**The American Legion Riders**

**Department of California**

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*For God and Country*

DEC MINUTES

December 21, 2023

1. **Call to Order** – Director Mike Smith @ 1900 hours
2. **Invocation** – Mick Sobczak
3. **Pause for POW/MIA** – Director Mike Smith
4. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Robert Lopez
5. **ALR Preamble** – Director Mike Smith
6. **Roll Call** - Secretary Debbie Proffitt

**Director-** Mike Smith

**Vice Director** – Ralph Wenzinger EXCUSED

**Sergeant-At-Arms** – Marc Lawrie ABSENT

**Area 1 Vice-D** – Vacant

**Area 2 Vice-D** – Robert Lopez

**Area 3 Vice-D** – Mike Phillips

**Area 4 Vice-D** – Brian Toal

**Area 5 Vice-D** – Robert Partlow EXCUSED

**Area 6 Vice-D** – Cristina Molina EXCUSED

**Jr Past** – Rey Ruiz (In Memoriam)

**Treasurer** – Stan Tehee

**Secretary** - Debbie Proffitt

**Chaplain** – Mark Rice ABSENT

**Historian** – Louisa Carson

**Judge Advocate** – Donny Brannon ABSENT

**Membership/ Legacy Run** - Rochelle Billet-Smith

**Parliamentarian-** Mick Sobczak

**Quartermaster** – Mike Phillips

**Safety Officer** – Andrew Trapani EXCUSED

**Service Officer** - George Smith ABSENT

**Convention & Rally** – Bob Atchley

**PP/DC** – Dennis Kee ABSENT

**Ways and Means** - Kathleen McClary

**Webmaster/Public Relations** – Tom Lively EXCUSED

**Guests: (TALDOC, TAL ALR Commissioners, ALR, etc)**

Past President/Secretary Steve Weber, A6 Alt Stephanie Huff, A5 Alt Wm. Blackstone, A1 Alt Sam Fergason, A3 Alt Ken Sutton, Ch 82 Ed Caler, D 28 Greg Martin, Jeff Carson.

PP/S Steve Weber- Ride Safe.

1. **Additions to the Agenda** –

Rider Everlasting ribbons redone

1. **Approval of Minutes** – ALRDOC November 16, 2023 minutes.

Accepted as electronically transmitted.

1. **Financial Report** – Stan Tehee

General Accounting as of 12/13/23

Beginning Bank Balance $ 61,371.42

Bank Deposits $ 0

Interest on bank account $ 1.21

Bank Withdraws $ 2589.57

Ending Bank Balance $ 58,783.06

PayPal Balance $ 6,259.86

Ending Total Balance $ 65,042.92

Motion to accept the Treasurer’s report pending audit by Stan Tehee. 2nd by Robert Lopez. Passed by vote of DEC.

1. **Director’s Report** – Mike Smith

Since our last meeting I have:

November 20 – Post 20 Blood Drive

November 21 – Convention and Rally Zoom

November 27 – Legacy Run Zoom

November 29 – National Commander Planning Meeting

December 6 – Charles ‘Chuck’ Landreth Chapter 852 Funeral

December 7 – Patrick ‘Paddy’ McDowell Chapter 53 Funeral

December 15 – 18 – National Commander Escort (Riders cut short due to inclement weather)

December 19 – Convention and Rally Zoom

For those of you who do not know, our Area 6 Vice, Cris Marie, found out today her cousin had recently passed away. Please keep her and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

Debbie has sent out the tracking. The chapters are doing a great job on getting things submitted. Keep up the momentum.

I have asked you all to have one notable from your area and your personal monthly escapades to share in your report this month. My most notable is the 2 local veterans my chapter has helped during the holidays. These veterans are in our younger veteran ranks. One was homeless and is getting back on his feet. The other struggles month to month. Both have small children. These are my notables because this is what we do as the American Legion Family. We help our veterans and their families. We plan to keep tabs on these young veterans to do our best to ensure their continued success.

You may have seen my Facebook post in which I posted this:

**My question of the day. We have all been asked and asked ourselves, “If your Post was to close today, would your community notice?”**

**We have also been asked, “Why did you join the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or the Sons of the American Legion?”**

**I want to take this a step further and ask these questions:**

**1. Did your ‘why’ change after you became a member?**

**2. Most importantly, are you doing everything you can to ensure your ‘why’ doesn’t die?**

My intent was to get people to think about why they joined the American Legion Family. Currently we are experiencing people not returning back to us. Why. Did they lose their why?

In answer to my question, my ‘why’ has changed. I joined the American Legion so I could be a Rider. I knew nothing of the American Legion, or the Family. My why was to ride with others. That was it. As my experience grew, my why most definitely changed. My why is very simple. My why is to keep the legacy of the American Legion Family alive, so our future generations will continue to enjoy what we now enjoy.

In my humble opinion, we put up our hands for leadership because we thought we had something to offer. Our family members agreed with us (misguided as they may have been lol) and voted us into leadership roles. We have a duty as servant leaders to ensure we help keep their ‘why’ alive as well as ours. As we go into the New Year, remember your ‘why’, see the ‘why’ in our family members and help them keep their ‘why’ alive.

I am thankful for the Riders who were able to participate in the escort of the National Commander. I decided to cut the Riders escort due to the impending rainfall. I want to single out South Bay Chapter 184 and thank them. Post 184 was included in the original planning as a stop for the National Commander. During the planning stage, the Area decided to remove them as a stop. While we were at the Battleship Iowa, it was found an early check in to the hotel was not possible. Chapter 814 Director Justin Garcia and Area 4 Vice Director Brian Toal were asked if their Post/Chapter could put something together. Within 2 hours they were able to mobilize and get lunch together. Many members of Post/Chapter 184 were in attendance and had an opportunity to meet at speak with the National Commander.

I want to thank you, and your families, all for a great year! We have a great team and we would not have been as successful without each of you and your families supporting you! I am very grateful for the friendship and camaraderie you show not only me, but each other. I can count on each of you to step up when needed.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

1. **Vice Director’s Report** – Ralph Wenzinger

November 19 – Post / Chapter 476 Family Fall Festival, California City

November 27 – California Legacy Run committee meeting

December 3 - Recruit Send off and Escort of 2023 at Armed Forces Career Center, Bakersfield

December 7 – Pearl Harbor Day Remembrance Ceremony at Kern County WW II Veterans

Memorial

December 10 – Bakersfield Toy Run

December 13 - Chapter 26 – Bakersfield general membership meeting

December 15 – Funeral for ALRDOC Past President Terry Baughman at California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery, Seaside (Kudos to Districts 28 for organizing the escort and Chapters 31, 69, 591, 694 and District 13 for assisting and attending)

December 16 – Hosted ALR Chapters 3 & 147, and the Combat Vets Motorcycle Association Special Needs Children Toy Run stop at Bakersfield Post 26

December 17 - Recruit Send off and Escort of 2023 at Armed Forces Career Center, Bakersfield

December 18 - California Legacy Run committee meeting

Events within my Area in the coming weeks & month:

January 19 – Escort to San Joaquin National Cemetery, Santa Nella for Art Cope, Director of

Chapter 476 - California City

January 20 – TAL District 15 meeting at Bakersfield Post 26.

Events planned for the months to come:

February 3 – TAL Area 3 meeting at Clovis Post 147

1. **Sgt. At Arms’ Report** – Marc Lawrie
2. **Secretary’s Report** – Debbie Proffitt

Supported the escorts for Charles Landreth and Patrick McDowell.

Escorted Santa to the Joint Forces Training Base for a party for families in need.

Supported Wreaths Across America at the Downey Cemetery. WAA added 500 new cemeteries

this year.

2/3rds of the way thru the year and we are at 15 names on the Rider Everlasting list.

Chapter member renewals due by December 31.

Online roster updates due by January 31.

Per Capita due February 14/Delegate fees due 3/13.

Bylaws are due 3/1.

Tracking went out. If it’s in orange there is an issue with one or more membership numbers on the roster.

1. **Area Reports** –
2. **Area 1 Vice D –** Vacant/Sam Fergason

Ch 119-Flag line for 100th birthday surprise party for a WW2 veteran.

-Participated in a Christmas parade for a senior community.

1. **Area 2 Vice D –** Robert Lopez

Participated in traffic control for Wreaths Across America and was the first time all the veterans received a wreath.

Escorted PP Terry Baughman to his final resting place.

Ch 69-

2 Honor Missions, share your Holiday parade, Marine Toys for Tots.

D 28-

Attended Honor Mission for: William Grandy USA

Made donations to Veterans Memorial, Girls State, Post 593 Thanksgiving Meal

Issued Food Bank meals for Chualar Community.

ALR District 28 Annual Veterans Day Ceremony

Attended ALR Chapter 69 Veterans Poker Run

Events within my Chapter in the coming weeks & months:

Saturday December 2 nd – Toys for Tots Run, Marine Corps Reserve Santa Cruz.

Friday December 8 th – Run to KSBW/Salvation Army Share Your Holiday.

Saturday December 9 th – ALR District 28 Christmas Party.

Friday December 15 th – Honor Ceremonies for Past President Terry Baughman.

Saturday December 16th – Wreaths Across America.

Events planned for the months to come:

Monday January 1st – Burrito Run to Gilroy Veterans Memorial Building.

Ch 64-

Honor mission. Toy drive.

Ch 591-

11/3/23- Attended CA Central Coast Veterans Cemetery Foundation (CCCVCF) Monthly Mtg (Kunoa)

11/6/23- Attended UVC presentation to honor Veteran Janet Parks for Lifetime Achievement (Kunoa)

11/9/23- Assisted with flag planting for Vets at El Carmelo Cemetery (Kunoa)

11/11/23- Assisted/ Participated in Vets Day Ceremony and Salinas Parade (Kunoa/ Hostetler/ Benitez)

Events within my Area in the coming weeks & month:

12/16/23- Wreaths Across American at the California Central Coast Veteran’s Cemetery in Seaside

Patriot Guard Honor Missions/ Special Events for Christmas

Events planned for the months to come:

Installation of Officers being planned for when new building is completed. ETC Feb/Mar

Ch 105-

Second Ride with 23rd Marine Regiment Escort for a Fallen Airmen

Veterans Day Ceremony & Car Show $195.00 Car Show Donation’s $195.00 Picked up tires for the 6x6

Berkeley 1/2 Marathon $720.00 Post Family & 23rd Regiment $720.00

346 DOC Miles 182 DOC Hours Group Miles 2243.

Wreaths Across America escort and wreath laying.

1. **Area 3 Vice D –** Mike Phillips

In the month of December, I rode in two Christmas Parades (Visalia and Lemoore). I was dressed as the Grinch and was a fan favorite with the kids as well as many adults living their best lives. I assisted with the set-up of the Post 18 Christmas Dinner which also welcomed members of all other Veterans organizations in the Visalia community.

Unfortunately, I have to report Tim Lobo LoBretto was involved in an accident wherein the driver of a car changed lanes hitting him. He is recovering with broken left arm and had to have surgery on his right arm.

Below is a list of events Area 3 Chapters have participated in during the last month:

Chapter – 3 Toys for Tots run in Bakersfield

Chapter - 18 National Commander Escort, Post 18 Christmas Dinner, Lemoore Christmas Parade, Visalia Candy Cane Lane Christmas Parade, Memorial Poker Run, Post476 Fall Festival, Hog Veterans Poker Run, Recruitment Ride, Elks Veterans

Breakfast and the Tulare Toys for Tots Run.

Chapter - 20 Funeral Escort and the National Commanders Escort

Chapter - 26 Escort New Recruits to MEPS and the National Commander Escort

Chapter – 83 Wreath Across America and a funeral escort.

Chapter – 88 Wreaths Across America, Holiday Dinner at Post 88, Toys for Tots and Helmets for Heros

Chapter - 100 Funeral Escort/Flag Line X2 and the Lemoore Christmas Parade

Chapter – 108 Hospice visit/Homeless Outreach

Chapter – 147 Poker Run

Chapter - 221 Poker Run

The Escalon chapter has more going on than just people not wanting to come to meetings. There are cliques and dissention. Ken Sutton will contact each current member to find out if they want to close the chapter and join another or to work to keep the chapter.

1. **Area 4 Vice D –** Brian Toal

Had member ride out to Riverside National Cemetery to participate in Wreaths Across America.

**Chapter 184:**

December – Chapter 184 Christmas get together and donations of toys for Josephs gift

December 18 – Escort duty for National Commander visit and last-minute visit to Post 184

**Chapter 61:**

December 18 – Escort duty for National Commander visit

Members helped out a veteran who lost everything in a house fire recently. Debbie stated there is a charity called Patriots and Paws that will help out a veteran or enlisted

Service member with household furniture and goods for free.

1. **Area 5 Vice D –** Robert Partlow
2. **Area 6 Vice D –** Cristina Molina

Chapter 30 participated in the Pomona Christmas parade with the support of local Chapters. They have also added new members.

Chapter 741 is losing a few members that do not participate in anything. However, they are voting in a new member so their Chapter will be 25 strong.

Chapter 180 has been participating in local parades and toy drives. Chapter Director was Santa for Christmas events at the Post.

Chapter 43 voted in a new member and stand at 25 Riders.

Area Vice – Supported the Army Reserves 420th Movement Control Battalion Christmas Party at Post 817. Helped coordinate the efforts and covered the Battalion’s rental of the hall. Represented Riders by dressing as Santa and showing up on the bike. Post 817 was presented a plaque.

* Facilitated the replacement of the roof at Post 817, which was completed this month. Started working on this effort before transfer to Post 817. Worked with Palisades Post 283. Thanks to them and to Immediate Past Commander Romano for his support.
* Attended the Luncheon for the National Commander at Post 826 in Woodland Hills. Represented in my ALR jacket and was personally coined by the National Commander.

1. **Officer Reports-**
   1. **Jr. Past President –** Rey Ruiz (In Memoriam)
   2. **Chaplain –** Mark Rice
   3. **Historian –** Louisa Carson

11/18 ALR 95 Memorial Ride for Leland Neva Director Attended the ride with Jeff in support of our fallen member. There were 4 ALR Chapters along with 5 MCs who participated. Posted onto social media.

11/19 American Legion Post 476 California City Family Fall Festival- Attended with four of ALR Ch 18 members as well as ALR 20 and 26. Posted onto social media.

11/27 Candy Cane Lane Parade in Visalia where our riders were in the parade and ALR Member Grinch made an appearance. Posted onto social media.

12/02 Lemoore Christmas Parade was attended by ALR Chapters 100, 3, and 18. Posted onto social media.

12/03 RiverView Luncheon where we recruited another member as we attended the museum.

12/6 Pearl Harbor Breakfast hosted by Quail Park at Shannon Ranch where the local Veterans were a part of the morning ceremony to honor those who were lost at Pearl Harbor.

12/9 American Thunder Toy Run in Tulare was attended by four members of ALR 18. We had breakfast before we started out on the route to deliver toys for Tulare’s children. Posted onto social media.

12/9 Visalia Harley-Davidson Food Drive attended by three members that donated nonperishable food items to fill the pantry at our local soup kitchens and homeless shelters. Posted onto social media.

12/10 Bakersfield Toy Run was attended by ALR Ch 3, 18, 26, & 221. We had a late breakfast, lunch, brunch, and all the foods with ALR Ch 26 after the ride through Bakersfield downtown. Posted onto social media.

12/14 Post 18 Christmas Dinner attended by 14 members of ALR 18 plus their families. We got a group photo with Santa as well. Posted onto social media.

12/15-17 American Legion National Commander Daniel Seehafer escort from San Diego through Area 5 & 6 where we ended our time escorting him to dinner in Chino. We visited 7 Posts and got to get a bit of the history from each Post. To be posted.

Louisa stated that originally her WHY was to join to ride. Over time she has learned of all the other portions of the Legion and her WHY has changed to serving our veterans and their families.

* 1. **Judge Advocate –** Donny Brannon
  2. **Membership Officer –** Rochelle Billet-Smith

11/19/2013-Meet & Greet at Chapter 476

11/27/2023-CLR Meeting

12/2/2023-Auxiliary District 15 Meeting

12/8/2023-American Legion Post 26, Friday Night Dinner

12/10/2023-Bakersfield Toy Run

12/12/2023-ALR Chapter 26 E-Board Meeting

12/13/2023-ALR Chapter 26 Meeting

12/16/2023-Bakersfield National Cemetery Wreath Laying

12/16/2023- Hosted Chapter 3, 147, Combat Vets at Post 26

12/18/2023-CLR Meeting

Rochelle suggests that all members carry brochures for new Legion, Sons and Aux members with them. Her chapter has increased by 2 members who saw what the chapter was doing and wanted to participate.

* 1. **Parliamentarian –** Mick Sobczak

Thank you to Mike and Debbie for attending my father-in-law, Patrick McDowell’s, funeral.

Thank you for the outpouring of sympathy and concern.

* 1. **Quartermaster –** Mike Phillips

We have 1 order payment received, 2 orders in process and 8 orders were completed. Please pay for all orders submitted in a timely manner and your orders will get out to you as quickly as possible.

Sweatshirts are now available for order at a price of $40 plus shipping.

If you do not receive your invoice with 4 days of placing your order, first check your spam as I have found that some of my invoices go there. If you have not received your invoice, please email me at alrdocquartermast@gmail.com and I will email you a copy of your invoice.

If you have any questions regarding your orders feel free to give an email or a call. Leave a message and I will return your call as I don’t generally answer numbers I don’t know. 559-759-7705.

My bike is back in the shop. They think it’s the O2 sensors.

Reminder that we still have sweatshirts for sale.

We need to order more berets.

* 1. **Safety Officer –** Andrew Trapani

On November 20th the DOC Safety Committee held a ZOOM Meeting to discuss changes to the ALR DOC Safety Handbook as well as the DOC Mileage Cup Rules

There was a lot of progress made. The final draft should be completed in January and become effective April 1 2024.

The changes to the Cup Rules involve changes to loss of mileage due to an incident. Also creating different divisions by Chapter size for mileage awards.

Th changes to the Safety Handbook include clarification on licensing requirements for three-wheel trikes and bikes with side cars.

A member of Chapter 105 was involved in a solo incident on the way to meet up with the Chapter for a mission. He suffered a broken shoulder as a result of the incident.

* 1. **Service Officer –** George Smith
  2. **Webmaster/Public Relations –** Tom Lively

Attended National Commander Escort on 12/16/2023

Fixed access for several individuals and actively responding to emails.

Maintaining Calendar and News.

**Public Relations Committee Chair**

Working with Committee to establish Instagram and TikTok accounts.

1. **Committee Reports** –
   1. **California Legacy Run –** Rochelle Billet-Smith

Getting things together. Need help with the website. If you can help please contact me.

* 1. **Convention and Rally –** Bob Atchley

The 2024 Rally and the 2025 convention committees are moving along. The 2024 convention flyer has been posted.

* 1. **PP/DC –** Dennis Kee
  2. **Ways and Means –** Kathleen McClary

This month’s report is short, sweet, and to the point. The Legacy Quilt 2024 is done. All tickets were picked up by Chapters, the Area Vice Directors or a representative thereof, to be distributed. Also distributed was an informational letter including when ALL money is due, who to make checks out to, who &amp; where to mail them, and who to contact if they need more tickets. I have emailed all of the Area Vice Directors requesting that they get all tickets out to the Chapters ASAP so the Chapters have time to sell them. I would really like to have all distributed tickets sold this year, and hopefully most if not all of the ones not

assigned to a specific Chapter. I have only received money and ticket stubs from one chapter at this time.

The 2025 quilt design is set, and some preliminary work has been done. The 2025 quilt will be displayed at the 2024 Convention in San Diego, and tickets will be distributed at that time so Chapters will have basically a year to sell tickets.

1. **Unfinished Business-**
   1. Chapter 263 Escalon update about returning to normal business.

See area 3 report.

* 1. Safety Committee update on Mileage Cup Rules.

See Safety Committee report.

1. **New Business-**
   1. Area 1 Director Lane Ybright submitted his resignation on December 4, 2023

Motion to accept the resignation of Area 1 Vice Director Lane Ybright by Mike Phillips. 2nd by William Blackstone. Passed by vote of DEC.

* 1. Ratify Sam Fergason, Chapter 119 Placerville, as Area 1 Vice Director

Motion to ratify Sam Fergason, Chapter 119, as Area 1 Vice Director by Mike Phillips. 2nd by William Blackstone. Passed by vote of DEC.

Sam states he will do his best to represent Area 1.

* 1. Rider Everlasting ribbons redo

There are at least 3 ribbons from prior years that were done with stickers. They need to be redone with embroidery. Mick stated they can be done from the convention fund. There will also need to be at least 2 extra ribbons this year for Past Presidents Terry Baughman and Albert Villa.

1. **Sick / Memorial-**

**Ill/injured:**

Chapter 184 – Jeff Brookes down with pulled bicep muscle

Chapter 147 - Tim LoBretto-accident-broken right arm and surgery on his other arm.

Chapter 105 – Gary Shweid-broken shoulder

Chapter 79 – William Blackstone will be having heart surgery on January 9th.

Chapter 18 – Lisa Rojas had neck surgery.

**Rider Everlasting:**

Chapter 534-Gene Baird-heart attack

Chapter 476-Art Cope-Director

District 28-Past President Terry Baughman

1. **Good of the Riders-**

Ralph- I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. For those

who are traveling over the holidays, please be safe! I am looking forward to serving our

membership in the upcoming year.

Mike-There were fines totaling $40 for the National commander’s escort that will go to the Legacy Run.

Mike-We have a good time on the calls, good energy. Take that energy back to your chapters and posts and infect them with it. We have toxicity in our posts and chapters. We are the face of the Legion family.

1. **Next Meeting Date** – January 25, 2024 @ 1900 hours.
2. **Benediction** – PP Steve Weber
3. **Adjournment** – Director Mike Smith @ 8:15pm