



***CALIFORNIA AMERICAN LEGION POST 18
NEWSLETTER. Volume 5, Number 2, February 2024***

Come to our February 2024 regular business meeting, February 8, at 7:00PM, Visalia Veterans Memorial Building, 609 West Center, across from Smart and Final.

=====

Here is a message of thanks and encouragement from our Post's First Vice Commander and 15th District Commander, Chris Wenzinger, United States Air Force veteran.

Hello my fellow veterans!

Let me begin by saying thank you all for what you do.

Thank you for volunteering your time to the families of the fallen, our communities, youth, active duty military and veterans. Our time is precious and is something that a price cannot measure. All of you continue to show your unfailing devotion to God and Country. Just as you did when we took our oath of service.

I am so impressed with our American Legion Family that accomplishes so much. It exemplifies service to others before self. Let me highlight a few areas.

Blood Drives hosted by Visalia Post 18, Porterville Post 20 and Sierra Post 785. These events are the gifts of life, especially when there is such a shortage of blood for those in need. If you can donate, please do so. I understand that sometimes we cannot donate blood but we all know people who can donate, so please encourage them to do so. Post 20 has a blood drive scheduled for March 11th at the Porterville Memorial Building from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Post 18 is in the process of scheduling a blood drive at the Visalia Veterans Memorial Building in March. The date and time of the blood drive will be announced.

Food Drives, Visalia Post 18 and Bakersfield Post 26 both have worked to help those in need. Please keep up this effort. There are veterans and members of our community impacted by inflation that has made it more difficult and challenging to feed their families.

Honor Flight, such a great endeavor, raising funds for our fellow veterans to travels to visit the various memorials. Those that escort and provide care donate their time and money to make these trips. I see heroes in all of you. Each month on the last Saturday, Post 221 in Tehachapi supports this cause with a breakfast. Post 18 will be hosting a benefit dinner on March 28th at the Visalia Veterans Memorial Building. We need your help by attending these events, spending a little money, or spreading the message about these events.

There are many Posts within District 15 that support their community by sponsoring parades, pageants, scholarships, youth sports, scouting and taking the time to visit or check on our older veteran comrades. I am proud of each one of the comrades in these Posts. Together we can do anything.

Recently I saw the **American Legion Riders** in action. First, they are a rolling advertisement and recruiting tool for The American Legion. They escort those entering military service to our great nation. They escort dignitaries making visits. They raise money for various causes. However, I think the greatest thing that the “Riders” do is provide an honorable escort and tribute to fallen veterans and active duty service members. The line of bikes on the road and then the line of Flags proudly held at the cemetery is truly a sight to see. I know the families and friends of the fallen greatly appreciate this action of respect and honor.

Again, I want to say thank you. I am proud and grateful for what you all do.

For God and Country
Chris Wenzinger
Commander, District 15, Department of California of the American Legion



On the far left, Commander Chris Wenzinger, with District 15 2nd Vice Commander Bob Atchley and District 15 Chaplain Robert Lassotovitch. Taken at the Department of California Four Chaplains Day held in Sanger, February 3, 2024. An outstanding program.

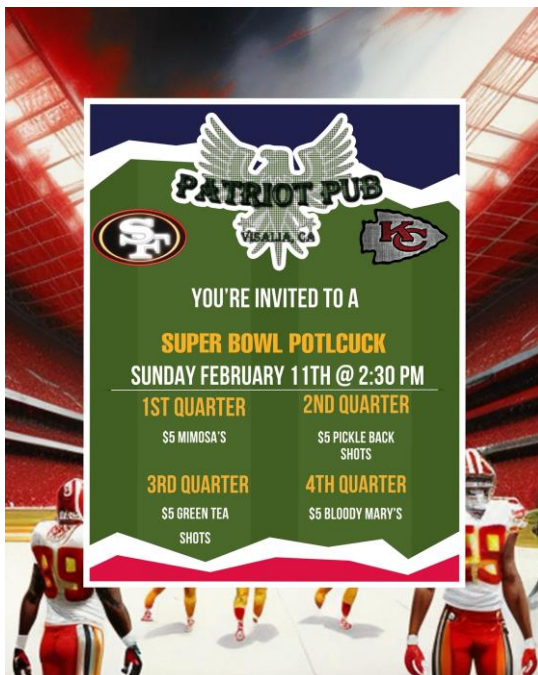
Coffee and Donuts in the Veterans Memorial Building –

Every Wednesday at the Visalia Veterans Memorial Building, in the main dining room downstairs, starting at 6:30AM. The Memorial Building Board of Directors with American Legion Sierra Post 785 host an ‘all veterans get together’ until about 8:00AM. A large gathering of many vets from all the local veterans’ organizations. Modest donation for the coffee and donuts. Often, guests speak and provide info on issues pertinent to veterans.



Support and enjoy your Members Only Patriot Pub –

Exclusively for veterans, military, first responders and their guests. The Pub is inside the Memorial Bldg. **Now open Sunday!** Hours are 4:00PM to 10:00PM every day. Full bar, modest prices, excellent mixologists, pool table, large screen TV and great company. Here are two February events at the Patriots Pub.



Our American Legion Riders Chapter 18

Join the Riders. Check them out this Thursday, February 8, 6PM, Vets Memorial Bldg. You will not be disappointed.

We are on for our Monthly Ride..... Please come out and join us!!!



★ ★ ★

ALR Ch 18 Monthly Ride

.....

Sat., Jan. 20th
We Invite All Riders To Join Us
On A Ride To Clovis Memorial District

.....

Meet AMPM on Plaza Drive
At 9 AM
KSU At 9:30 AM

We will have lunch at Yosemite Cafe



join the group.

Veterans 'At Ease' monthly gathering at Marie Calendars

Every first Wednesday of the month at 10:30AM, veterans, family and friends get together at Visalia's Marie Calendars for a meal and good company. No reports or other 'business.' It is a diverse group of people from different branches of service and different periods of service. Next gathering is Wednesday, February 7, 2024. Contact Navy vet Art Vallejo at 559-972-0642 if you wish to

Happy Trails, Veterans Open House. Check it out.

Many people praise the benefits of therapeutic horse riding provided at Happy Trails.

‘Equine Services.’ Veterans and their families are invited to Happy Trails on a special Open House, Saturday, February 10, 10AM to Noon. A tour with a lunch provided.

Contact 559-688-8685 for more info.



Is Hosting A

VETERANS OPEN HOUSE


Saturday, February 10, 2024
10:00am - Noon
2773 E Oakdale (Ave 256), Tulare

All Military Veterans and Their Families
Are Invited To
Join Us for an Introduction to
Equine Services for Heroes

This will include
Facility Tour
•
Lunch
•
Activities for Children

Therapeutic horsemanship has been proven to help warriors strengthen physically, mentally, and emotionally in a positive and welcoming environment.
For more information or to RSVP please contact us at 559-688-8685 or info@wearehappytrails.com

*Please note that horseback riding will NOT be available during the open house.


CENTRAL VALLEY HONOR FLIGHT
Fundraiser Dinner

609 W Center Ave • Visalia, CA 93279
March 28, 2024 • 05:30 PM

Join the community in fundraising for Central Valley Honor Flight so that they may continue Honor Flights for future Veterans.

\$20 per person
Includes dinner & non-alcoholic drink
Hosted by American Legion Post 18

Our Post 18 Community Diner to benefit Central Valley Honor Flight –

We are honored to host this event at our Visalia Veterans Memorial Bldg. March 28, 5:30PM. Complete menu and details provided in our March Post Newsletter.

Adjutant's Corner: Membership

WE DID IT! We beat our 2024 Membership Goal! As of the 26 January Weekly Report, we had 130 members paid for 2024. We still have 9 Annual members not renewed for 2024, **Please Renew NOW**. If you are having financial difficulties, let me know, we can do installments, or in extreme circumstances, the Post may pay your National and Department dues.

8 Annual members renewed in January, 3 of them online. 3 New members joined the Post, and 1 member Transferred In from CA Post 1000. No Members Transferred Out or to Post Everlasting.

Dues Increase: Current Post 18 Annual Dues are \$40. Of that, \$18.50 goes to National and \$15 goes to the Department of California (\$33.50), leaving the Post with \$6.50. At this year's National Convention, the National component of our dues was raised by \$5 to \$23.50, effective 1 July 2024 (Membership Year 2025). Rumor has it that at the March meeting, the Department Executive Committee will vote to RAISE Department Dues by either \$2.50 or \$5.00. If any dues increase passes, the Post will also have to raise dues for 2025, probably to \$45 or \$50 per year, as our Bylaws require Post dues cannot be less than the sum of National and Department dues. **Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL)** members, and those who upgrade to PUFL status before 1 July 2024, will not be affected by these increases. **Multi-year renewals are now available:** If you renew **online at legion.org** you may renew for up to 3 years at the **current** rate.

2024 Membership Goal -	127
As of 31 January 2024:	
Paid-Up For Life Members -	24
Transfers from At-Large Posts 1000 and 1601 -	01
Transfers from other Posts	Paid 2024 - 06
Transferred Out -	-01
New Members -	05
Reinstated -	05
Annual Members Paid for 2024 -	<u>91</u>
Members in Good Standing -	132
2023 Members Not Renewed for 2024 -	09
2023 Post Everlasting -	07
Members on the Roster -	148
Percent of 2024 Membership Goal (132/127) -	103.93%
Percent of 2024 Retention Goal (120/127) -	94.49%

Welcome Aboard - New Members:

Nicole Graham, USN, Global War on Terrorism, of Visalia.

Carleen Hammer, USN, Persian Gulf War, of Visalia

Lessa Rojas, USCG, Global War on Terrorism, of Exeter.

Transfer In: Edward Rojas, USA, Global War on Terrorism, of Exeter.

Adjutant's Corner, continued:

February Birthdays:

Robert Mattison	3 rd	Matthew Rossignol	9 th	Mark Westbrook	11 th
Irvin Watts Jr	15 th	Ronald Douglass	17 th	Henry Mitchell	19 th
Rick Dorr	23 rd				

Is your birthday this month but not listed? It might not be in our records. Send me the date, and I'll add you to the list for next year (and wish you a belated Happy Birthday next month).

Continuous Membership – 10 Years or more - None

Please remember to keep your contact information up to date. If you post a change to myLegion.org please send me an email note. Also, please make sure your family knows to tell us if you become seriously ill or transfer to Post Everlasting. In addition to Prayers and/or Condolences, the Post Chaplain and Service Officer can assist with VA benefits and funeral arrangements. We are here to help.

Donald Johnson, Adjutant / Chaplain
(C) (559) 737-8009 / (L) (559) 732-4440 (24/7 voicemail)
Email 70524.1023@Compuserve.com

Contact Information for this Newsletter:

Bill Morland, Editor, 559-300-2306, b237eashland@yahoo.com.
Send any change of address and phone number to our Post Adjutant, Donald Johnson.
Post Mailing Address: Post Office Box 1947, Visalia, CA 93279-1947



Visalia Amvets Post 22, Bingo at the Memorial Bldg. Thursday, February 15, 6PM. Very good prizes. Modest price of \$10 for 10 bingo cards.