



# Moorpark Post 502

The American Legion • Sixteenth District •

March 2007

## Commander's Message

*Looking Forward*

### **Bruce Thomas**

American Legion Post 502 Commander

As we move into the next Legion year, the possibilities are endless. New prospects for a Post Hall, although temporary, look promising. Our cash flow must be addressed and resolved. The dues increase from the National Organization has hurt us. However, we will do all that we can to overcome the shortfall and keep the dues were they currently are for our Post, \$25.00. Be patient with us and continue your support. At the end of the day, we are looking toward the betterment of our Veterans, their Families and the Community.

One of the events employed last year to help with fundraising that was a ride on a WW II vintage airplane called the T-6 Pilot Maker. This proved to be a successful undertaking for the Post and something we will try again in the very near future. This was made possible by the Jason Air Racing Team and done under the guidance of Joe Catrambone, a long time member of the Post.

My thanks to Jim Beaver for the Newsletter; it is long over due. I am sure Jim will do his best to keep you informed as to what is happening with your Post.

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## Adjutants Report

### **Pete Duncan**

American Legion Post 502 Adjutant

After years of struggle, it would appear that the Post has struck pay dirt. I am referring to the Newsletter you are currently reading. In January, our Historian, Jim Beaver, said he would give it a go as editor, but only as long as the membership support his efforts. In the past, We would send out a communiqué under the banner of 'newsletter', but with other responsibilities always getting in the way, it became difficult to maintain an acceptable schedule and the mailing cycling of that newsletter would fluctuate between something and not at all. It is safe to say, those days are behind us. Thank-you, Jim!

We must now feed Jim stuff for publication. That would be items of interest and importance to you, the reader. Of course, Jim will have the final say as to what goes into the Newsletter, but don't be afraid to challenge his authority. The fact that he is a retired Peace Officer should not be an intimidation and his 24-years of membership in the Legion should not stand in your way.

This newsletter will be an expensive undertaking; consequently, we will start out slow. Publication should be about four times a year. One of the ways to help defray the cost would be to use electronic mail as much as possible. If you currently have an email address, send it to Post 502 at [moorparkpost502@aol.com](mailto:moorparkpost502@aol.com). Please write 'NEWSLETTER EMAIL' in the SUBJECT area and be sure to include your name and email address. That way we know whose name to remove from the snail mail hard copy mailing list.

I want to thank Jim his willingness to be more involved (see FYI that follows) and especially for taking on this challenging but rewarding endeavor.

**Veterans' Memorial Update:** Several months back some Veterans living in Moorpark were asked to participate in an Advisory Group to provide some input

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## Looking Forward:

As you may know, I am a member of the Moorpark School Board. Often there are conflicts with Post events. I have addressed this concern with Adjutant Duncan and we have agreed that, with our current leadership this will not prove to be an impediment to the successful running of the Post. In that spirit, I have agreed to run for Post Commander at least one more time. Should I be elected to that post I will continue to make Veterans and their welfare my priority.

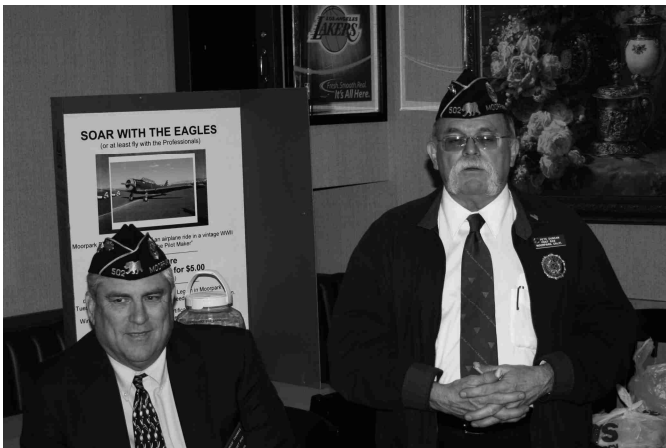
One of our newer members, Kevin Panet has agreed to create a website for the Post and to serve as the Webmaster. This will be of great value to our success and I look forward to viewing his work. Adjutant Duncan has assured me that we have a URL and a location for this useful tool. We are moving ahead.

If you need to reach me for any reason or with concerns, drop me an email at [moorparkpost502@aol.com](mailto:moorparkpost502@aol.com) and just say 'Commander' in the subject; or call the Post at 805.523.3355 and leave me a message. I will get back to you.

Here is to a successful Post and a successful coming year.

Yours in comradeship,

Bruce Thomas  
Commander. ❖



Commander Thomas and Adjutant Duncan announce the result of the Raffle Fund Raiser at December's Post 502 meeting.

## Vice Commander Message

### Jim Carpenter

American Legion Post 502 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander

Greetings to all Legionnaires of Post 502,

This year promises to be very eventful for Moorpark veterans and especially for our Post.

I would like to update you on the major items we have been pursuing:

#### City Veterans Memorial,

Last year the city formed a Moorpark Citizens' Veterans Committee to identify a location and propose suggestions for the construction of a Memorial site dedicated to honor the service of all veterans. Pete Duncan and myself are honored to be representing the Post as part of this committee, which is comprised entirely of veterans.

As the result of this committee's effort the corner of Flinn Ave. and Spring Road was designated as the site location and a list of design priorities was established.

The city then prepared and posted a Request for Qualifications with the intent of attracting the response of consulting professionals interested in presenting proposals for the project. There have been several applicants and The Public Arts Advisory Committee is preparing to interview and select the top candidate(s) to be commissioned for the project later this month.

This is really exciting news as the wheels are in motion to make this happen!

#### Location for Post Meetings,

Discussions are underway to allow the Post to have use of a city-owned house for Legion activities. This would provide us with a place to call home if all parties can come to an agreement on requirements, utilities and duration of occupancy.

**This will require a concentrated effort on all members to provide fund raising ideas and participate in events to raise the additional expenses necessary for this to happen.**  
**WE NEED A HOME!**

#### Fundraising,

You all should be aware of the need to raise funds to support the various programs our Post participates in. This is becoming even more pressing as we attempt to take on important obligations such as maintaining a home for the Post and expanding our involvement in community activities.

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**Adjutants report:**

to the City with regard to a Veterans' Memorial. The short version is this; a location across the street from the new Police Station at Spring Road and Flinn Avenue was selected. Sometime this month, the Moorpark Arts Commission will be meeting to select an Architect for this project.

As a member of this group, I have been impressed with the manner with which the process has developed and progressed. From a distance, it would appear that things are moving slowly, but let me assure you, a new Veterans' Memorial in the City of Moorpark is on the fast track. Most recently, the members were asked to finalize their concepts for input for the design. This is nothing more than the Advisory Group suggesting what the final Memorial should include. The one thing I can say for sure is that the entire Group agreed that whatever the final design should represent, it must be a destination for those that visit it.

At our February meeting, a discussion was brought to the floor with regard to the future of the Veterans' Memorial on the corner of Moorpark and Los Angeles Avenues. The history surrounding this location is ingrained into the history of Moorpark Post 502 and the community. Not only has it been the responsibility of the Post to look after this location and provide maintenance to its physical elements, it is the site of many Veteran and active duty military related services. Those include such events as Veterans' Day, Memorial Day, the addition of names and some very special occasions.

The location on which the Memorial stands belongs to CALTRANS. You read that right. The State of California, through this agency, can utilize that little triangle of space, as they deem necessary. Is that a problem? Yes and no. The 'no' part is, Caltrans will probably not want to use that location anytime in the near future. The key word here is probably. For those of you who may remember, the location where the Memorial currently sits was, at one time, in the middle of the road. It was an island with a flagpole. Under the leadership of then Post Commander Mario Silos and Committee Chair Henry Bravo, Caltrans and the Janss Corporation made it possible for the flagpole to remain and for the addition of several granite stones. On the stones were inscribed the names of those who gave their lives while in service to Country and who, at sometime had a connection with Moorpark. The 'yes' part is; State Routes 118 and 23 surround this location making it a Memorial in a sea of traffic congestion that, even on holidays, becomes unbearable and competes with our services. Caltrans has not been willing to block off these routes (it is not practical to do) allowing us to create a safety zone around this location when we conduct our Services. If you have ever been there for one of these events, or stopped by to visit, looking

for a little solitude, you know just how close the vehicles get and high the decibel level can be.

In light of safety concerns, noise concerns, a tenuous long-term future and Memorial degradation it was unanimously decided that the Memorial should be relocated, intact if possible. We are requesting that the Moorpark Veterans' Memorial on the corner of Moorpark and Los Angeles Avenues be relocated and incorporated into the new Moorpark Veterans' Memorial at Spring Road and Flinn Avenue. Whatever the outcome of this request, our Memorial will have to find a new home; if not today, ten, twenty or thirty years from now.

**Meeting Location Update:** Where are we meeting? Well, the news is good and bad. The 'bad' news is, we are still meeting at my house the Second Tuesday of each month. The cat is not happy and I think my wife will be speaking to me soon. The 'good' news is, the City is aware of our plight and has made us an offer, although temporary, to allow the Legion to utilize a small structure not far from City Hall. There is a caveat, however. Due to matters outside our sphere of influence, there are financial considerations that we must address. I am speaking of the County of Ventura, legal liabilities and a couple of other odds-and-ends. These items require us to look at newer and more innovative sources of revenue. Once we can resolve these issues and identify new sources of \$\$ we will be well on our way to a stronger commitment to Veterans, their Families and the Community and we will enjoy a greater visibility within the City, the County and State.

**Post Leadership Update:** With the passing of Mel Swerding, we have been without a First Vice Commander. While Mel lived in North Hills, he did what he could to fulfill his obligations but as his illness progressed, it became increasingly difficult for him to make the trip to Moorpark. Post elections are held in May with nominations beginning in April.

Being First Vice Commander of a Post requires a basic understanding of how The American Legion operates. That understanding usually comes with experience and that experience usually comes from taking part in what we do. Historically, the path to First Vice Commander is

**Adjutants report:**

not a single step. The process is referred to as 'going through the chairs' and is a rite of passage. It usually begins with an appointed position that may range from a committee membership to a non-elected office.

Commander Bruce Thomas has agreed to run for the High Office of Post Commander for another year. Second Vice Commander, James Carpenter, has agreed to run for the High Office of First Vice Commander and James Beaver, Post Historian, has agreed to run for the High Office of Second Vice Commander. Post elections are open to any Post member in good standing. You just have to be nominated and present at the time. If you cannot be present, a letter stating your intentions must be submitted at the time of the nomination.

**\$\$\$ Update:** As you are all aware, The American Legion, at National Convention last year, in an overwhelming floor vote, increased the dues for membership in The American Legion, and they voted for that increase to take affect beginning January 2007. That increase was \$4.50. Ouch! The majority of the Posts in California have increased their dues by five dollars.

The leadership of your Post has pledged not to increase our dues for the next year. With additional expenses as mentioned earlier, Commander Thomas is spearheading a search for newer and more innovative ways to overcome our shortfall. As the Post moves ahead with these efforts we ask that you please keep in mind what we are doing and why, and that you, as a member of The American Legion, continue to show and demonstrate support for your Post.

**FYI:** Pride is a simple expression of what we value. Pride in self, pride in commitment, pride in who and what we are. We show that pride in numerous ways. How we look, how we feel, how we behave. That pride extends to organizations and Post 502 is no exception.

National Commander, Paul Morin has extolled upon our Post Commander, Bruce Thomas a National Certificate of Appreciation, recognizing his outstanding leadership effort for 2006 – 2007 leading our Post into the future with the 'Back to the Basics' campaign in support of our Veterans. This is no slight occurrence and demonstrates the respect with which our humble Post is recognized across all strata of The American Legion.

It is an honor and with pride that I extend to Commander Thomas my sincere appreciation, gratitude and congratulations for a job well done. This is one more reason why 502 is the place to be.

For God and Country,

Pete Duncan  
Adjutant

**Vice Commander Message:**

People need to know we are here if we are to provide assistance and services for our veterans, promote Americanism, encourage education and honor our veterans service to this great country. (THIS IS WHAT WE DO!)

Our Commander, Bruce, is looking into the possibility of providing a two-day electronic recycling event, which has good potential for raising funds. I'm sure he will address this in his column, please read about it.

Sorry to be so long-winded, now you know not to let me get on the soapbox.  
Thank you all.

Jim Carpenter  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander

**Calendar****April**

10 – Tues: Post Meeting 7:00 PM

**May**

8- Tue: Post Meeting 7:00 PM

28 – Mon: Post Memorial Day Services

**June**

12 – Tues: Post Meeting 7:00 PM

**July**

3 – Tue: City of Moorpark 3<sup>rd</sup> of July Fireworks Extravaganza

10 – Tue: Post Meeting 7:00 PM

**August**

14 – Tue: Post Meeting 7:00 PM

**September**

11 – Tue: Post Meeting 7:00 PM

**October**

TBD – Moorpark Country Days

9 – Tue: Post Meeting 7:00 PM

**November**

6 – Tue: Election Day

11 – Sun: Post Veterans Day Services

13 – Tue: Post Meeting 7:00 PM

**December**

11 – Tue: Post Holiday Dinner and Meeting TBD

## **AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT 502**

### **Faye Beaver**

American Legion Unit 502 President

As we reflect on some of the events for this year, we should be proud of all we have accomplished. Our largest accomplishment was the Veteran Lap Robe Project. Approximately twelve hundred Lap Robes vastly exceeded the delivery of 309 from last year!

We are starting out the mid-year doing great things. We had District President Dorothy Davis as a guest at our January meeting; we raised \$150.00 for her special project. We have selected two Girls State Candidates. They will be coming to our meeting on March 27, 2007 to be introduced. Remember that date. The meeting time is 6:00 o'clock p.m...

Membership is the main topic for us at this time. Asking family, friends, neighbors, and even strangers can work if you bring up our club and accomplishments whenever the opportunity arises. New members bring more awareness of what our military does and allows us to do more for them. Remember the Post; they are in the same state of membership as we are. When asking for memberships, ask if the husband would be interested in joining the Post, as well. Remember junior count as a full member. So if you have

daughters, nieces, granddaughters, cousins, o.k. you know what I mean, get them signed up. Hopefully we will get an active juniors program in the works. Maybe our two new Girls State Candidates can work something up for us.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**2007 Poppies are coming!** Poppy Chairman Lynda Fitch needs volunteers during Poppy Week, May 14<sup>th</sup> thru 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Contact Lynda, at (805) 532-1824. Make poppies one of you annual charity donations is means a lot to so many disabled veterans in earning extra monies. See you at the March meeting.

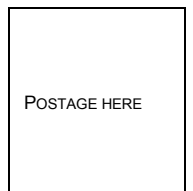
Thank you,  
Faye Beaver, President  
Moorpark American Legion Auxiliary Unit 502



**Cozy for the Holidays:** Moorpark High School students join with American Legion Auxiliary Unit 502 to give fleece throws to veterans. At a local VA hospital delivering the blankets are, from left, Alena Campagna, Nina Nguyen, patient Gilbert Vargas, Lace Granatelli, and Jenna Nguyen.

# A Message of Interest From The American Legion Moorpark Post 502

The American Legion  
Moorpark Post 502  
PO Box 156  
Moorpark, CA 93020-0156



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Mailing Address  
Street Number and Name  
City, State 98765-4321