	2 nd Place
13	3 rd Place

Outstanding District Community Service Program

DIST	RANK
4	1 st Place
17	2 nd Place
14	3 rd Place

Outstanding District Youth Activities Program

DIST	RANK
4	1 st Place
21	2 nd Place
8	3 rd Place

Outstanding District National Home Program

DIST	RANK
2	1 st Place
23	2 nd Place
1	3 rd Place

Outstanding District Veteran Service Program

DIST	RANK
1	1 st Place

Outstanding District Veterans Employment Program

DIST	RANK
4	1 st Place

Outstanding District Scouting Program

DIST	RANK
2	1 st Place
17	2 nd Place
21	3 rd Place

Outstanding District Buddy Poppy Program

DIST	RANK
22	1 st Place

Outstanding Post Citizenship Program

POST	DIST	RANK
2967	4	1 st Place
6298	14	2 nd Place
3552	7	3 rd Place

Citizenship – Thomas Jefferson Award

POST	DIST
2111	1

Buddy Poppy – John F. Kennedy Award

POST	DIST
1468	9

Outstanding Post Community Program

POST	DIST	RANK
2967	4	1 st Place
6298	14	2 nd Place
1487	17	3 rd Place

Outstanding Post Youth Activities Program

POST	DIST	RANK
2967	4	1 st Place
2043	8	2 nd Place
9148	4	3 rd Place

Outstanding Post National Home Program

POST	DIST	RANK
6024	2	1 st Place
1525	25	2 nd Place
9934	2	3 rd Place
2805	7	3 rd Place

Outstanding Post Veteran Service Program

POST	DIST	RANK
6298	14	1 st Place
9561	21	2 nd Place
9934	2	3 rd Place

Outstanding Post Veterans Employment Program

POST	DIST	RANK
2381	10	1 st Place
6601	9	2 nd Place
2967	4	3 rd Place

Outstanding Post Homeless Veterans Program

POST	DIST	RANK
2967	4	1 st Place
2111	1	2 nd Place
1917	14	3 rd Place

Outstanding Post Home & Hospital Program

POST	DIST	RANK
2075	4	1 st Place
7216	4	2 nd Place
1732	4	3 rd Place

Outstanding Post Military Assistance Program

POST	DIST	RANK
2967	4	1 st Place
7216	9	2 nd Place
7766	1	3 rd Place

Outstanding Post Publication

POST	DIST	CIRCULATION	RANK
2805	7	Large	1 st Place
2075	4	Medium	1 st Place
9578	1	Medium	2 nd Place
11548	2	Small	1 st Place
11013	5	Small	2 nd Place

Outstanding Post Scouting Program

POST	DIST	RANK
6298	14	1 st Place
2481	21	2 nd Place
3552	7	3 rd Place

Outstanding Post JrROTC Program

POST	DIST	RANK
2111	1	1 st Place
6298	14	2 nd Place
4718	15	3 rd Place

Outstanding Post POW/MIA Program

POST	DIST	RANK
2266	23	1 st Place
12023	23	1 st Place
97	9	2 nd Place
2111	1	3 rd Place

THANK YOU

I would like to thank all of the Comrades and Sisters who sent cards, well wishes and prayers. Your telephone calls have helped as well. I am enjoying the beautiful skies in Colorado and missing my California VFW Comrades.

Yours in Comradeship,
John Fitzke
Past State Commander
1995-1996