



CATHAY DISPATCH

Veterans - Sounding Off Since 1931

Membership - Full Speed Ahead!

By Clara Pon

Important Dates:

- Jan 1—New Year's Day
- Jan 14—Post Monthly Meeting @ 11 am Powell St.
- Jan 16—Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Jan 26-28, District 8 & 26 Membership Revitalization
- Jan 28—Chinese New Year. Year of the Rooster.
- Feb 3—God Bless USA Show



The latest membership report is out and we will meet the 80% goal (72,000) by Thursday, January 19 if everyone reminds their fellow Legionnaires to renew his/her 2017 membership by next week. Every week, the department's main webpage is updated with our latest membership stats along with a weekly report of each post's, district's, and area's membership standings.

As of January 1, if you haven't renewed for 2017, your membership to your post is considered delinquent. If you don't want your privileges suspended, you need to renew before February 1. If you pay your dues by the 1st of February, your membership will be automatically reinstated, so don't wait. Renew today by mailing or dropping off your dues to the post, at your next meeting, or you can even renew it online.

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You served your country.

As a veteran, your life of service has just begun.
Help your community, your country and fellow veterans - all while having a good time making differences with people who get you.
Be part of the legacy. Share the vision.

THE AMERICAN LEGION
www.Legion.org

Membership is not the sole responsibility of the post 1st vice commander or the adjutant. It is everyone's duty to make sure we maintain our large membership numbers. Our large collective veteran voices is what's needed when The American Legion national commander provides his testimony annually to Congress on Capitol Hill in March to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. It is because of The American Legion that veterans have services and benefits like The Service Readjustment Act of 1944, aka G.I. Bill and now, the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill.

(Continued on page 2)

Membership, Continued

(Continued from page 1)

There are membership revitalizations going on up and down the state beginning in January and continuing through the next few months. We are losing members to Post Everlasting at an average rate of over 275 Legionnaires a month in California. From July to October, over 1,110 Legionnaires were transferred to Post Everlasting. One of the hardest challenges and goals for every member is to replenish our numbers by asking every veteran you meet or know to join The American Legion if he/she isn't already a member.

2017 National Membership Target Dates

Mid-Winter (2017)	January 19—80%
Presidents Day	February 8—85%
LEGION Birthday	March 8—90%
Children & Youth	April 12—95%
Armed Forces Day	May 10—100%



AREA 2 MEMBERSHIP REVITALIZATION

A combined District 8 and District 26, Area 2 membership revitalization is in a few weeks beginning on Thursday, January 26 – Saturday, January 28 at San Mateo Post 82, 130 South Blvd., San Mateo.

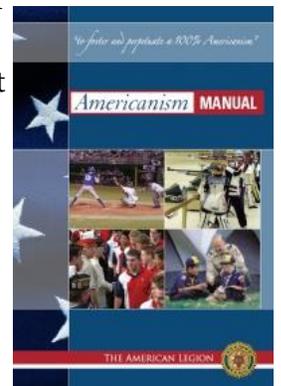
Point of contacts are:

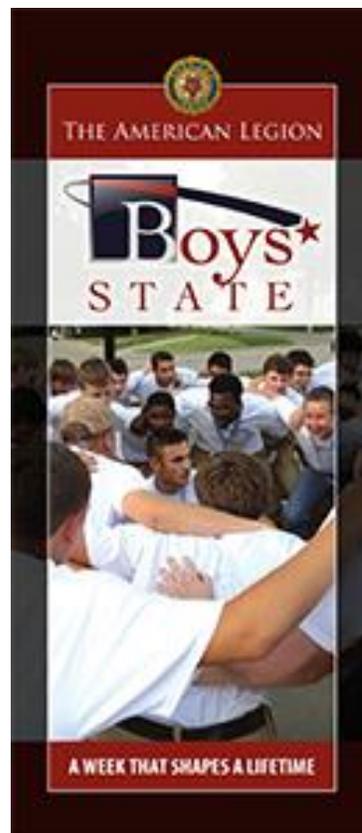
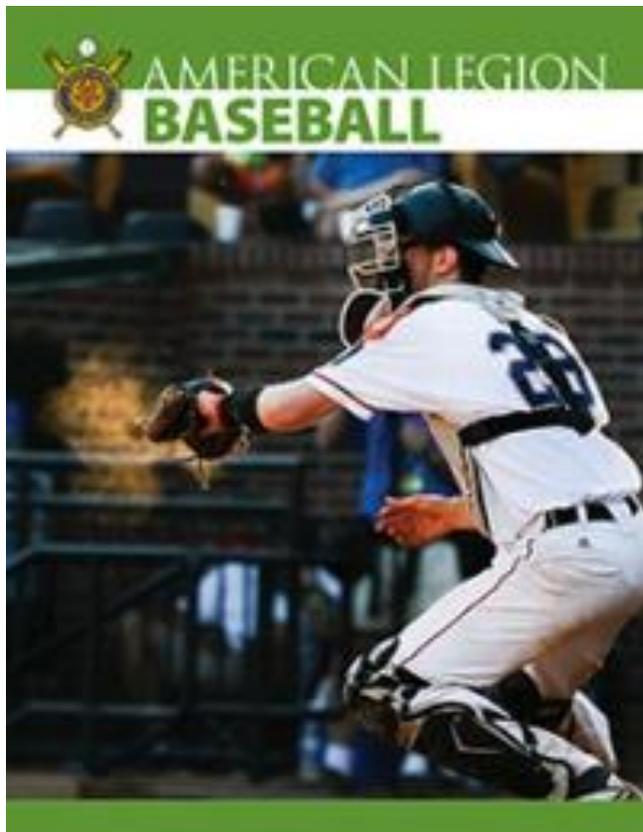
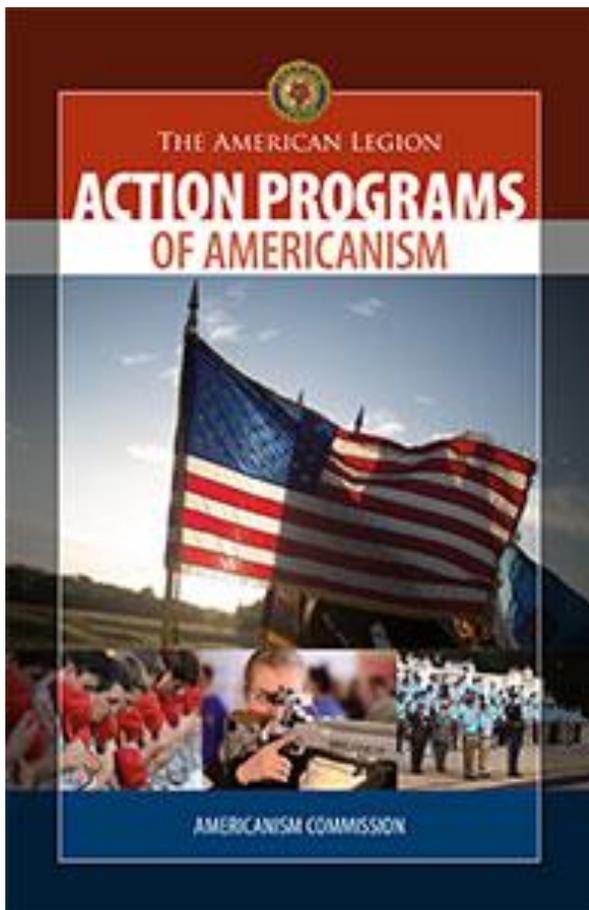
District 8—1st VC, Ed Sandmeier (804) 721- 3624, sandmeier8725@gmail.com

District 26—1st VC, Rich Erhardt (650) 218-9388, captainamelia@aol.com

Ready for Upcoming 2017 Legion Programs?

- ◆ High school oratorical competition—Department competition will be held in Sacramento at the state Capitol on March 4.
<http://calegion.org/programs.html#oratorical>
 - ◆ District 8 competition is January 15, SF War Memorial Veterans Building 10 a.m. #202.
 - ◆ Area 2 competition is February 19, Pacifica Post 238 at 1 pm.
- ◆ Legion Baseball— Registration is now open.
<http://calegion.org/programs.html#ball>
- ◆ Boys State— June 17-24, CA State University, Sacramento.
<http://calegion.org/programs.html#state>







**Friday, February 3, 2017
Herbst Theater-
401 Van Ness Avenue, SF
Doors open 12:30pm**

**\$25.00 VIP Donation Request
\$10.00 Balcony Seating Donation Request**

Special guest - Jan Yanehiro, Doris Grover, Rick Quan

Grant Avenue Follies

Golden Follies

Ralph Pinkerton & Card

Frankie Fictitious

Bobby Barnaby

Wiggly Darlington

Maureen McVerry

Bill Ramos

Blenders

Flora Hui

Allen Ogi

Miki Katsuyama Novitski

TAMAKA

Fortune Kookie

Mr. Shap

**Special Showing of Award Winning Documentary
"Dancing Through LIFE"**

**Linking Rings Performing Arts &
American Legion Cathay Post No. 384**

Presents

GOD BLESS the USA 7

For tickets & info, contact (415) 793-1183

Or contact Cathay Post Officers:

Nelson Lum or Helen Wong

at SF War Memorial Veterans Building Offices, M-F 1-5 p.m.

COMMANDER NELSON LUM

2017 is here. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a very happy New Year. May you and your loved ones enjoy a healthy and prosperous new year. The end of 2016 saw our post in the midst of completing a major renovation and building improvement project. A project of this scope and magnitude has not been done since the purchase of the building in 1948. The contractors have been working hard to deal with the numerous details along with the various unexpected discoveries and obstacles encountered as the renovation proceeded. As to the estimated completion date, we are looking at the beginning of February for the first floor. When we move down to the first floor, I hope you will all find it to be a project that we can be proud of. We will all know we have done something that will benefit the future generations of members of American Legion Cathay Post 384.

2016 was a very busy year for our post. We began by co-hosting the God Bless USA show at the San Francisco War Memorial Veterans Building. We invited over 40 veterans from

the Veterans Home of CA in Yountville to attend the show. They all had a great time and are all eager to come back. February was occupied with our preparation for and participation in the Chinese Lunar New Year parade. We also attended the funeral service of our late comrade Greg Dare. I also attended the Area 2 caucus as the representative for our post and for the district. In March, members of our post attended an annual formal dinner hosted by Community Youth Center. We also received the final details of the long awaited court settlement of the litigation involving the San Francisco War Memorial Veterans Building. I was pleased to report the outcome of the settlement at the spring Department Executive Committee meeting a couple of weeks later.

A flag detail was provided to our late comrade Jack Quan at his funeral in April. The Department of California's annual convention was held in the latter part of June and a few of our members were in attendance. We again came back with awards in the California American Legion Press Association media competition.

On the fourth of July, we held a flag raising ceremony at one of the oldest Chinese benevolent associations in Chinatown. We also participated in the first flag retirement ceremony at a crematorium which was organized by our district's 1st vice commander. The following month, the Korean War Memorial located at the Presidio was unveiled and a huge public dedication ceremony was held on the 1st of August. I attended the fall Department Executive Committee meeting just prior to departing for the national convention in Cincinnati, Ohio.

For the first time in the district, a classroom session of the American Legion Extension Institute training course was taught in September. In October, I attended the second Area 2 caucus to discuss recent Legion topics and possible candidates for the upcoming term. The following month, our members attended the annual officer and firefighter awards recognition dinner hosted by Police-Fire Post 456 in November at the Irish Cultural Center. On December 3, 11 members of our post attended the annual holiday dinner hosted by 91st Div/

(Continued on page 7)



Nelson Lum

nelson1431@aol.com
(415) 797-7384

Cathay Post Member
since: 2005

Branch: Army

Final Rank: SPC

*"We will all know
we have done
something that
will benefit the
future
generations of
members of
American Legion
Cathay Post
384."*



Helen Wong

wong_helen@sbcglobe.com

(415) 797-7384

Cathay Post Member since: 1990

Branch: Army

Final Rank: Lt. Col.

“Caring people matter. ... Thank you for taking time to pay tribute to our fellow veterans.”

1st VICE COMMANDER HELEN WONG

Caring people matter! 2016 has come to an end but not the memories of all the events that have gone on in the year. One such event in December was Wreaths Across America which was started in 1992 by Morrill Worcester, owner of Worcester Wreath Company of Harrington, Maine. He had excess wreaths and realized he had an opportunity to honor our country's veterans who had made the ultimate sacrifice.

Arrangements were made to place wreaths at Arlington Cemetery and other individuals and organizations started to help. A trucking company provided transportation and volunteers from the local American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) posts decorated the wreaths with hand-tied bows. This annual tribute went on for several years until 2005 when a photo of the stones at Arlington, adorned with wreaths and covered in snow, circulated around the internet.

Suddenly, the project attracted national attention and thousands of request poured in from all over the country with people wanting to do the same at their national

and state cemeteries. In 2006, simultaneous wreath-laying ceremonies were held at over 150 locations around the country. In 2007, the Worcester family, along with veterans, individual, and other groups who had helped with their annual veterans wreath ceremony in Arlington, formed Wreaths Across America, a non-profit 501c(3).

In 2008, over 300 locations held wreath-laying ceremonies in every state, Puerto Rico and 24 overseas cemeteries. In that year, December 13, 2008 was unanimously voted by the U.S. Congress as “Wreaths Across America Day.” In 2014, over 700,000 memorial wreaths were placed by volunteers at 1,000 locations in the United States and around the world.

This past year in 2016, Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno

had over 450 volunteers placing 11,025 wreaths, the most it had ever received in donations largely in part to retail giant Wal-Mart.

Several members from American Legion District 26 and Cathay Post 384 were on hand attending the ceremony prior to placing wreaths at the gravesites. The program included a minute of silence, presentations by Matt Boggs, Assistant State Captain of the Northern California Warriors Watch Riders, wreath presentations including the POW/MIA wreath by Vietnam Veteran Legionnaire from Pacifica Post 238 Leo McArdle, and keynote speaker Col. Christopher Starling USMC (Ret.).

It was a day to “Remember, Honor and Teach” the mission of Wreaths Across America. Many of Cathay Post

(Continued on page 7)



L-R: Micahel Cooney, Ponce Gonzalez, Gary Higgins, Cliff Vrooman, and Helen Wong. Not pictured, Leo McArdle.

Photo courtesy of Helen Wong.

COMMANDER Lum, Continued

(Continued from page 5)

Chinatown Veterans of Foreign War Chinatown Post 4618 at Lai Hong Lounge in San Francisco's Chinatown. The event was well planned and the food was delicious.

At our December membership meeting, our members authorized the sale of the land located at Boulder Creek in Santa Cruz County. The sales transaction is currently in escrow and should be completed within a week. Unfortunately, the sale amount is nowhere near what was listed with the realtor, but at least we are no longer paying the property tax and insurance premium on it. Our members also authorized the lease of the basement space of the headquarters building. The lease is being drafted by an attorney and should be ready for signing soon.

Our annual SFFD toy drive was another spectacular event that showed how generous our members were. Our members donated and delivered three buckets full of toys to the local

firehouse a couple of blocks away at the conclusion of the meeting.



Cathay Post members with SF firefighters with the donated toys.

Time flies and we are once again making preparations for the next God Bless USA show at the SF War Memorial Veteran's Building, Herbst Theatre which will take place on February 5, 2017. (See flyer on page 4.)

Our next post meeting will take place on Saturday, January 7 at our post headquarters building. Please make every effort to attend.

Vice COMMANDER Wong, Continued

(Continued from page 6)

members participated in the past at San Francisco National Cemetery, Presidio's ceremony. It is expected that these caring members continue to observe this annual event when it is held again in December.

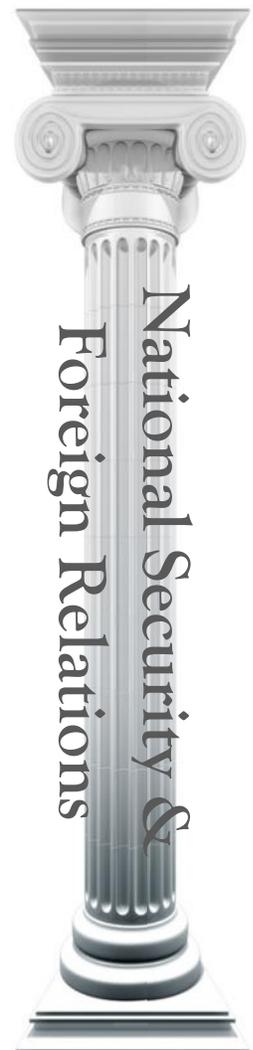
Thank you for taking time to pay tribute to our fellow veterans. Your service and time will in turn not be forgotten either.



Wreaths from Wreaths Across America at Arlington Cemetery.

Disclaimer

Opinions or articles expressed herein are those of the author or columnist, and are not necessarily those of the National, Department, District, or of the American Legion. Publication of advertisements does not imply endorsement by the American Legion of the products, service, or offers advertised or profiled.





Chinese Lunar New Year Donations By Nelson Lum



As we approach Chinese New Year, Saturday, January 28, it has been the tradition of our post to ask for donations from our members and supporters to defray the annual operating expenses. The financial viability of our post is dependent upon the good will of our members and community supporters. As most of you are aware, in addition to our regular expenses, our post has been undergoing a major renovation of our headquarters. The completion of the renovation project is

finally within sight. It will not be long before I can announce to all of you the actual date that we will be able to move down to the newly renovated first floor.

While a great amount of effort has been made to keep the cost from exceeding the original budget, the budgeted estimate has exceeded nevertheless. A project of this magnitude requires a huge financial investment and invariably, there are always unexpected issues that cause the projected expenditures to increase. So, please be generous and help your post by making a tax deductible donation this month. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you and happy year of the Rooster!!

Chinatown VFW Annual Christmas Dinner By Nelson Lum



Cathay Post members at VFW dinner.
Photo courtesy of Nestor Tom.

On Saturday, December 3, our fellow comrades of the 91st Div/Chinatown Post 4618 Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) hosted its annual Christmas dinner at Lai Hong Restaurant near our post. Eleven members and support members from our post attended this celebratory event. There were approximately 110 attendees to this event and Nestor Tom and other officers of VFW deserve to be applauded

for their planning. The seating arrangement was a bit tight and crowded because there was another group of customers occupying the other half of the restaurant.

All of our members were unanimous in their assessment that the quality of the food served was excellent and the quantity was sufficient. A good time was had by all and I was the lucky winner of a fondue cooker from the drawing of the raffle. You will see the fondue cooker in our newly renovated kitchen.

American Legion Cathay Post 384 was represented by me, 1st Vice Commander Helen Wong, Dale King and his son Sherman, Quartermaster Ed Wong, Comrades Aaron Low, Roger Dong, Ed and Lillian Lee, and support member Teresa Lai.

Party with National Parks Service By Roger Dong

Great news. Working with our local National Park Service (NPS) representatives, we have arranged for our first opportunity to visit one of our national treasures in Northern California, Muir Woods. Most of us have visited this national treasure before, and there is no one I know who doesn't love this treasure. Most of us just don't plan to visit Muir Woods because we never find the time to do so. In addition, a few of us won't regret the opportunity. Besides it's just far enough with bridge tolls that few of us make that highly desirable visit.

Well, this time you have no excuse. You won't have to drive, and you won't have to break you piggybank to pay the \$7.50 Golden Gate Bridge toll.

On Saturday, January 21, the NPS will provide a bus to take up to 40 mem-

bers of Cathay Post and one immediate family member to breath the refreshing clean air and gaze at redwoods, flora a fauna of our Muir Woods and you just need to show up at our post at 0900 hours to get a free roundtrip ride to gorgeous Muir Woods. For details and information about what you will be looking at and have never heard of because you wandered around on your own, we will have a real NPS Park Ranger escorting us and telling us many historical matters and facts we never knew.

Sign up immediately if you and your one family member wants to join us. It's first sign-up, first booked. I'm going.

Many thanks in advance to Park Ranger Kay Wang and Michelle Lee, Chief of Interpretation and Education, NPS, US Department of Interior.



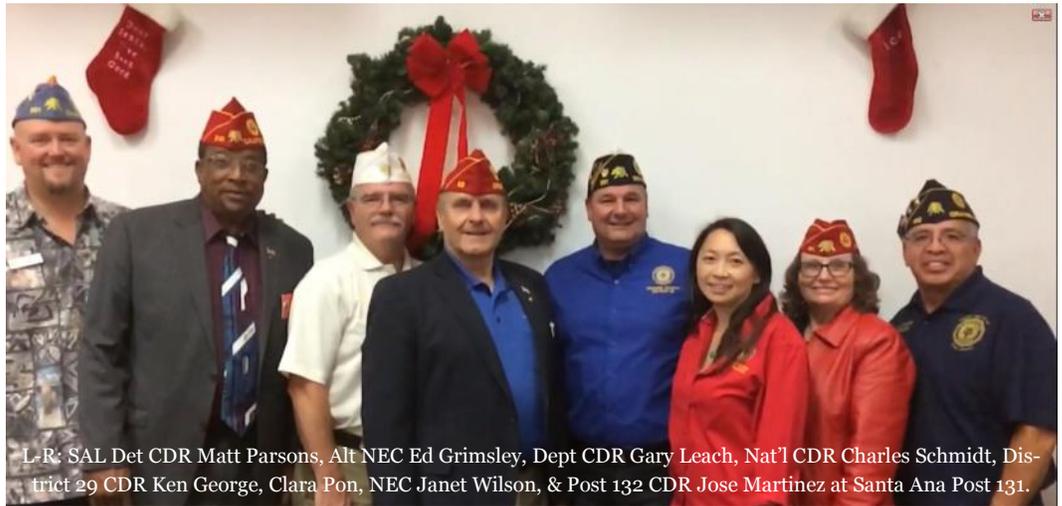
amazonsmile

INTRODUCING—The American Legion Cathay Post 384 has established a 501 (c) (3) foundation called American Legion Post 384 Foundation to enable and enhance our ability to raise funds to support the various charitable projects we currently are engaged in and to expand our ability to fund future endeavors. We have recently connected with the Amazon Corporation to assist with our fundraising efforts. It is a very simple process and it will benefit our charitable causes greatly.

When shopping on Amazon, please click on the Amazon Smile logo and select American Legion Post 384 Foundation as your charity. Amazon will donate 0.5% of all purchased amount to our American Legion Post 384 Foundation. You, the customer will get the same Amazon low prices, but you will be helping The American Legion Cathay Post 384 with its charities. <https://smile.amazon.com/>.



National Commander Charles Schmidt in CA By Clara Pon



L-R: SAL Det CDR Matt Parsons, Alt NEC Ed Grimsley, Dept CDR Gary Leach, Nat'l CDR Charles Schmidt, District 29 CDR Ken George, Clara Pon, NEC Janet Wilson, & Post 132 CDR Jose Martinez at Santa Ana Post 131.



The American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt and his aide, Dirk Levy arrived on Friday, December 9 in San Diego to start their tour of California.

His first day of the tour began on Saturday, December 10 in the San Diego area with a tour of Mt. Soledad, followed by brunch in Kearney Mesa, Albert J. Hickman Post 460. After a full stomach, he was taken to San Dieguito Post 416 in Encinitas to watch the popular Army vs. Navy game. With an Army win after 14 years, they had dinner at Larry E. Holmberg Post 731 in Linda Vista.

The next day, after breakfast, Legionnaires from Hollywood Post 43 conducted a *Walk for Veterans*. The national commander and his entourage enjoyed a lively

and festive dinner at Pacific Palisades Post 283. Their hall was fabulously decorated by the Post Commander Jere Romano, his wife and Auxiliary President, Martha Romano, and the ladies of Unit 283. Photos of the dinner can be seen on Unit 283's Facebook page. This year, they again had the sweet sound of the Christmas carolers dressed in their holiday finery serenading all the guests with favorite Christmas carols.

On Monday, they toured West Los Angeles VA Medical Center and then experienced a boisterous evening at a Chinese restaurant in Rosemead hosted by Chinatown Post 628.

The following day, he spent the whole day in Orange County. His first stop was at Newport Harbor Post 291 and the

usual boat ride around the harbor. Later that evening, the entire entourage had the opportunity to let their hair down and relax to an intimate casual BBQ dinner hosted by District Commander Ken George, Orange Post 132 (Commander Jose Martinez), and Santa Ana Post 131 (Commander Scott McKee). These two smaller centennial posts were able to have their members visit and talk with the national commander. For many of the Legionnaires in attendance, it was the first time they've met a national commander and had the opportunity to talk and ask questions freely.

On Wednesday, they traveled east to Riverside County. They had lunch at Perris Post 595 and then toured Riverside Veterans' Cemetery. That

(Continued on page 11)

National Commander Schmidt, Continued

(Continued from page 10)

evening, they had dinner at Riverside Post 79.

On day 6 of the 8 day tour, they traveled north to Department of CA headquarters in Sanger for a short visit on their way up to Amador Post 108 for another delicious evening meal and more Legion family camaraderie.

National Commander Schmidt participated in another *Walk for Veterans* after the tour of the State Capitol in Sacramento. Another well attended dinner was had at Mission City Post 564 in Santa Clara.

On his last day, they toured the veterans home in Yountville and a finished the evening having dinner at Dept. Commander Gary Leach's own post, Woodland Post 77.

We hope National Commander Charles E. Schmidt had a wonderful time and visit here in California. Legionnaires in CA donated at least over \$25,000 to Commander's Schmidt's various funds.

Next year, we are tentatively scheduled to host the first female American Legion National Commander candidate Denise Rohan during her tour in California. Let's hope it happens.

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA LEGION CALENDAR PHOTO CONTEST

The Department of California produces a calendar each year as a fund-raiser to support the good work of our California Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation (VA&R) programs. This year we are having a contest to select 15 photos, taken by Legionnaires, that will be used in the calendar.

Subject matter of the photos should be, California Legionnaires, actively involved in doing the good work of The American Legion.

15 photos, from those submitted, will be selected for the calendar. Photos will be selected for October, November & December 2017 and one for each month of the year 2018.

Deadline to submit photos is March 1, 2017.

Submit your photos by e-mail to: calendar@calegion.org

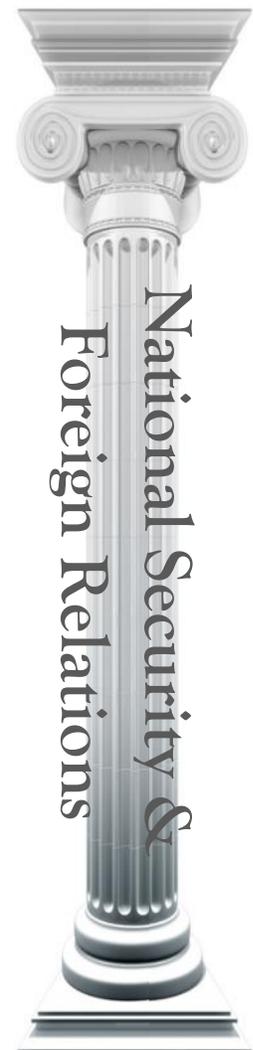


Every photo you submit must include:

- Photographer's Name
 - Date Photo taken
 - Who is in the photo
- Sender's Name
 - E-Mail Address
 - Phone Number
- Legion Post Name, Number, District & Area



For additional information please contact: Janice Somers,
Department of California, Ways & Means Commission Chair
805-234-5547 or janicesomers@charter.net



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January 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 New Year's	2	3 ALWMC Meeting, 6:00 pm	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 Dist. 8 Meeting 6:00 pm	13	14 Post Meeting 11 am
15 District 8 Oratorical contest, 10 am	16 Martin Luther King Day	17	18	19	20	21 Nat'l Park Service Field Trip
22	23	24	25	26 D8 & D26 revitalization	27 D8 & D26 revitalization	28 Chinese New Year Dist. Revit.
29	30	31				

February 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Groundhogs Day	3 GOD Bless USA Show	4
5 Super Bowl 51	6	7 ALWMC Meeting, 6:00 pm	8	9 Dist. 8 Meeting 6:00 pm	10	11 Post Meeting 11 am
12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18
19	20 President's Day	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

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 Cathay Post #384



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We welcome article or letter submissions but reserve the right to publish, republish or not publish any submission and to edit articles or letters as appropriate. Submissions must include your name and an email address or phone number. All submissions should be emailed to cathaypost384events@gmail.com.

Cathay Dispatch is a proud member of the *National American Legion Press Association (NALPA)* & *California American Legion Press Association (CALPA)*.



2014, 2015, 2016



2014, 2015, 2016



www.legion.org

Join Cathay Post No. 384 in San Francisco, one of the oldest and most active posts in San Francisco. We welcome all qualified retired or active men and women.

Our veterans are courageous wartime military men and women who proudly served or are currently serving.

Gulf War/War On Terrorism

Desert Shield/Desert Storm/OEF/OIF
8/2/1990 to present

Panama—*Operation Just Cause*
12/20/1989 – 1/31/1990

Lebanon/Grenada
Lebanon War/Operation Urgent Fury
8/24/1982 – 7/31/1984

Vietnam War
2/28/1961 – 5/7/1975

Korean War
6/25/1950 – 1/31/1955

World War II
12/7/1941 – 12/31/1946

World War I
4/6/1917 – 11/11/1918

**Cathay Post No. 384
American Legion
Executive Committee
2016-2017**

Commander: Nelson Lum

1st Vice Commander: Helen Wong

2nd Vice Commander: VACANT

Adjutant: Francis Hall

Finance Officer: George Tsang

Secretary: VACANT

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