



# THE MESSENGER

*Newsletter of The American Legion Post 318 and  
The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 318  
Volume CXXXIII, Issue 1, January-February 2014  
1504 Minnesota Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125-4445  
(408) 926-9946 / [www.alcsapost318](http://www.alcsapost318)*

## **From the Commander:**

By: William Staehle

Another year has passed by and there were quite a few activities and accomplishments in 2013. We have made a number of improvements to the facilities and more are on the way. Our summer BBQ series was a popular event and everyone had a great time. For 2014, we are hosting a "Game Night" every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month at the Post and everyone is welcome to come and enjoy an evening of socializing and friendly games. Snacks are provided and the fun starts at 5:00 PM. Please try to join us and bring your friends and family along. We are also hoping to hold a number of "movie nights" so please visit our web site calendar for information about these and other upcoming events. For those of you who may be interested in Amateur Radio we are in the process of establishing a club station at the Post. This should be in operation sometime in the first half of 2014. We will be happy to help anyone who is interested in getting a license and participating in Ham Radio for both recreational and emergency communications purposes.

In an effort to better communicate with our members we have established an email distribution list to send out information about new events and informational messages. We have only about a third of our member's addresses so, if you wish to participate and are not getting any messages from us, you can join the list by visiting our web site, [alcapost318.org](http://alcapost318.org), and clicking on the "Email List Options" page. Rest assured that we will not share your email address with anyone outside of the Post. As we move farther into the new year we are planning more fun things for our members and guests. Please be sure to check the website often for upcoming events and activities. Also, please plan to attend our regular meetings every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of

the month except June and December. Dinner is at 6:00 PM and the meeting starts at 7:00 PM.

## **From the 1st Vice Commander:**

By: Peter LaFond

No report submitted

## **From the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander:**

By: John Parks

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year.

## **From the Adjutant:**

By: Gene Fanucchi

Welcome to 2014, and best wishes from the officers of Willow Glen Post 318. As we move forward in 2014 we are entering the start of a new membership year. Most of you are aware that dues renewal notices have been sent out for several months. The majority of you have sent in your dues, for which all levels of the American Legion are pleased. Of the thirty dollars you send to Willow Glen, six dollars and fifty cents is kept by the Post, while the remainder is sent off to our Department (State) and National Headquarters. Remember you can keep up with Post activities and events on our Post web site, [www.AlcaPost318.org](http://www.AlcaPost318.org). We encourage those of you who have access to an internet system to send your address to our web master at that address so that we can communicate with you more readily, and give you an opportunity to join together with fellow members to socialize and/or participate in our community programs as we serve our veterans and youth in accord with our Preamble. Also information and questions can be more readily responded to for you. We hope each of you will have an opportunity to be with us more often. Best wishes for the new year.

## **From the Finance Officer:**

By: Jim McMann

Due to some renters canceling their leases, the Finance Committee and Executive Board reviewed and made some changes to our budget that was then

approved by the general membership in October. As a member of the post you are welcome to review this budget any time. Just request a copy and one will be provided. We also took the opportunity to establish two savings accounts. First is an "Emergency Fund" to provide for any unexpected expenses. Second, is the "Long-Term Building Fund" which is to be used for major projects not normally budgeted for like a new roof or painting. We've allocated the existing Chase Certificates of Deposits to provide each of these accounts a good beginning balance. Both accounts will now be credited an amount each month as part of our new savings plan. Our ultimate goal is to have one full year of income in each account as a safety net to financial problems. We have also completed our conversion to QuickBooks. The software is up and working well and all the financial data is accessible online. I will continue to try to standardize and document our financial processes to make it easier for the next guy to take over. Financially, we are doing well and seem to be in good shape for the coming year. If you have any questions as to the financial affairs of the post please feel free to contact me. Happy Holidays.

#### **From the Chaplain:**

By: Norman Tevis

Received word that Walter O'Neal may not be doing so well. Let's keep him in our prayers. Should you hear of one of our brothers or sisters sick, injured, or worse, please contact me at (408) 266-5080.

#### **From the Service Officer:**

By: Jim McMann

Did you know that even though you have no service connected disability, your wartime service may make you eligible for a VA Pension? The following is taken from the VA website. "Low-income wartime Veterans may qualify for pension if they meet certain service, income and net worth limits set by law; are age 65 or older, permanently and totally disabled, a patient in a nursing home receiving skilled nursing care, receiving Social Security Disability Insurance, or receiving Supplemental Security Income. Generally, a Veteran must have at least 90 days of active duty service, with at least one day during a VA recognized wartime period. The 90-day active service requirement does not apply to Veterans discharged from the military due to a service-connected disability. (Veterans may have to meet longer minimum periods of active duty if they entered active duty on or after Sept. 8, 1980, or, if

they were officers who entered active duty on or after Oct. 16, 1981.) The Veteran's discharge must have been under conditions other than dishonorable and the disability must be for reasons other than the Veteran's own willful misconduct. Payments are made to bring the Veteran's total income, including other retirement or Social Security income, to a level set by Congress. Unreimbursed medical expenses may reduce countable income for VA purposes. Protected Pension: Pension beneficiaries, who were receiving a VA pension on December 31, 1978, and do not wish to elect the Improved Pension, will continue to receive the pension rate received on that date. This rate generally continues as long as the beneficiary's income remains within established limits, or net worth does not bar payment, and the beneficiary does not lose any dependents. Beneficiaries must continue to meet basic eligibility factors, such as permanent and total disability for Veterans. VA must adjust rates for other reasons, such as a Veteran's hospitalization in a VA facility. Medal of Honor Pension: VA administers a pension benefit to recipients of the Medal of Honor. This entitlement is not based on income level or need. Congress set the monthly pension at \$1,259 for 2013. Veterans Pension: Congress establishes the maximum annual Veterans Pension rates. Payments are reduced by the amount of countable income of the Veteran, spouse, and dependent children. When a Veteran without a spouse or a child is furnished nursing home or domiciliary care by VA, the pension is reduced to an amount not to exceed \$90 per month after three calendar months of care. The reduction may be delayed if nursing-home care is being continued to provide the Veteran with rehabilitation services. Aid and Attendance and Housebound Benefits (Special Monthly Pension): Veterans and surviving spouses who are eligible for VA pensions are eligible for higher maximum pension rates if they qualify for aid and attendance or housebound benefits. An eligible individual may qualify if he or she requires the regular aid of another person in order to perform personal functions required in everyday living, or is bedridden, a patient in a nursing home due to mental or physical incapacity, blind, or permanently and substantially confined to his/her immediate premises because of a disability. *Veterans and surviving spouses* who are ineligible for basic pension based on annual income may still be eligible for VA Pension if they are eligible for aid and attendance or housebound benefits because

a higher income limit applies. In addition, unreimbursed medical expenses for nursing home or home-health care may be used to reduce countable annual income, which may result in a higher pension benefit. Claimants may apply for aid and attendance or housebound benefits by completing VA Form 21-2680 (available through [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)). Claimants may also write to the nearest VA regional office and include copies of any evidence, preferably a report from an attending physician or a nursing home, validating the need for aid and attendance or housebound care. The report should be in sufficient detail to determine whether there is disease or injury producing physical or mental impairment, loss of coordination, or conditions affecting the ability to dress and undress, to feed oneself, to attend to sanitary needs, and to keep oneself ordinarily clean and presentable. In addition, VA may need to determine whether the claimant is confined to the home or immediate premises. VA also pays a special \$90 monthly rate to pension-eligible Veterans or surviving spouses with no dependents who receive Medicaid-covered nursing home care. These funds are available for the beneficiary's personal use and may not be used to offset the cost of his or her care." You can find out more about all the programs VA has to offer by going to

[http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits\\_book.asp](http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp).

I got my free Flu Shot this year at the VA Clinic. If you are registered in the VA Healthcare system, and you should be even if you have private insurance, you can get yours free at their walk-in Flu Shot area. Quick easy and you'll stay healthy this flu season. I hope this holiday season finds all of you in good health and high spirits! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

#### **From the House Committee:**

By: William Staehle

No Report Submitted

#### **From the Editor:**

Communication is important to all of us and with that we are always looking for articles related to Veteran issues for our newsletter. If you're a budding Journalist or a seasoned Pro please submit your article in "Word" format. to be published in the Messenger. Next deadline February 15, 2014 If you wish to receive the "Messenger" by mail, please telephone the post at (408) 926-9946.

#### **From the Webmaster:**

By: William Staehle

If you haven't been on our [www.alcapost318.org](http://www.alcapost318.org) web site recently you may not have noticed its new, more modern appearance. In addition, some of the functions, such as the "Photo Gallery" and "Events Calendar" have been improved. I am striving to keep the site up to date with events and current information. If you find any errors, have updated information, or want something posted to the site please email that information to me at [webmaster@alcapost318.org](mailto:webmaster@alcapost318.org). Also, be sure to use the site "Forms" page to submit your Americanism Committee Report activity on a regular basis.

#### **Unit 318 Looking Ahead, Moving Forward:**

By: Patricia McLeod

Sisters: I would like to thank all of those responsible for the resounding success of our Veterans Day Parade program. The Auxiliary performed an outstanding service for our veterans and our community. It's been a long while since Unit 318's colors were flying in the parade. Kudos to sisters, Malyne and Alyne Hazard, who carried our flags for the entire parade. A very Special Thank You goes to Malyne Hazard, who made numerous calls until she found vehicles and drivers so our disabled members could also participate. This year's parade had the largest number of people in attendance. This year the Post and Unit 318 are sponsoring the Marine Corps "Toys for Tots" campaign, and toy collection boxes have been placed inside and outside the hall. American Legion Family members are encouraged to donate new, unwrapped gifts for children in need. We continue to collect throughout the Holiday Season. Collection Boxes are available every day for your convenience and participation. All donated toys will be distributed to needy children in Santa Clara County. Our Auxiliary members took all the ingredients necessary to the VA Hospital for the patients to create holiday ornaments and gifts. They did a fantastic job of providing entire kits of craft items, the knowhow and encouragement necessary to make several different projects. It was a very rewarding experience for all. Everybody had a wonderful time at this fun filled evening. I just love being around these wonderful people; our heroes. Christmas in the Park- Tree decorating was fun and weather helped so much. Be sure to visit the Park and see our Tree at the entrance directly across the street from the Tech Museum. It's the Red, White and Blue on the right! Blanket Drive – we collected new blankets for low income and homeless veterans. This is an ongoing project for us during

these cold winter months. The Holiday Season is upon us. While it is a time of joy and celebration, for many in our ranks it can also be a sad time too. It is more important than ever that we all take the time to reach out to those who need our care and let them know they are not alone. Holiday Pot Luck Social, Good Food, Good Company, all by candle light and a nice warm fire in the fireplace. We had some new and some old traditions. But first, A Great Big Thank You to Malyne Hazard for providing her fireplace and mantel for the event. She has promised to bring it again to the Super Bowl Party in February. Wonderful evening for traditions, like the toasted marshmallows, toasted over the candles at the table. The new, new faces; several members from Moffett Field Post 881 attended. DUES are DUE by December 31, 2013; your \$20.00 check can be mailed to PO BOX 5205, San Jose CA 95150-5205. Remember, anyone can give the gift of membership. January It was decided at a recent meeting; Members with Paid 2014 Membership Dues will received a FREE Breakfast at our Sunday Breakfast on January 05, 2014. Choice of Pancakes or Waffles, with a gluten free option available. Nice way to start the New Year and a little thank you for your support as we continue to provide for our troops, veterans, and their families. Warm Coat Drive – January is our month to collect new and gently used coats for low income and homeless veterans and their families. Jan. 10-12, 2014 Auxiliary Mid-Year Conference, Long Beach, CA. February The Four Chaplains Interfaith Memorial Service, "That others might live, Saturday, February 1, 2014. Oratorical contest 2014 both female and male students are eligible to participate. Also, we must have (6) six of the programs working full force within our unit. I personally challenge each member to become a committee chairman. If you would like to learn more about these opportunities to be of service by attending our monthly meetings. Bring a friend along with new ideas, and a spirit of cooperation to join us. As your Leader and Leadership Chairman our goal is to foster an atmosphere of team-work which means that coming together is a beginning; keeping together is a progress; and working together is success! Therefore, we must remember that we are all volunteers' in a business of empowering women. We must look and act as members of the American Legion Auxiliary which as a community has embraced the core values of integrity, honesty, fairness, openness, responsibility

and respect. If you have any concerns, please feel free to contact me by e-mail, write a letter, or make a phone call, the door is always open! I truly appreciate all your support. God bless you and God bless America. Monthly meetings are on the First Sunday of the Month, @ 1pm.

### **Four Chaplains Inter-faith Memorial Service:**

By: Gene Fanucchi

On Saturday, February 1, 2014, all veterans, family members, and patriotic individuals are invited to attend a 34th annual Four Chaplains Inter-faith Memorial Service in tribute to four chaplains of World War Two who made the ultimate sacrifice for their God and fellow man. This year the service will be at St. Frances Cabrini Church, 15333 Woodard Road, San Jose starting at 10:00 AM. Along with Post 318, other veterans organizations, scouting, and other patriotic organizations and individuals will be participating and will be encouraged to bring their National Colors and organization flags for an entry procession and posting during the ceremony. The service will last approximately an hour. Not much to sacrifice from one's life, considering these four men made a sacrifice to eternity. As we contemplate why we would give of our time for this program, let us ponder why the sacrifice of these four men became a national symbol of selfless service and unity; why are there three crosses and a Star of David at Arlington National Cemetery, a Special Medal for Heroism, and a Congressional medal struck in their name; what distinguishes these four from the hundreds of thousands of other young men who also made the ultimate sacrifice for their fellow man on the battlefield, high seas, and in the air? These four men of differing faiths, George L. Fox, Methodist, Alexander Goode, Jewish, Clark Poling, Reformed Church of America, and John P. Washington, Catholic, were all Army Chaplains assigned to sail aboard the USTS Dorchester, a 5,649 ton former luxury liner, from New York to Greenland. They were amongst over 900 troops, merchant seamen, and civilian workers, sailing in a convoy of three ships and three Coast Guard cutters. The convoy was in the ice cold North Atlantic, a known submarine "wolf pack" patrol area, and only 150 miles from its destination, when, at 12:55 AM, on February 3, 1943, the German submarine U-223 fired three torpedoes toward the Dorchester, one striking a deadly blow on the starboard side amid ship, deep below the water line. Imagine the chaos of the hundreds of mostly teenage and barely

twenty aged men in their bunks deep in the ship, many sleeping, when their world explodes, the lights go out, and there is fire, smoke, and oil impeding their escape; death occurring everywhere. Many of the survivors, only 230 of the 902 aboard, attribute their survival directly to the four chaplains, who provided prayers for the dying, and encouragement and hope to those "lost" in the dark, running about in a daze, panicked, and many without a life preserver. Finally, as the ship continued its quick, less than thirty minute death dive, the chaplains were seen to be giving their life preservers to four young men, then gathering with hands clasped, in unison, reciting the Lord's Prayer as water began to lap at their feet. The altruistic actions of the four chaplains constitute one of the purest spiritual and ethical acts a person can make. When giving their life preservers they did not ask of what faith the recipient practiced. They simply gave their life preservers to the next young man in line. These men lived and died on faith, hope, and love of their God and fellow man. As we give remembrance and tribute to the act of these four, we also must take time to acknowledge the sacrifices and dedication of chaplains today, as they administer to those on the battle lines and in hospitals, and to the families of those on active duty or those suffering in hospitals from combat. Heroes do not exist only in the past; they are amongst our fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters serving our country today. Join with us on February 1, 2014 to give tribute to our chaplains of the past and today

#### **Membership Eligibility and the IRS:**

The American Legion has been working with the IRS regarding Verification of Statutory Membership Requirements of Veterans Organizations and a new memorandum revising guidelines for tax-exempt veteran's (501-C-19) organizations. Compliance with the requirements is mandatory to remain qualified as a IRS 501-C-19 organization. The change being enacted allows for the following documents to be produced by potential members as proof of qualification: *DD Form 214, Certificate of Release, or Discharge from Active Duty*. Post recruiters must ensure that a copy of one of these documents is made available by the potential new or transferring candidates. The IRS wants to see documentation of service dates.

#### **Game Night at the Post:**

Both the Post and Unit 318 have been hosting a "Game Night" on the second Friday of the Month. Doors open at 5:00 pm and runs till 9:00 pm. Come

join us and relax, enjoy the company of your comrades. If you desire you can play cards, board games or any game you may want to bring. Reminder if you want to bring a guest be sure to sign them in so we comply with Federal law.

#### **Super Bowl XLV Post Party:**

We will be hosting a Super Bowl Party at the our Post on Sunday February 2, 2014. Doors will open at 4:00 pm and the game is scheduled to start at 6:00 pm. We will be streaming the game from the internet on to our new big screen. No Super Bowl party is complete without a Pot luck, so bring your favorite game munchies to share. Free to all Legion Family members (Legion, Auxiliary, etc.).

Reminder if you bring a guest be sure to sign them in so we comply with Federal law. Come early to get a comfortable seat.

#### **Volunteers Needed:**

On Monday, February 17, 2014, The American Legion will stage its annual *Presidents Day Games* event at the Menlo Park VA Hospital located at 795 West Willow Road, Menlo Park. Volunteers are needed to assist at the gaming stations set up for the hospital "clients", which range from wheel chaired and impaired vision individuals to folks that seek counseling and physical therapy support. It is a fun day that has the full cooperation of the VA hospital

### **Calendar of Events**

#### **January 2014:**

Jan. 5th, Unit 318 Pancake Breakfast and Coat Drive, 8:30 am - 11:30 am, @ the Post.

Jan. 5th, Aux. Unit 318 General Meeting, 1:00 pm 3:00 pm, @ the Post.

Jan. 10th, Game Night. 5:00 pm -9:00 pm, @ the Post

Jan. 12th, Operation Care and Comfort Packaging, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm, @ the Post.

Jan 17th, House meeting, 6pm, Executive meeting, 7pm @ the Post.

Jan.. 22nd, Dinner at 6p, Post 318 General Meeting 7:00 pm @ the Post.

#### **February 2014:**

Feb. 1st, Four Chaplains Day Inter-Faith Service, 10 am @ St Francis Cabrini Church in San Jose.

Feb. 2nd, Unit 318 Pancake Breakfast, 8:30 am - 11:30 am, @ the Post.

Feb. 2nd, Aux. Unit 318 General Meeting, 1:00 pm 3:00 pm, @ the Post.

Feb. 2nd, Super Bowl Party, Doors open at 4:00 pm, Game starts at 6:00 pm, @ the Post.

Feb. 9th, Operation Care and Comfort Packaging, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm, @ the Post.

Feb. 14th, Game Night. 5:00 pm -9:00 pm, @ the Post.

Feb. 17th, Annual Presidents Day Games event, 9:00 am-2:00 pm @ Menlo Park VA Hospital located

Feb. 21st, House meeting, 6pm, Executive meeting, 7pm @ the Post.

Feb. 26th, Dinner at 6p, Post 318 General Meeting 7:00 pm @ the Post.

**March 2014:**

Mar. 2nd, Unit 318 Pancake Breakfast, 8:30 am - 11:30 am, @ the Post.

Mar. 2nd, Aux. Unit 318 General Meeting, 1:00 pm 3:00 pm, @ the Post.

Mar. 9th, Operation Care and Comfort Packaging, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm, @ the Post.

Mar. 14th, Game Night. 5:00 pm -9:00 pm, @ the Post.

Mar. 21st, House meeting, 6pm, Executive meeting, 7pm @ the Post.

Mar. 26th, Dinner at 6p, Post 318 General Meeting 7:00 pm @ the Post.

Newsletter Editor: Garry D. McLeod  
Always open to contributions  
email: Post318@aol.com

American Legion Post 318  
1504 Minnesota Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95125-4445

2013/2014 Staff

**Post 0318**

**Commander:**

William (Bill) Staehle (408) 997-6924

**1st Vice Commander:**

Peter LaFond (408) 858-8072

**2nd Vice Commander:**

John Parks (408) 309-8709

**Sgt at Arms:**

Tom Ruffo (408) 268-5312

**Adjutant:**

Gene Fanucchi (408) 506-9643

**Chaplain:**

Norman Tevis (408) 266-5080

**Treasure:**

Jim McMann (408) 221-8844

**Webmaster:**

William Staehle (408) 997-6924

staehle@sbcglobal.net

**Auxiliary Unit 318**

**President:**

Patricia McLeod (408) 926-9946

**Vice President:**

Annetta Robertson

**Secretary:**

Malyne Hazard (408) 722-2361

**Treasure:**

Alyne Hazard