



Stevens Creek Post 642 The Ranger Way
January 2025 Newsletter
Mailing Address: PO Box 302,
Cupertino, CA 95015



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Source: Army Ranger Full Color Embroidered Tab – Vanguard Industries (vanguardmil.com)

Upcoming events for December 2024-January 2025

6 Jan 1900 hrs. Post 642 Monthly Meeting in Person

(Dinner served at 1800 hrs.) Oddfellows. Cupertino Lodge #70, 20589 Homestead Ave. Cupertino, CA

For more events and detailed event information please visit our [website events page](#).



Commander's Corner

Greetings and Happy New Year fellow Legionnaires,

Now that we are officially in the winter season where the days are shorter and the nights colder it's time to celebrate the new year 2025. What better way to celebrate the new year than to start attending our Monthly meetings once again. I have been working with several agencies to swing by our meetings and provide us with key information and updates for our Post and other Veterans in the area.

This upcoming month I have the Veterans Support Center from the Palo Alto VA stopping by and providing our Post with an update on the various services they provide to Veterans here in Santa Clara county. Please mention this to some of your Veteran friends and have them attend our meeting and hear the latest. Please look at our Post Calendar for the latest events and meetings.

Thanks to those of you who braved the elements and attended our 9th Annual Wreaths Across America ceremony on the 14th of December. It was definitely an event not to forget, as it was windy, rainy, sunny with a rainbow or two and it kept repeating in no sequential order. Needless to say over 2100 wreaths were placed on the grave markers by the Scouts, community and volunteers on the 14th.

I believe you all are aware of the passing of our current Second Vice Commander Gordon Hall. His enthusiasm and support of the Boys State Program was instrumental in having our Post sponsor more than 20 students during his tenure as the Boys State POC for our Post. He will be missed by all of us. We as a Post need to keep the Boys State spirit alive and continue to recruit in the local high schools for students who are interested in the program. At the meeting I will be asking for the Post to set up a committee to share the responsibilities of the Boys State program.

I look forward to seeing as many of you at our January meeting. Stay safe, warm and dry this winter.

“Duty First”

Arturo

Upcoming events for January 2025-April 2025

- 6 Jan 1900 hrs. **Post 642 Monthly Meeting in Person (Dinner served at 1800 hrs.) Oddfellows.
Cupertino Lodge #70, 20589 Homestead Ave. Cupertino, CA**
- 15 Jan 1900 Hrs. District 13 Meeting: Post 558, 347 First St. Los Altos, CA
- 3 Feb 1900 hrs. **Post 642 Monthly Meeting in Person (Dinner served at 1800 hrs.) Oddfellows.
Cupertino Lodge #70, 20589 Homestead Ave. Cupertino, CA**
- 3 Mar 1900 hrs. **Post 642 Monthly Meeting in Person (Dinner served at 1800 hrs.) Oddfellows.
Cupertino Lodge #70, 20589 Homestead Ave. Cupertino, CA**
- 11 Mar 1900 Hrs. District 13 Meeting: Post 419, 958 Homestead Rd., Santa Clara, CA
- 7 Apr 1900 hrs. **Post 642 Monthly Meeting in Person (Dinner served at 1800 hrs.) Oddfellows.
Cupertino Lodge #70, 20589 Homestead Ave. Cupertino, CA**
- 29 Apr 1900 Hrs. District 13 Meeting: Post 564: 2120 Walsh Ave, Santa Clara, CA

For more events and detailed event information please visit our [website events page](#).

Other Activities on Post Calendar

Fellow Legionnaires, although our Post does not have many events as in the past, I have updated our [Post calendar](#) with events from Posts that are close to Cupertino. Please look as there are a considerable number of events that are open to Legionnaires and their families. More importantly by attending you can have fun and support the American Legion.



"Th' hell this ain't th' most important hole in the world. I'm in it."

1st Vice Commander's Note

Greetings Fellow Legionnaires,

As 1st Vice Commander, I would like to make sure that we are inviting our fellow veterans to our Post meeting which is on January 6th. This month also brings us the Feast of the Epiphany (6th also known as Little Christmas with a party in San Jose's Little Italy), De Anza Vet Lunch (8th), and District 13 Meeting (15th).

There is also Celebration of Life for Autrey James (105th Department of California Commander and Persian Gulf War Coast Guard Veteran) at the Oakland Columbia Club (25th). He was from Detroit, so wear Lions and Tigers gear.

We are still working on increasing membership, but we have met current goals and The post has an application page for both new applications and renewals at <https://www.americanlegionpost642.com/site/application.php> or your My Legion account here: <https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Membership/Renew>

In December, we had a blustery, cold Wreaths across America, where I was able to pipe at both Gate of Heaven and Los Gatos Memorial Park ceremonies. I was able to pipe at my Mum and Dad's grave too, whom were both "Veterans" of the Blitz as children and my Dad was a Royal Army Medical Corps medic in the British Army of the Rhine (Occupation Forces) and the Burma Uprising. We bid farewell to our 2nd Vice Gordon Hall as he entered Post Everlasting on the 28th. There was good attendance by the Post.

We would really like to get more people attending the Post meetings and events and enjoy social aspects of membership, so let us know your ideas by coming to our meetings. Do give us heads up, so that we can requisition extra rations versus our regular contingent. The next person on the meals roster will have to get the cooler with drinks, etc. If additional drinks are required, it will be reimbursed above the normal meal amount. Remember, if you need a ride, contact either me or one of the officers.

Please remember that if you have Post or Veterans events that you would like on the calendar to get them to Arturo or the District. Please include pertinent information like event information, contacts, address, where to meet, etc. <https://www.americanlegionpost642.com/site/eventscalendar.php?y=2023&m=3>

If you know of deceased members during the past few months either bring their name and share with our District Chaplain, Sunny Dosanjh or send to him at dos@dosanjhusa.com

To Comradeship!
Vincent Guinnane, MSME, P.E.
CW4, 881A1, USAR (Retired)
vguinnane@comcast.net

2025 Membership Report (As of 31 December)

2025 Membership Goal: 68	Total Members: 50
Paid Up for Life (PUFL): 16	New Members: 1 (Post 419 Transfer)
Online Renewals: 21	Renewals Pending Submittal: 4 (sent)
Mail Renewals: 11	Members not yet renewed: 17
Post 1000 Transfers: 0	District Rank: Tied for 5th/12 or 1st with transmittals
Newly renewed Members:	
New Members:	

Additional Meeting Notes for February, but RSVP's required by January 24th.

My Fellow Area 2 Legionnaires:

National Commander James A. LaCoursiere Jr., his staff, along with Department Commander Nick Rosa, will arrive in San Francisco on February 5, 2025, as part of his tour of California. American Legion Cathay Post 384 has arranged a sumptuous luncheon to take place on Thursday, February 6, 2025, at noon. The luncheon will be held at the Osmanthus Restaurant located at 504 Broadway Street, San Francisco, CA. 94133. This will offer legionnaires from Area 2 a chance to meet, chat, and hear the visions of the National Commander. The cost of the luncheon is \$35 per person. In order to facilitate this gathering, I need a headcount of the attendees, and thus your RSVP to this [email](#) must be received no later than the end of the business day on Friday, January 24, 2025. Looking forward to seeing you.

For God and Country

Nelson Lum

8th District Commander



Source: <https://images.app.goo.gl/t54bPZ7B2fTUxaLx8>

Post 642 Monthly Meeting Schedule for 2023-24 Year

The meeting dates can be found on the [Post Website Calendar](#).

Need A Ride?

Are you a member who hasn't had a chance to attend one of our meetings or activities because you have difficulties driving at night, or are no longer able to drive? If so, please feel free to contact the 1st Vice Commander (arturo@cadiz.com) or at 408-838-0375 and let him know. We will arrange to have someone pick you up and drop you off at home. We currently have several members who use this service and will be more than happy to assist others in being able to attend our meetings and activities. It's a great opportunity to get out of the house, especially if you are not able to on your own and meet fellow Legion members and attend our meeting.



Service Officer Report

Government Shutdown

Even if there's a government shutdown, Veterans will still be able to access their health care, benefits, and memorial services from VA.



SERVICES TO VETERANS NOT IMPACTED:



VA Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, and Vet Centers will be open as usual and providing all services.



VA benefits will continue to be processed and delivered, including compensation, pension, education, and housing benefits.



Burials will continue at VA national cemeteries. Applications for headstones, markers, and burial benefits processing will continue.



The Board of Veterans' Appeals will continue decisions on Veterans' cases.



Call Centers: VA's primary call center (1-800-MyVA411) and the Veterans Crisis Line (Dial 988, Press 1) will remain open 24/7.



Suicide prevention programs, homelessness services, and caregiver support will continue.



HAVE A QUESTION? CALL US!

The one number all Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors can use to access VA resources 24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year.

1-800-MYVA411 (1-800-698-2411)



SERVICES TO VETERANS IMPACTED:



VA will cease providing transition program assistance and career counseling.



Call Centers: VA's GI Bill (1-888-GIBILL-1) and National Cemetery Applicant Assistance (1-800-697-6947) hotlines will be closed.



VA benefits regional offices will be closed.



Public Affairs and outreach to Veterans will cease, including social media, VetResources emails, and responses to press inquiries.



No grounds maintenance or placement of permanent headstones at VA cemeteries.

Applications for pre-need burial at VA cemeteries will not be processed.

No printing of new Presidential Memorial Certificates.



No outreach to state, county, tribal, municipal, faith-based, and community-based partners by VA Central Office.

[DOWNLOAD THE VETERANS FIELD GUIDE TO A GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN](#)

Wishing you a safe and happy new year!



[It's okay, to not be okay. You're not alone.](#)

The holidays can bring joy and warm feelings, but they can also bring added stress and difficult emotions. If you deal with depression, anxiety, PTSD, or other mental health challenges, the holidays can be especially difficult. We have resources and tools to help you take extra care of your mental health. And if you need it, there's help available.

[Keys to manage stress](#)

[Videos on stress management](#)

[Stress relief relaxation exercises](#)

[Tips to manage depression during the holidays](#)

[Tips and tools for coping with PTSD](#)

[VA mobile apps for PTSD support](#)

[Are you a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one?](#)

To connect with a Veterans Crisis Line responder anytime day or night:

- [Dial 988 then Press 1](#)
- Start a [confidential chat](#)
- Text 838255

- For TTY: Dial 711 then 988

You don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to call.

Historians Report

Jan 2

1967: In just one day, Col. Robin Olds' 8th Tactical Fighter Wing - the "Wolfpack" – wipes out half of North Vietnam's MiG 21 fighter fleet in Operation "Bolo". Olds' advanced F-4C "Phantoms" tricked Communist intelligence into thinking the advanced fighters were just another easy target of F-105 "Thunderchief" fighter bombers by flying at altitudes, speeds, routes, and using radio callsigns typical to the less maneuverable F-105s. When the MiGs flew into Olds' ambush, seven "Fishbeds" are shot down in 12 minutes. Col. Olds scores one of the victories, making him the only Air Force ace with kills in both World War II and Vietnam.

Jan 5

1970: Staff Sgt. Franklin D. Miller

(<http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/01/franklin-d-miller-medal-of-honor-citation/>) was leading a long range patrol of Special Forces soldiers and Montagnards in Laos when a booby trap wounded several members. A firefight ensued, wounding the entire patrol. Despite a serious chest wound, Miller is the last man standing and keeps up the fight for several hours, holding off repeated enemy assaults against their position. That evening, as he is about to exhaust his ammunition, a team arrives to relieve the Green Berets. Miller would serve over six years in Southeast Asia. When asked by Richard Nixon upon awarding Miller the Medal of Honor, the president asks him where he wanted to be assigned next. Miller's answer: "Vietnam."

Jan 6

Medal of Honor: 44 years ago in South Vietnam, Army helicopter pilot

Maj. Patrick H. Brady

(<http://www.victoryinstitute.net/blogs/utb/2000/01/patrick-hbrady-medal-of-honor-citation/>) conducted multiple medical evacuation missions in dense fog and in the face of heavy enemy fire. Over the course of

the day, he rescued 51 soldiers and 400 bullet holes were counted in the three helicopters he flew.

Jan 8

1967: 16,000 U.S. and 14,000 South Vietnamese troops enter the "Iron Triangle," a major Viet Cong stronghold near Saigon, on a massive search and destroy mission. The Viet Cong largely avoided contact with the large force, withdrawing to Cambodia or hiding in tunnels. Operation "Cedar Falls" was the largest ground operation of the Vietnam War and marked the first time "tunnel rats" were used.

1973: An Air Force F-4D "Phantom" flown by Capt. Paul D. Howman and 1st Lt. Lawrence W. Kullman shoots down an enemy MiG - the last aerial victory of the Vietnam War.

Jan 11

1969: While leading an armored convoy down a highway in Vietnam's Binh Long Province, 1st Lt. Harold A. Fritz's formation is ambushed. Surrounded on all sides and in danger of being overrun, Fritz — who had been wounded in the initial moments disregards his injuries and heavy enemy fire, leaping from his vehicle to rally his men, directing them to reposition and shift their fire. As the battle wore on, a group of enemy soldiers closed in on the unit. Fritz, armed with just a pistol and bayonet, and some of his fellow men defeat the infiltrating force. Upon arrival of the relief force, Fritz again braves incoming fire to direct the unit. Today, Fritz is one of only 71 surviving Medal of Honor recipients.

Jan 12

1962: Ten miles west of Saigon, U.S. Army H-21 "flying banana" helicopters ferry South Vietnamese paratroopers into battle - the first major American combat operation in what will become the Vietnam War.

Also on this date, the U.S. military begins defoliation operations to deny the Viet Cong use of jungle cover for their movements. Over nine years, Operation "Ranch Hand pilots," whose motto was "Only you can prevent forests," would fly 19,000 sorties and drop an estimated 20 million gallons of defoliant. 10 percent of the vegetation in South Vietnam is destroyed.

1973: An F-4 "Phantom" flown by U.S. Navy Lieutenants Vic Kovaleski and Jim Wise splash a MiG-17, making it the Navy's final air-to-air kill and the last aerial-combat kill of the war.

Jan 19

Act of valor: On this day in 1967, A-4 "Skyhawk" pilot Capt. Michael J. Estocin (USN) earned the Distinguished Flying Cross during aerial combat over North Vietnam. His citation states: "As the leader of three Shrike-configured aircraft, Captain Estocin was responsible for providing warning, detection, and suppression of hostile surface-to-air missile activity directed at elements of the main strike group conducting a coordinated attack against the Dong Phong Thuong Railroad Bridge north of Thanh Hoa, North Vietnam. He lured the opposing missile sites to direct their fire toward his widely dispersed position by deploying the Shrike aircraft well ahead of the main strike group. During the course of the mission, Captain Estocin broadcast timely and accurate warning of enemy missile firings and personally took under fire two enemy missile site, destroying one and causing significant damage to the radar facilities of the other. He was subjected to heavy and accurate enemy anti-aircraft fire throughout the execution of these attacks. After exhausting his ordnance and at great personal peril, Captain Estocin remained on station to act as a lure in drawing any missile fire away from the remaining strike group. Only when assured that the main strike group was clear of the missile threat did Captain Estocin leave the hostile area." In April, Estocin will earn the Medal of Honor (posthumously) for two daring attacks against enemy surface-to-air missile sites.

Jan. 20

1968: North Vietnamese Army tries - and fails - to overrun Marines patrolling hills surrounding the Combat Outpost Khe Sanh. The Battle of Khe Sanh begins, and for the next 77 days, the heavily outnumbered and besieged Marines fought off their attackers, shattering two enemy divisions.

Jan 22

1968: With aerial photographs, ground reconnaissance reports, and a massive array of electronic sensors indicating that some 20,000 North Vietnamese Army soldiers surround the Khe Sanh Combat Base, Operation "Niagara", is underway. The massive air campaign, dubbed "the most concentrated application of aerial firepower in the history of warfare," will rain down nearly 100,000 tons of bombs - and eight times that amount of artillery shells - on the enemy. Meanwhile, transport planes ferry supplies to the besieged Marines in the largest aerial supply operation since the Berlin Airlift.

1969: Operation "Dewey Canyon", the Marine Corps' last major offensive of the Vietnam War, begins. Marines under the command of Col. Robert H. Barrow will spend 56 days clearing out the North Vietnamese Army's stronghold near the A Shau Valley.

Jan 28

1966: Marines hit the beaches of the South Vietnam's Quang Ngai province in the first amphibious landing since Korea. The Americans meet little resistance as they head inland, then move to cut off retreating North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong forces.

1973: B-52s carried out their final combat sortie in Southeast Asia – striking targets in South Vietnam. Operation ARC LIGHT had started in 1965.

Jan 30

1968: (Featured image) At 2:45 in the morning, a 19-man Viet Cong suicide squad blows a hole in the wall of the U.S. Embassy at Saigon, managing to hold the courtyard for six hours until paratroopers can retake the compound. 10,000 North Vietnamese soldiers take the city of Hue, triggering a grueling house-to-house battle with U.S. and South Vietnamese soldiers. Meanwhile, virtually all of South Vietnam's major urban areas and bases are under attack.

The Vietnamese Tet Offensive launched by over 70,000 jointly operating North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces — has kicked off across South Vietnam. The Communists trade their typical guerilla tactics for a risky, more conventional strategy intended to weaken the government in Saigon and inspire a revolutionary uprising. Militarily speaking, the Communists are shattered, with an estimated 50,000 killed, wounded or captured. But in the United States, the psychological effect of Tet playing out in the media drains the resolve of the American public thanks to the negative reporting of Walter Cronkite.