

**AMERICAN
LEGION**

The Flash

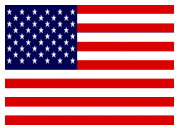
Serving the 19th District Community, State and Nation Since 1926

FEBRUARY 2023



**Volume 98
No. 2**

Member The American Legion Media Alliance



Keep up the pace



**National
Commander
Vincent J.
Troiola**

I have said repeatedly that in spite of our Be the One outreach efforts, most Legionnaires are not professional therapists. I view our role as connectors. We are friends and confidants of any veteran experiencing crisis and we are committed to helping veterans obtain whatever treatment and therapy they may need.

The American Legion applauds the groundbreaking announcement made by the Department of Veterans Affairs earlier this month. As of Jan. 17, veterans in suicidal crisis can go to any VA or non-VA health-care facility free of charge. Eligible veterans include those discharged or released from active duty after more than 24 months under conditions other than dishonorable. Also included are members of the reserves who served more than 100 days under a combat exclusion or in support of a contingency operations. Victims of military sexual trauma or harassment incurred during their service time are also eligible. Significantly, veterans need not be enrolled in the VA system to receive this benefit.

In announcing this benefit, VA Secretary Denis McDonough said, "Veterans in suicidal crisis can now receive the free, world-class emergency health care they deserve – no matter where they need it, when they need it, or whether they're enrolled in VA care. This expansion of care will save veterans' lives, and there's nothing more important than that."

The American Legion share his view that nothing is more important than saving the lives of the people who have defended our nation. It is why Be the One is The American Legion's top priority.

Under the new benefit, VA will provide, pay for or reimburse treatment and transportation costs for up to 30 days of inpatient or 90 days of outpatient care. VA will also determine eligibility for other benefits and include referrals for follow-up treatments following the period of emergency suicide care.

Many incidents and issues contribute to a veteran experiencing a crises. Access and affordability of treatment should not be among them.

**19th District
Meetings for February 2023
E-Board
Wednesday February 1st
Riviera Post 411
7642 Serapis Ave,
Pica Rivera ,CA**

**General District Meeting
Wednesday February 8th
Eugene A. Obregon Post 804
4615 E. Cesar E. Chavez Ave,
Los Angeles ,CA
Meetings start at 7:00 PM**

Let the good times roll.....



World War II veteran Joseph Eskenazi, who at 104 years and 11 months old is the oldest living veteran to survive the attack on Pearl Harbor, holds a photo of his younger self, at an event celebrating his upcoming 105th birthday at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023. (Gerald Herbert/AP)

Louie Adame—Commander



Hello, District 19 Posts and Members,

It is February, and with it, comes the annual Four Chaplains ceremony that all posts should be observing. It was on February 3, 1943, four Army chaplains – Father John P. Washington, Rabbi Alexander D. Goode, and the Revs. George L. Fox and Clark V. Poling – gave up their life jackets on a sinking Army transport in the North Atlantic so that others might live. Of the 902 soldiers, Navy armed guard, ship's crew, and civilian passengers on board the Dorchester, only 230 survived. They have told us of the Chaplains' efforts to restore calm in a hopeless and chaotic situation, and how they were last seen at the ship's stern, arms linked in prayer.

The survivors' testimony and the chaplains' bravery are enshrined at the Chapel of Four Chaplains in the Philadelphia Navy Yard, where the Chapel Memorial Foundation honors acts of selfless service nationwide in memory of the Four Chaplains and crew of USAT Dorchester.

– *Louis A. Cavaliere, retired Navy captain and chairman of the Chapel of Four Chaplains, and Christine Beady, the chapel's executive director*

Some District 19 posts remain delinquent in paying their dues to District 19, Area 4 and the Los Angeles County Council which must be paid. The following posts have not paid their dues which must be made payable to "Los Angeles County Council" and submitted at the next District meeting on Wednesday, February 8th. If your Post has paid these dues, we thank you.

During the weekend of January 13th – 15th 2023, I attended the meeting of the California Department Executive Committee (DEC). During the various meetings, it was related that memberships for all California Posts is declining throughout the state, and it is vital for each post to follow-up with their unrenowned members to encourage them to remain members of the Legion to help support the many Legion programs, and especially to help support the Department of California. It is imperative that each Post continues to renew, retain, transfer, and sign-up new Legion members to reinforce the force to advocate on behalf of our fellow Veterans and their families. All Posts should be diligently processing and forwarding any and all membership transmittals and per capita payments as quickly as they receive them from the members. Do not hang unto them for whatever reason.

On another topic, the Department Judge Advocate related that he received inquiries about unruly behavior at posts with canteens by some members of the American Legion families. The Judge Advocate noted that each Post should have a set of "House Rules" besides the Bylaws which pertains to proper behavior for the canteen and post facilities. Post canteen committees or executive committees should be formed to enforce those rules, thereby, leaving it up to the post to properly resolve the issues.

Also, during the DEC meeting, it was related by the Department Boys' State Program Chairperson that it is time for all posts to start the process of contacting local high schools to interview junior level students (girls and boys) for selecting the best qualified student as a delegate to the Department Boys & Girls State program in Sacramento in June 2023. By reorganizing the program to be coed, the program will meet the provisions outlined by California Senate Bill 363 "Educational Equity: Government Instruction Conferences" which gives equal access to the use of California public buildings to all high school junior level delegates. The provisions of SB363 commenced January 1, 2023.

Lastly, it's time for all District posts to start looking within themselves to nominate potential candidates for office either at the post level or at the District level. Come April 2023, it is regularly the first nominations taken at the general meeting, followed in May, the second nominations and elections of nominated candidates. Please be sure to be sure that said candidates be qualified to assume the positions and are in "Good Standing." Thank you.

Louie M. Adame
Commander District 19

1st Vice Commander - Fernando Gallardo



Good morning comrades,

“We Need To Be The One!” Let's conduct “Buddy Checks” with members on your rosters that have not yet renewed by calling, emailing, or visiting them at home to see how they are doing. Inquire if they need assistance with the Veterans Administration regarding questions or issues relating to their health or benefits, or if they need the assistance of a Service Officer

All posts should be contacting those post members who have not yet renewed their 2023 membership, and remind those members on your roster that their membership expired as of December 31, 2022 and are considered no longer an active member of The American Legion which denies access to the post or its canteen and other parts of the post facilities. To all posts who have canteens, you must ask for their valid membership cards before providing services. Below, is the current Department of California Membership Report.

Department membership renewal percentage is at 76.38% and is in 47th place.

Area 4 is at 81.06% and is in 1st place, and District 19 is at 78.45% and in 11th place. 80% Membership target date January 19, 2023 has passed. There are (8) Posts that have met their 80% target date, with (4) Posts that are close to achieving their 80% goals.

The following are the District 19 membership renewal percentages for all posts:

- Montebello Post 272 is at 87.50%
- Norwalk Post 359 is at 87.50%
- Bert S Crossland Post 170 is at 85.34%
- Eugene A Obregon Post 804 is at 84.81%
- Lincoln Village Post 833 is at 84.00%
- Downey Post 272 is at 82.35%
- Lakewood Post 496 is at 81.57%.
- South Bay Post 184 is at 81.16%
- Battleship Iowa post 61 is at 80.68%
- Hawthorne Post 314 is at 78.83%
- Leland A Cupp is at 77.59%
- Rivera Post 411 is at 74.53%
- Whittier Post 51 is at 72.80%
- Paramount Post 134 is at 65.32%
- Clyde F Hager Post 465 is at 64.00%
- Arthur A Peterson Post 27 is at 50.94%
- Houghton Park Post 560 is at 50.00%
- Gilbert Lindsay Post 352 is at 49.18%.

I am working on organizing a District Revitalization in the near future, and once the details have been finalized, I will forward the details to all Commanders, First Vice Commanders, and Adjutants. I any District post is willing to host the Revitalization, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss the details.

To all posts with a Sons of the American Legion Squadron (SALs), please have the Squadron Commander contact me as soon as possible. A reminder the SALs dues have increased from \$11.00 to \$13.00 as of January 2023.

And finally, I encourage all District officers and members to consider taking the online “Basic Training” course at CALE-GION.ORG, and if taken already, consider attending the California American Legion College (CALC) schedule for March 17, 18 and 19, 2023. All classes begin at 8:00 a.m. and will be held at the American Legion Hollywood Post 43, 2035 North Highland Ave., Los Angeles CA, 90068. If you would like more information or wish to attend, you can apply online at <http://calegion.org/calc-application/>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email at ferndogsc28@gmail.com.

Thank you,

Fernando Gallardo
District 19 1st Vice Commander & Membership Chairman.

Americanism Chairman Report - Ray Gard



Law & Order

Due to the increase of crime and lack of prosecution by our legal system to stem this increase it behooves us as Legion Members to step up and support out police and sheriff departments. We can do this by approaching these agencies and offering our support by honoring them for the job that they do.

Most common challenges for law enforcement today are suspicion and mistrust. Another is budgetary constraints, centralized decision-making, Interference and ethical dilemmas.

At least 12 cities across the country have cut funding from police budgets or decreased officer numbers.

Due to the increased crime in cities like New York City, Oakland, Baltimore, Minneapolis and Los Angeles they are looking at restituting funding for these departments.

As of 2021 19% of police are veterans. In 2021, 129 officers died in the line of duty which was an increase of 29% from previous year. 79 deaths were killed feloniously, 56 officers were accidentally killed. 52 of these accidents were motor vehicle crashes.

We need to go out and thank these men and women who do this job day in day out. Honor them by inviting them to a post. Buy them and their family dinner. Create plaques to recognize their duty to their city and county. We thank active military for service lets thank our police and sheriffs.

Judge Advocate - Nick Rosa



Post Bylaws Incentive Program...

There is an incentive Drawing for Posts within the Department of California who bring their Bylaws up to date and submit them to the Department of CA Constitution and Bylaws Commission. The Drawing will be held at the annual Department of California Convention in June 2023 at Visalia, California. The winning Post will be awarded \$1,000 which will be payable to the Post's general fund. Below, the following American Legion Posts need to update their Bylaws. If you need assistance, please contact the District Judge Advocate Nick Rosa at nrosa1212@yahoo.com. The years in bold reflect the last time their Bylaws were updated. All Bylaws should be updated every 7 years.

If you have already updated your Bylaws, and submitted a copy to the Department Bylaws Commission, thank you.:

Arthur L. Peterson Post 27 (**1969**)
 Paramount Post 134 (**2001**)
 Bert S. Crossland Post 170 (**1989**)
 South Bay Post 184 (**1992**)
 Montebello Post 272 (**2009**)
 Hawthorne Post 314 (**2006**)
 Leland A. Cupp Post 341 (**1991**)
 Gilbert W. Lindsay Post 352 (**1993**)
 Norwalk Post 359 (**1978**)
 Rivera Post 411 (**1983**)
 Clyde F. Hager Post 465 (1991)
 Lakewood Post 496 (**2005**)
 Houghton Park Post (**1991**)
 Eugene A. Obregon Post 804 (**1991**)
 Lincoln Village Post 833 (833)

Historian Report - Fred Shacklett



Historian's Report

Since the last publication, I have created, recorded, photographed and/or covered the following events.

District 19 General Meeting & Flag Folding Training at Post 272 on January 11, 2023

Photographs of the meeting and Flag Folding Training are on the Post 51 Flickr page.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/whittierpost51/albums/72177720305182286>

Dept Executive Committee (DEC) at Doubletree, Anaheim, CA Jan 13-15, 2023

Photographs of the DEC are posted on the Department Google Drive

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DqUtSyelveHs-Hyaqls2nW32WQrxe_k7

At the DEC, I briefed the DEC on the history requirements for Districts and Posts for this year and reported that digital History Books will be accepted by the Department this year on a trial basis. Digital files are being requested by the National Historian for testing in future judging. I made note of over 350 Facebook listings to be reviewed for inclusion in this year's Department of California History Book.

I also completed the digital restoration of all of the original photographs of Department of California Commanders from 1919 to Present, that were hanging on the walls of the headquarters building in Sanger, CA. The photographs are published on the Department Google Drive. <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HPczpLqYhmjUsevEbyLbFxc7ZQI9hju7>

Also, in a collaboration effort with Michael Toschak, Department Web Team (Post 105), a video was published of the restored photos for the Department Commanders on the Dept Historian Center. <https://calegion.org/historian-center/>

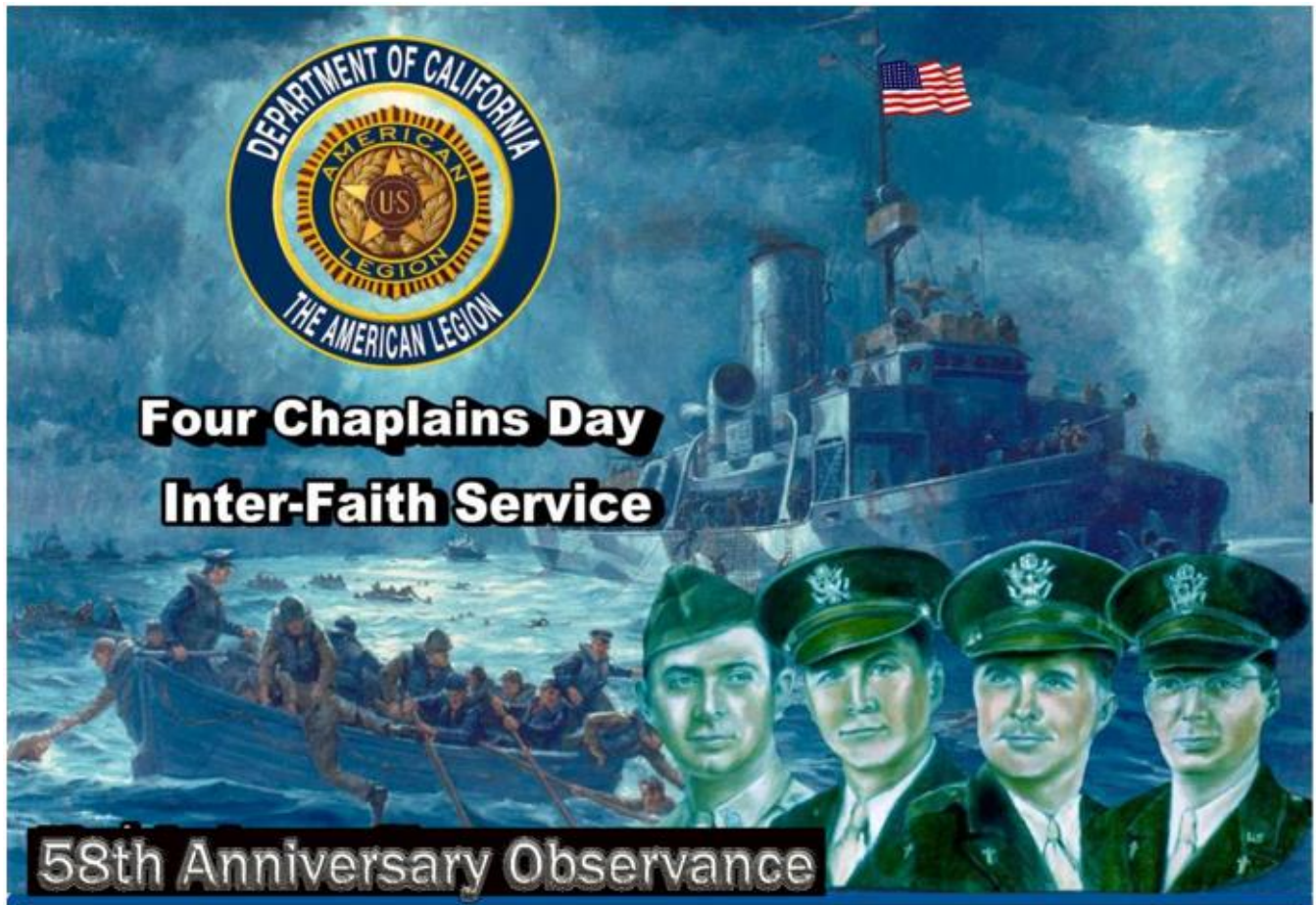
Upcoming Events:

Four Chaplain's Ceremony Montebello Post 272 on February 5, 2023

Four Chaplain's Ceremony in Sanger, CA on February 11, 2023

Fred Shacklett, Department of Calif and District 19 Historian

Four Chaplains Day Interfaith Service



...of the ultimate sacrifice of military chaplains: (l to r) Rabbi Lt. Alexander D. Goodes, Methodist Minister Lt. George L. Fox, Reformed Church of America Minister Lt. Clark V. Poling and Catholic Priest Lt. John P. Washington who perished (after volunteering their life jackets so that others might live) when the United States Army Transport SS Dorchester was torpedoed and sunk in the Labrador Sea by a German U-boat on February 3, 1943. *The Legion will pay homage to these 4 chaplains who served during WWII, on a ship in the Atlantic who sacrifice their lives by giving up their life jackets to other sailors and servicemen who did not have one after their ship was sinking by a torpedo. The ceremony will depict the event and the Chaplain's acts of heroism during that time with a narration of how the event unfolded.*

**DISTRICT 19, THE AMERICAN LEGION
IS PROUD TO OBSERVE THE FOUR CHAPLAINS CEREMONY
FEBRUARY 5, 2023, 2:00PM
MONTEBELLO POST 272
616 W. CLEVELAND AVENUE, MONTEBELLO, CA 90640**

**All American Legion Family Members, Veterans, and The
General Public Are Invited To Attend**

Quality over Quantity

‘Quality over quantity’: Army’s top general says lowering requirements to boost recruiting could be dangerous



The Army’s top general warned Wednesday that lowering entry requirements for recruits is dangerous as the U.S. military looks for ways to attract troops who want to serve and can pass the physical and academic tests.

Gen. James McConville, the Army’s chief of staff, said the challenges to increase recruiting numbers are formidable. By the end of 2022, the Army was hoping to have 473,000 troops, but ended up with about 465,000 after lowering its goal twice.

It’s not just the Army. The other service branches are also having difficulty finding recruits who can meet physical and academic requirements.

“Here’s what we do know. We have a lot of young men and women who want to serve — and they can’t pass the academic requirements or they can’t pass the physical requirements,” said McConville, who became the Army’s chief of staff in 2019.

To join the Army, a recruit must be between the ages of 17 and 35, medically and physically fit, and in good moral standing. Further, they must be a high school graduate, or the equivalent, and pass the Army’s placement exam known as the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test. According to Pentagon data, 23% of Americans between the ages of 17 and 24 meet all eligibility requirements.

“We are facing unprecedented challenges recruiting new soldiers. Among a myriad of causes, America’s youth are less qualified for service than ever before,” said Army Brig. Gen. Patrick Michaelis, commander at Fort Jackson, S.C. “Since the all-volunteer force was established in 1973, this is the hardest Recruiting Command has had to work to meet recruiting goals.”

Army officials have said the coronavirus pandemic has also made recruiting more difficult, as ASVAB test scores are down almost 10% since the start of the crisis.

“They just can’t pass it,” McConville said. “It’s harder for people today to pass it than it was before.”

He also pointed to a university study done that found about half of high school ROTC students are also failing the ASVAB test. But despite these recruiting hurdles, he said he remains opposed to relaxing entry requirements because the standards are there for a reason.

“This could be a very dangerous time and unimaginable things can happen,” McConville said, stressing the importance of troops’ intellect and physical capabilities during conflict.

“What we are not willing to do is ... we don’t want to lower standards,” he said, noting Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin shares his opinion. “We think that quality is more important than quantity.”

“What we are willing to do is we’re willing to invest in young men and women. We have started what we call the Future Soldier’s Prep Course at Fort Jackson, and we’re getting ready to stand one up at Fort Benning [in Georgia].”

The pilot prep course started last year and its chief goal is to train young Americans to pass the entry requirements when they’re ready to join. To test its effectiveness, the Army put about 3,000 young men and women through the prep course and saw remarkable improvement.

“It got about a 95% success rate. Either they are improving their scores or they are losing body fat,” McConville said. “When they go into initial military training, they have got a heads up on their peers.”

He said the prep course could save the Pentagon money by helping to weed out recruits before they get to the stage where the military starts investing in their futures.

“I think we are going to have to do this if we don’t want to lower standards,” McConville said. “We want to give people an opportunity to do great things.”

“In fact, we want them to be all they can be,” he added, harking back to the Army’s “Be All You Can Be” slogan from the 1980s and 1990s — a slogan so fondly remembered that the service is bringing it back in 2023 as part of its evolving recruiting plans.

Another avenue that the Army wants to follow, McConville said, is finding recruits in families that don’t have a lot of military connections. He emphasized more than 80% of recruits have traditionally come from military families.

“We really need to make it not a military family business — but an American family business,” he said. By Douglas D. Ware/Stars and Stripes

New District 19 Pin and Sticker By Fred Shacklett

After too many years of not having a pin, our Department Historian, Fred Shacklett, has designed a new Noisy 19 collectable lapel/hat pin and a sticker. Yes, he is also a graphic designer.



The pin is approximately 1 ¼ inch wide. Made of polished brass, with dark blue background color. The pin has a double rubber clutch on the back and won't stain your cover or suit lapel.



The sticker is 3.00 inches wide, with yellow and blue colors on an adhesive back.

If you would like to have one of these collectables, come to a Post 51 meeting or a District 19 meeting. You can get both pin and sticker for \$5.00.

Education and Transition



Nebraska considers using veterans to help address teacher shortage

By Paul Hammel, The Nebraska Examiner

LINCOLN — The number of teaching jobs in Nebraska left vacant or filled by less than fully qualified instructors rose significantly in 2022, according to a recent state survey.

Many of those vacancies were because there were no applicants, or many fewer applicants, according to State Sen. Ben Hansen of Blair.

On Monday, Hansen said Nebraska should follow the lead of Florida, which last year passed a law allowing talented military veterans, even those with no teaching experience, to fill classroom vacancies by providing them temporary, five-year certificates to teach.

The senator said veterans have specialized training that would assist them in the classroom, and under his Legislative Bill 188, mentors would be assigned to help them work with students and vets would have to pass a test on the subject they would teach.

‘It’s a crisis’

“This bill fits the time,” Hansen said of his proposal. “It’s not just a teacher shortage, it’s a crisis now.”

Hansen’s bill ran into a wall of opposition from past and present teachers, some with military backgrounds, during a public hearing before the Legislature’s Education Committee.

Opponents of the idea said that molding young recruits into soldiers is much different from molding young minds and that lowering standards for teachers was not the right approach.

Nicole Hochstein, an Air Force veteran, a former special education teacher and now a substitute teacher, said that even after obtaining her degree in education and her experience student teaching, she felt unprepared when she finally got into the classroom full time.

“We are essentially saying anyone off the streets can teach,” Hochstein said, of LB 188.

‘Other than dishonorable’ discharge

The Nebraska State Education Association, the state teachers union, also opposed the bill.

Isau Metes, an Army veteran who works for NSEA, said a clause in LB 188 that allowed a veteran to teach with 60 hours of college credit — about two years of study — and a grade point average of at least 2.5 out of 4 (a C+) wasn’t enough.

Metes also said another clause of the bill that would allow any veteran who was discharged “under conditions other than dishonorable” to teach could be a “red flag.” There are a lot of classes of discharges beyond “honorable,” she said, including being discharged for “bad conduct.”

Other critics of the bill said that no other demographic group other than veterans would get such a break and that the real answer was better pay and support for current teachers.

Brad Dirksen of the Nebraska Department of Education testified neutral on the bill. He said that currently, military veterans have four pathways to obtain temporary certificates to teach full time, including certificates for transitional teachers and those teaching career education.

‘We need help’

Hansen pushed back on criticism of his proposal, saying that military veterans have a “unique set of qualifications” to teach and that his proposal doesn’t mean a school district would be mandated to hire them. But some districts might, he added, to relieve overworked teachers.

“We need help,” Hansen said.

Testifying in favor of the bill was Kevin Naumann, a Catholic school principal from Lincoln and a military veteran, who said schools are working harder, and longer, to find teachers.

“There has been a definite shift in supply and demand in the teaching field,” Naumann said.

Michael Davis, an Army veteran who left college just before obtaining a teaching degree, said he thought that dealing with “junior soldiers” wasn’t all that different than dealing with teen-aged students.

“What we do is teach,” said Davis, who retired as a staff sergeant.

Senior Reporter Paul Hammel has covered the Nebraska Legislature and Nebraska state government for decades. Paul has won awards for reporting from Great Plains Journalism, the Associated Press, Nebraska Newspaper Association and Suburban Newspapers of America.


**THE AMERICAN
LEGION**
*"Still and Forever
Serving America"*

19th District Flash Editor

Karl H. Wilvert
21905 Badeau Ave
Carson, CA 90745

720-840-5578 Cell
E-mail: karl.wilvert@yahoo.com

THE FLASH

DEADLINE

25TH OF MONTH

COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS

WELCOMED

Check us out on
19th District Face book
On the Web page
Noisy 19th.com



END ZONE BRIEFS

Battleship Iowa Post 61



Post 61 Service Officer William Sims attends a "muster" of US Marines assigned to Reserve Units or serving as Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMA) within the Western United States. Hooah!!

Enrollments in VA medical care spiked after PACT Act passage last year



on Thursday.

Veterans Affairs officials saw a surge in patients enrolling in department health care services following the passage of sweeping military toxic exposure legislation last summer, but leaders are confident they have hiring plans in place to absorb the extra work.

Roughly 21,000 more veterans signed up for VA medical services from the start of August 2022 to last week, VA Under Secretary for Health Dr. Shereef Elnahal told reporters

That's an increase of more than 17% from the same five-month period a year earlier. Elnahal said officials do not yet have data specifically linking the increase to the signing of the the Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act (better known as the PACT Act) last summer, but officials believe the two issues are linked.

Congressional critics of the PACT Act last year expressed concerns that the influx of new patients could lead to longer wait times and less access to medical appointments. Both Republicans and Democrats have promised close oversight of the issue in coming months.