



THE MESSENGER

*Newsletter of The American Legion Post 318 and
The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 318
Volume CXXXII, Issue 1, September-October 2013
1504 Minnesota Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125-4445
(408) 926-9946 / www.alcapost318*

From the Commander:

By: William Staehle

As most of you know, July marked a new fiscal year for your Post and we have an almost completely new slate of officers. We are striving to sign up new members with an emphasis on getting more Gulf War and later veterans to participate in our activities and events. To this end we are going to work hard to make our meetings more enjoyable and events more attractive and fun not only for the members, but for their families. Among other items in the planning stages, we have added four events as the '2013 Summer BBQ Series' and these are open to all members, prospective members, and their families. This should be great food and fun for all. Please see our web site www.alcapost318.org or call 1st Vice Commander Pete LaFond at 408.858.8072 for complete details and to RSVP. If you are an Amateur Radio Operator or think you might be interested in becoming one please feel free to give us a call and we'll be happy to help you out with information about licensing and our ongoing plans. If you haven't been to a meeting or event recently please consider coming in and joining in the activities. We are open to new ideas about how to better serve our community and especially our veterans. We'd love to see you.

From the 1st Vice Commander:

By: Peter LaFond

This year is what I call the 'Year of Renewal'. With a new slate of officers, Post 318 is planning ahead for what the organization will look like years from now. As First Vice Commander, securing the strength of our membership is my number-one mission. A New Generation of Vets The American Legion couldn't be more relevant for recent veterans. However, less than 8% of our post's membership is from the most-recent war era. Why is this? Recent Veterans, like myself, are bombarded with information from a plethora of

organizations claiming they help vets. Unfortunately, many of these veteran organizations are frustrating to deal with or don't provide the real help we need. How does a vet apply for a free business license? Who do I talk to about an issue with my disability rating? Very few vets know where to go to get quick answers. In direct contrast to other organizations, the American Legion can get answers in a zip. Vets need to be aware of this! Helping our fellow veterans is our post's elucidation for long-term membership vitality. I recently inquired with a dozen War on Terror-era veterans on how they perceive the American Legion. The vets I spoke with fell into two camps. They either hold a misconception of what we're about or have no idea of our role. The first group of recent vets I inquired with thinks of the Legion as 'musty old bars and bingo halls for retirees.' This impression, obviously, doesn't hold true for our post. This stereotype needs to be dispelled. The second group of recent vets has no clue what we're about. Some told me they only know about us because they drove by our post hall. Others earnestly asked how we're related to the French Foreign Legion. When U.S. Veterans are unaware of the American Legion, how can we expect them to want to join our organization? If this isn't a call to get our word out, I'd be hard-pressed to know what would be. Nurture Engagement, Affinity and Kinship Although membership is the responsibility of the 1st Vice Commander, building a strong organization requires a concerted effort from all members. One person cannot do it alone. I cannot do it alone. The vitality of our membership can only be successful if we work on it together, as a team. I call on each one of us to engage prospective and non-active members. The record speaks for itself... If we wait for veterans to come to us, it just won't happen. Our mission: to foster an amiable environment for veterans and spread the word about the Legion as a bonafide resource. I have good news. Plans are already in motion to re-engage idle members

and attract new ones. We saw success with our family BBQs this summer, and we're looking forward to our next one (September 14th). Additionally, we're in discussions for hosting other member events during the Fall and Winter months; hot cocoa movie nights and a Super Bowl party. However, these events do have challenges. The biggest hurdle we face with these great ideas is man-power. Everyone has limited time to organize and execute these events. Without more member participation, the number of events we can host is limited. Therefore, I call on you to help the Post. I'm looking for men and women to help engage our inactive members and help organize an event. If you have the time and interest in making the American Legion blossom, please contact me. Even pledging a mere two hours of your time can determine whether an event gets approved or not. Don't wait! Call me today and let me know that you're interested. My number is (408)858-8072.

From the 2nd Vice Commander:

By: John Parks

No report submitted

From the Adjutant:

By: Gene Fanucchi

No Submit ion

From the Finance Officer:

By: Jim McMann

The computerized accounting system is up and running. We have had some delays because of the problems we faced installing Internet at the post. Now that we've done everything we need to do, hopefully the Internet installation will be done soon and we can put the finishing touches on a few of the last to do items. I've never felt comfortable working on financial data at a place like McDonalds or Starbucks with their free Wi-Fi.

One of the first things that I did after I assumed office was to create an Expense Reimbursement Form for our use. If you have any expenses that you will seek reimbursement for, please download a form from our website, in the Forms section, fill it out and submit it with your receipt.

We've completed most of the expensive post upgrades like the projector & screen, printer, electronic door lock, additional insurance and Wi-Fi. We also restocked the post store so members can purchase caps, ties, patches and pins. Hopefully since that is over, the cash outlays will slow down. I'll continue to monitor the actual expenses and compare it to the budget so we can better learn to forecast and budget for our needs. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at finance@alcapost318.org.

From the Chaplain:

By: Norman Tevis

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

If you are currently receiving benefits from the VA, you should take a look at the enhanced VA benefits portal at www.ebenefits.va.gov. After registering, you can download VA letters, transfer post-9/11 education benefits, update your direct deposit or contact information and print a VA home loan certificate of eligibility. You can also apply for benefits or check on the status of your appeals. The VA has committed to enhancing the portal and making it easier to access and maintain your information while simplifying your interaction with the VA. Let's hope they do a great job.

In June, I attended the Palo Alto VA Hospitals Veterans Administration Volunteer Services (VAVS) awards luncheon held at a hotel in Palo Alto. At the event, volunteers, some of which had accrued thousands of hours of service, were awarded for those long hours of service to veterans and the VA system itself. I was proud to note that several of those honored were American Legion or Legion Auxiliary members. I was surprised to learn that two thirds of the staff at the VA Hospital in Palo Alto, is made up of volunteers. I can't imagine what kind of services would have to be cut if the number of volunteers at the VA Hospital were to decline. If you have some free time, you may want to consider volunteering. You don't have to drive all the way to Palo Alto, there are positions open at the VA clinic in San Jose.

As the Willow Glen Post 318 Service Officer, if there is anything I can do for you please don't hesitate to contact me. My phone number is 408-266-8601 and my e-mail addresses is serviceofficer@alcapost318.org

From the House Committee:

By: William Staehle

Over the past year we have been working on improving the Post Home. We have added air conditioning, better outdoor lighting, a new screen and projector and have had the parking lot re-surfaced and striped. In addition we have many more improvements in the planning stages including on site Internet access, storage and kitchen upgrades, and Amateur Radio (Ham) capabilities for both pleasure and emergency communications.

Election Results - 2013/14 Department

Department Commander

Joseph A. Garcia (262-25)

Department Vice Commander (area 2)

Marilyn E. Rideaux (161-9)

Department Sgt-at arms

William J Reed (790-18)

Election Results - 2013/14 District 13:

District 13 Commander

Larry Doutherd Sr (380)

District 13 1st Vice Commander

Don Newton (419)

District 13 2nd Vice Commander

Jim McMann (318)

District 13 3rd Vice Commander

Warren Petree (

District 13 Sgt-at-arms

Walter Waite III (

Election Results - 2013/14 Willow Glen Post 318:

Post 318 Commander

William Staehle

Post 318 1st Vice Commander

Peter LaFond

Post 318 2nd Vice Commander

John Parks

Post 318 Sgt-at-arms

Tom Ruffo

From the Editor:

If you wish to receive the "Dispatch" by mail, please telephone the post at (408) 926-9946.

From the Webmaster

By: William Staehle

No report submitted

Unit 318 Looking Ahead, Moving Forward

By: Patricia McLeod

Dear Sisters, Thank you with gratitude to the membership that has re-elected me as your Auxiliary Unit 318 President for the 2013/2014 year. The Joint Post and Unit *installation of officers* in July went well. It was a wonderful evening of members, family and friends. Please take a moment to thank the members who stepped up to take the officer positions: Malyne Hazard Secretary, Alyne Hazard Treasurer/Finance and Annetta Robertson 1st Vice. There are several committee chairman positions still open and officers positions Historian, Chaplain, Parliamentarian and Sgt. of Arms. Every member is eligible to hold an office. Remember, each of us was once "The New Girl."

I look forward to working with you in the coming year. There are some great opportunities to be a team player, to help move forward, and accomplish

new goals this coming year. In the planning stages are: the Annual Coat and Blanket Drive, a Wine Tasting, a Chocolate Tasting (these last two items may yet be combined), possibly an Art Show, a Mother's Day Tea, a Craft Fair and the newest event in our line up-the really popular Car Show.

On July 4th, Unit and Post members participated in the annual *Carnival* at Menlo Park VA Hospital. I would like to thank everyone who came out and helped make the day a success. The hospitalized veterans enjoyed a day out and appreciated our attention to them. Members attended the *Spirit of '45*, a celebration of the end of WWII and a remembrance of its Veterans. Our favors this year were lovely, fresh gardenias together with black bobby pins donated by Malyne Hazard. They were such a big hit! Thank you to Annetta Robertson for meeting and greeting so many people. The *Inaugural Car Show* was a huge success. Thank you to our volunteers who did an awesome job putting it all together and served breakfast, lunch and root beer floats too! Another big thank you goes out to Cindy Hernandez, the balloting and awards happened because of you. Big, big thank you goes out to our sponsors: *racecarparts.com* and *Operation Care and Comfort*. Please support our sponsors as without their support our Car Show would not have been possible. If you haven't had a chance to come the Post 318's *Bar B Q's* you are missing some good food, great company and a movie all at the best price - FREE for members and their family. Check the calendar for dates and times @ www.alcapost318.org. The *combined Post and Unit Youth Awards Night* is coming up on Saturday, Oct 5, 2013. Doors open at 4pm, dinner at 5. We were able to support 3 schools last year. Come out and meet these outstanding students and hear their stories. I have great confidence that as we support each other at our various events and functions throughout the year, we can accomplish some great things for a successful year. To those of you who can't be with us, you are in our thoughts and prayers. Meeting Date Change Everyone is welcome to *1st Sunday of the Month Pancake Breakfast* \$6.00 serving from 8:30am til 11:00am. Our Regular meeting follows that same afternoon, at its *new date -1st Sunday of the Month @ 1pm*.

Veterans Day Reminder:

Monday, November 11th

7:00 am Oak Hill Flag Raising & Breakfast

11:00 am Veterans Day Parade

Calendar of Events

September 2013:

Sept. 1st, Aux. Unit 318 Pancake Breakfast, 8:30 am - noon, @ the Post.

Sept 1st, Aux. Unit 318 General Meeting, 1:00 pm 3:00 pm, @ the Post.

Sept. 11th, San Jose State University 9/11 Service, 8:00 am to 10:05 am, @ Tower lawn, SJSU.

Sept 11th, Oak Hill Memorial 9/11 Service, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, @ 9/11 Memorial, Oak Hill

Sept. 14th, Post 318 BBQ and a Movie, 4:00 pm -9:00 pm, @ the Post.

Sept 20th, Post 318 , House meeting, 6pm, Executive meeting, 7pm @ the Post.

Sept. 21st, Founders Day Parade, Show up 9:30 am, Downtown Willow Glen

Sept 25th, Dinner at 6p, Post 318 General Meeting 7pm @ the Post.

Sept. 29th, UVC Flag lowering ceremony, Show up 1:00 pm, @ Oak Hill Memorial

October 2013:

Oct 5th, Post 318 Youth Appreciation Dinner, 4:00 pm
Doors open

Oct 6th, Unit 318 Pancake Breakfast, 8:30 am -noon, @ the Post.

Oct 6th, Aux. Unit 318 General Meeting, 1:00 pm 3:00 pm, @ the Post.

Oct 12th, Post 318 BBQ and a Movie, 4:00 pm -9:00 pm, @ the Post.

Oct 13th, Operation Care and Comfort Packaging, 10:00 am -2:00 pm, @ the Post.

Oct 18, House meeting, 6pm, Executive meeting, 7pm @ the Post.

Oct 23rd, Dinner at 6p, Post 318 General Meeting 7pm @ the Post.

November 2013:

Nov. 3rd, Unit 318 Pancake Breakfast, 8:30 am -noon, @ the Post.

Nov. 3rd, Aux. Unit 318 General Meeting, 1:00 pm 3:00 pm, @ the Post.

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

Nov. 11th, Veterans Day Flag Raising, 7:00 am, @ Oak Hill Memorial (Breakfast to follow).

Nov. 11th, Veterans Day Parade, 11:00 am, @ Downtown San Jose.

Nov 15th, House meeting, 6pm, Executive meeting, 7pm @ the Post.

Nov. 27th, Dinner at 6p, Post 318 General Meeting 7pm @ the Post.

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

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Patricia McLeod (408) 926-9946

Vice President:

Annetta Robertson (408) 244-9624

Secretary:

Malyne Hazard

Treasure:

Alyne Hazard

Newsletter Editor: Garry D. McLeod

Always open to contributions

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