



**American Legion**  
**Joseph Q. Johnson Post 96**  
PO Box 7096  
Surprise, Arizona 85374-0101



**Newsletter No. 245**

**azalpost96.com**

**January 2024**

**Commander:** Mike Elliott 623-533-4377  
**1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Commander:** Arnold Kohl 602-692-0659  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Commander:** Kelly Donlevy 602-299-5007  
**Finance Officer:** George Van de Langeryt 623-547-6668  
**Adjutant:** VACANT  
**Chaplain:** Joe Urshan 623-584-4653

**Executive Committee:**  
Mike Elliott, Arnold Kohl, Kelly Donlevy  
George Van de Langeryt, Nancie Scalercio

**Post 96 Officers**

**Newsletter:** George Van de Langeryt gvan8888@aol.com  
**Sergeant-At-Arms:** Kirsten Dube 623-694-2473  
**Judge Advocate:** George Van de Langeryt  
**Fundraising Chair:** Kelly Donlevy 602-299-5007  
**Membership:** Mike Elliott & George Van  
**VA Hospital Coordinator:** Rodney Hage 478-501-6625  
**Photographer:** Paul Satkowski 207-706-6250  
**Historian:**  
**Past Commander:** Nancie Scalercio  
**ALR Chapter 96 Director:** Eddie Jenness 480-584-1145

*The Surprise Post 96 Newsletter is the official publication of Joseph Q. Johnson Post 96*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE!**

***NEXT Post business meeting 1800 January 25 at AZ Traditions Neighborhood Center  
17225 N Citrus Rd., Surprise, AZ 85374***

***Post Officer's meeting 1600 January 4 at the Commander's home***

***Voiture 1154 Promenade on January 6 is canceled.***

***Marty Schwab Memorial Breakfast 1000 Sunday January 21 NEW LOCATION  
Richi's Diner - 15609 W Bell Rd #100, Surprise, AZ 85374***



## **COMMANDERS CORNER**



Happy New Year everyone. Let us all gather around and make this a great year for all Veterans, Service Members, Children, and our community. I invite everyone to attend meetings, volunteer, and recruit others for membership.

Together we can accomplish many great deeds. We are doing well with recruiting. Current numbers show that we are at our goal of 183 active members, which is our current goal. However, 44 have not paid their dues to get 100% of our goal. We are currently at 75.41%.

By the time you get this newsletter, we will have had our last meeting for calendar year. I thank everyone who attended this year and hope that next year the numbers will grow.

For God and Country,  
Mike Elliott, Legion Rider, Post 96 Commander

## **FROM THE 1<sup>st</sup> VICE-COMMANDER**



### **2024 A New Year, What Will It Bring?**

Christmas, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are behind us, and we have entered the year 2024. What will the New Year bring? That is something we can't be sure of, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't be making plans. Remember how fast 2023 went?

What will we as individuals and as American Legion Post 96 accomplish in 2024? Will we be stagnant, or will we **all** be involved in growing our Post, in supporting the Post's fund-raising activities, in donating our time to support each other, other veterans and active military? Will we listen to reason; support each other and our Post? Will we try to not let our feelings be easily hurt? Will we try to consider the opinion of other Legionnaires without being upset?

The American Legion was founded on four pillars: Americanism, Children and Youth, National Security, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation.

Our goal in the American Legion and at Surprise Post 96 is to provide morale support for each other, assist each other, provide support for other veterans in need and to help active military members and their

families. In 2023, we contributed monetary support to a program headquartered at Luke AFB, which provides assistance for the children of military children living in Arizona. We also contributed to a multi-Post fundraiser to provide Thanksgiving Day meals for military dependents in need. Post 96 makes a monthly contribution to MANA House, which provides shelter and support to get homeless veterans off the streets.

Post 96 supports Americanism by sponsoring boys at Boys' State where they can learn how the American government is supposed to function. None of these things happen without the support of the members of our Post. Especially those members who assist with our fund-raising activities. Another way Post 96 supports Americanism is through the retirement of unserviceable American Flags. Post 96 is a member organization of North West Valley Veterans Association. As a member organization, some of our members take turns with other member veterans' organizations in retiring flags by cremation. Together with these same fellow veterans' organizations, we organize and conduct Memorial Day and Veterans Day observances programs.

In 2023 and prior years Post 96 Legion Riders have conducted fund raisers to send youth to ALLECA (AMERICAN LEGION LAW ENFORCEMENT CAREER Academy – ARIZONA) and provide support to other worthwhile veteran causes.

A few members try very hard to make this work succeed. What is needed is more effort, more support, and more dedication from the other approximately 95% of our membership.

- **Make 2024 your year of involvement.**
- **Plan to be a part of your Post and its activities.**
- **Attend the monthly meetings and provide morale support for each other.**

With your help, we can accomplish many things. We can be a Post you are proud to be a member of. Don't let 2024 fly by without accomplishing anything.

Plan to be involved in 2024.

For God and Country,  
Arnold "Arnie" Kohl, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander

## **FROM THE 2<sup>nd</sup> VICE-COMMANDER**



This Christmas season is winding down and I hope all of you had a wonderful holiday with family and friends. Now, we head into the New Year and possibly with new resolutions for change. Many like to start the year with new resolutions or try again if not kept from the previous year. I have tried New Year resolutions but have never been able to keep a single one of them. I guess my heart just wasn't in it, at the time. It seemed like the thing to do since it is considered a tradition. Whenever I want to change something now, I just do it and don't wait. It doesn't have to be the New Year to make my life better. We can make changes any time, day, or hour that we choose, and those changes will come and are more likely to continue and flourish when we make those changes from the heart.

Whether you choose to make those resolutions or not, I hope that each and every one of you have an amazing and blessed New Year, all year long!

For God and Country,  
Kelly Donlevy, 2nd Vice Commander

## **FROM THE FINANCE OFFICER AND JUDGE ADVOCATE**



I am happy to say the revised by-laws were presented to the Post and accepted by the membership. I will submit them to Dept. for approval.

The budget for 2023-24 was submitted and approved. It was a busy and productive meeting in October.

Semper Fi!

George Van de Langeryt  
Finance Officer & Judge Advocate  
Past Commander & Legion Rider  
AZ Veterans Hall of Fame – Class of 2018

## **FROM THE CHAPLAIN**

Amen.

For God and Country,  
Chaplain Joe Urshan

## **SICK CALL**

Please inform Chaplain Joe if you or your family are having medical problems. The Post will pray for you.

## **POST EVERLASTING**

No reports

## **FROM THE FUND RAISING CHAIRMAN**



Hello brothers and sisters,

Happy New Year!!

Christmas is winding down and it's time to look forward to plans for the coming year.

For fundraising, I thought it best to go back to the two three-day weekends as we did in prior years. Our donations took a little bit of a hit when I mixed it up this past year so we're back to the three days over Memorial Day weekend and Veterans Day weekend. Fortunately, it works out that though we are working the three days, we will have the actual holiday off to do other events or spend time with family and friends.

We will be fundraising at Sam's Club, on Bell Road by the 303, Friday-Sunday May 24-26 and November 8-10. So, please mark your calendars to set aside a couple hours those two weekends as we can sure use the help. I will send out more information about those weekends as we get closer to the fundraiser.

For God and Country,  
Kelly Donlevy, Fundraising Chair

## **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

We are nearing the end of 2023. Dues for 2024 will be late after December 31, so please get your dues paid. Best way to pay them is online at MyLegion.org. Membership is on a fiscal calendar. Starting July 1 of the current year and ending June 30 of the following year. For the 2024 membership dues, that means July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. Again, please pay your dues. Our membership is 183, but only 120 have paid for 2024. That is only 65.57 percent that have paid. We would like to see 100 percent. There are Posts that have met or exceeded 100 percent because their members paid and/or their recruited more.

As of January 1, we have 44 pay the post, 41 pay



online and 35 PUFL's. Total is 120. Our goal is 183 so we have 65.57% paid! Keep those cards and letters coming; don't forget your \$40 check. Thanks to all who paid their dues. It is easy to pay online. If you use a credit card, we don't mail your membership card because you can print your own online. But if you want one, let George know and he will mail it to you.

**Have you moved, changed your phone number or email address?** If so, please contact Mike or George. Give us the new information and we will update the records so you will continue to get your Legion Magazine and the Post Newsletter mailed or emailed to the proper address.

Mike & George

### **From the VA Hospital Coordinator**

I delivered a full box of support items to the VA Wards to use at the request of one of the nurses who emailed me around Thanksgiving. She was VERY happy with what I brought and will email me a list of things they could really use.

I am a DAV Service Officer and I will serve Post 96 as best I can. We continue to operate our VA claims in partnership with DAV 24, and have seen a recent rise in homeless veterans needing help in the greater Surprise area. The City of Surprise has reached out to me several times in December to help with various needs of these destitute vets.

As cases arise, I will work with the DAV and the Post to help on an individual basis as best we can.

For God and Country,  
Rod Hage, VA Hospital Coordinator  
DAV Star Chapter 24 Commander & Service Officer

### **Voiture Locale 1154 Report**



Our next Promenade is scheduled for January 6, unfortunately, we have no place to meet so the Promenade is canceled. We hope to have this problem resolved by February.

Interested in the 40&8? Please talk to any of our members in Post 96. `1

Nancie Scalercio, Past Commander  
Voiture Locale 1154 Fundraising Coordinator

### **American Legion Riders Report**



#### **ALR96 Riders**

A few American Legion Riders Post 96, Surprise AZ Participated in the Fiesta Bowl Parade December 16, 2023. The Riders teamed up with Valors Veterans and other volunteers to maintain control during windy conditions of the largest Balloon in the parade, a GIANT Pinata. Great fun and exercise was had by all. This parade really is a first class event.

The Riders of Post 96 will join forces with Post 96 to have combined meetings at Traditions until further notice as we make recruiting a priority.

Eddie Jenness, ALR Director  
480-584-1145

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### **January Calendar**

**Monday January 1 - New Year's Day** - The most celebrated holiday around the world.

**January 1, 1801** - Ireland was added to Great Britain by an Act of Union thus creating the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

**January 1, 1863** – The Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves in the states rebelling against the Union.

**January 5, 1919** - The German Workers' Party (*Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*) was founded by Anton Drexler in Munich. Adolf Hitler became member No. 7 and changed the name in April of 1920 to the National Socialist German Workers' Party (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*) commonly shortened to Nazi or Nazi Party.

**Saturday January 6** – 1700 American Legion Riders Chapter 96 meeting is now being held after the Post 96 business meeting at AZ Traditions on January 25. This is a temporary change.

**Saturday January 6** – 40&8 Hassayampa Voiture 1154 Promenade is canceled until we find a location.

**Wednesday January 6** – 0900-1000 - Veterans Coffee Hour at Surprise Funeral Care, 16063 W Bell Rd, Surprise, AZ. Every 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month, Veterans are invited to a free coffee hour, compliments of Dignity Memorial.

**Wednesday January 6** – Senior Day at Fry's, Bashas' and Albertsons. 10% discount on your groceries.

**Thursday January 7** – 1600 Post 96 Officer's Meeting at Mike Elliott's home.

**Thursday January 7** – 1000 American Legion Post 94, in Sun City West, meets 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday, of each month. Sun City West Foundation Building at 14465 RH Johnson Blvd, Sun City West, AZ. No Zoom connection.

**Tuesday January 9** – 0900-1000 Veteran's Coffee Hour at Sunland Memorial Park. All vets and friends are invited for coffee and nibbles. Second Tuesday every month. In the Chapel building at 15826 N Del Webb Blvd, Sun City, AZ 85351.

**January 10, 1984** - The U.S. and Vatican established full diplomatic relations after a break of 116 years.

**Sunday January 14** - 1400 District 11 Meeting at John J. Morris Post 62, 9847 W. Desert Cove Ave., Peoria, AZ 85345

**Saturday January 20** – 0900 NWVVA meeting Sunland Memorial Park.

**Saturday January 20** – 1000 Wickenburg Veterans Stand Down, hosted by Legion Post 12 and Elks Lodge 2160. See flyer.

**Sunday January 21** - 1000 Marty Schwab Memorial Breakfast at Richi's Diner, Bell & Reems. All veterans and family are invited to this informal gathering.

**January 22, 1943** - During World War II in the Pacific, Japanese resistance ended in New Guinea, resulting in the first land victory of the war for Allied forces.

**January 24, 1848** - The California gold rush began with the accidental discovery of the precious metal near Coloma during construction of a Sutter's sawmill. An announcement by President Polk later in the year caused a national sensation and resulted in a flood of "Forty-niners" seeking wealth.

**January 27, 1943** - The U.S. 8th Air Force conducted the first all-American bombing raid on Germany as 55 bombers targeted Wilhelmshaven, losing three planes while claiming to have shot down 22 German fighters. The success of this first mission encouraged U.S. military planners to begin regular daylight bombing raids, which eventually resulted in high casualty rates for the American crew members involved.

**January 28, 1915** - The U.S. Coast Guard was created by an Act of Congress, combining the Life Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service.

### **SAVE THE DATE**

**February 10** - 1700-2200 Surprise Vet Fest at Mark Coronado Park.

**February 20** – 1145 Massing of the Colors & Service of Remembrance. Palm Ridge Recreation Center, 13800 W. Deer Valley Dr., Sun City West

**March 23-24** - Luke Days Airshow

**March 23** – Veterans Ceremony Concert. See flyer.

**May 24-26** - Friday-Sunday Post 96 Fundraiser at Sam's Club

**November 8-10** - Friday-Sunday Post 96 Fundraiser at Sam's Club

### **Up Coming District 11 Meetings**

All Meetings on Sunday with Training at 1300 and General Meeting at 1400

**Gary Vaughn, District 11 Commander**  
garyavaughan@gmail.com

**Mar. 10, 2024:** Hazelton – Butler Post 53  
402 E. Narramore Ave., Buckeye, AZ 85326

Remarks: Officer Nominations

**May 19, 2024:** Earl E. Mitchell Post 29  
6822 N. 57<sup>th</sup> Dr., Glendale, AZ 85301

Remarks: Officer Elections and installations



### **FROM THE EDITOR**

Please help us find new businesses or individuals to advertise in our newsletter. It is only \$5/month (\$60/year) and we give Legion Members a 20% discount.

Karen and I wish all our fellow veterans and families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

George Van de Langeryt  
Past Commander & Newsletter Editor

## 2024 Will Be A Busy Year For Phoenix-Area Freeway Projects

Drivers beware! The Arizona Department of Transportation will start as well as continue making progress on several Phoenix-area freeway construction or maintenance projects during 2024.

The New Year will see the launch of two Loop 101 widening projects as well as advancements on improvement projects that are underway along Interstate 10 near the Broadway Curve and along Interstate 17 north of Phoenix.

The following are among the major freeway projects ADOT will work on in 2024:

Loop 101 (Pima Freeway) Improvement Project between Shea Boulevard and Princess Drive/Pima Road in Scottsdale. The project is scheduled to start on Jan. 5 and include the addition of a lane in each direction within a 4.5-mile work zone. Crews also will convert the Loop 101 interchange at Frank Lloyd Wright Boulevard into a diamond configuration to improve traffic flow. The project is scheduled to be completed in approximately two years. More information: [azdot.gov/Loop101PrincessToShea](http://azdot.gov/Loop101PrincessToShea)

Loop 101 (Agua Fria Freeway) Improvement Project between I-17 and 75th Avenue in the northwest Valley. The two-year project is scheduled to start in fall 2024 and include the addition of a lane in each direction. Other work will include interchange and cross-street improvements at 75th Avenue. More information: [azdot.gov/Loop101West75thToI17](https://azdot.gov/Loop101West75thToI17)

I-10 Broadway Curve Improvement Project between the I-17 “Split” and Loop 202 in Chandler. The largest freeway reconstruction project in ADOT’s history started in fall 2021 and is slated for completion near the end of 2024. Crews will finish elevated ramps providing direct connections between I-10 and State Route 143 (Hohokam Expressway) and complete lanes carrying local traffic in areas between Baseline Road and 40th Street. The project improves travel on 11 miles of one of the Valley’s busiest stretches of freeway. More information: [i10broadwaycurve.com](http://i10broadwaycurve.com)

I-17 Improvement Project between Anthem Way and Sunset Point north of Phoenix. Work on the 23-mile project started in fall 2022. Crews are adding third lanes in each direction between Anthem Way and

Black Canyon City as well as a unique 8-mile flex lanes system north of Black Canyon City. Improvements are scheduled for completion by late 2025. More information: [improvingi17.com](http://improvingi17.com)

I-10 Gila River Bridges Project southeast of Riggs Road. The project, which will reconstruct the outdated existing I-10 bridges crossing the Gila River, is scheduled to start in spring 2024 and take approximately two years to complete.

I-17 Resurfacing Project between Happy Valley Road and State Route 74 in north Phoenix. A project to improve pavement conditions along I-17 is scheduled to start in spring 2024 and take approximately seven months to complete.

Real-time highway conditions are available on ADOT's Arizona Traveler Information site at [az511.gov](http://az511.gov) and via the AZ511 app.



"This is so cool. Where'd you get the saber rattle ringtone?"

## **POST 96 DELINQUENT MEMBERS**

The following Post 96 members are delinquent and their membership cards have expired. They have not paid 2024 dues and until they do, they may not attend any Legion function, including Post and Rider meetings. If you know any of these members, please give them a call and remind them to pay their dues. We hate to lose 36 members this year.

Maria E Baltran  
Patrick J Becker  
Leisa Boyd  
Paul D Briscoe  
Cynthia L Cabrera  
Steve L Cockling  
Randy Coffman  
Barry E Crow  
Michael E DeLay  
Jeffrey W Dick  
Christopher A Dorr  
John H Draper  
Kristen M Dube

Jurgen Eckoff  
Thomas C Ferelli  
Joseph A Fletcher  
David Hernandez  
Frank C Hofmann  
Janos S Hottya  
Ronald D Howell  
Larry R Kisicki  
Vernon A Komenda  
Charles Manuel  
Raymond McLaren  
Chester Morgan  
Ennis B Miller

Christine Patterson  
Robert R Pickrel  
Albert Polito  
Gerald R Pontius  
Norbert L Reischl  
Isidro A (Alex) Rios  
Gerald L Schwartz  
Donald L Swanson  
Robert L Tovey  
William C Turner

If you have an issue that is causing you to not pay your dues, PLEASE call Commander Mike Elliott and discuss it with him. We don't want to lose you as a member of Post 96.



## A few photos from the December 28 meeting thanks to Post Photographer Paul Satkowski.

We enjoyed great sandwiches, chips and soft drinks at the meeting. Sorry if you missed it.



Chaplain Joe Urshan & Past  
Commander Nancie  
Scalercio



2nd Vice Kelly Donlevy, Robb Donlevy and  
Commander Mike



Visiting Navy Vet Bob  
Peters



1st Vice Arnie Kohl & Tom Frizzell



Member Russ Harlan, a  
SeaBee veteran



Finance Officer George Van de Langeryt  
digs into the great food



Riders table: Tom Roark, Chairman Eddie  
Jenness, Pat Boyd and Karina Burch



Carolyn Roark and Nino Olsen, Riders  
guests



**A few photos from the Marty Schwab Memorial Breakfast on December 17 at Richie's Diner. This informal get together is open to all who wish to join us for a great breakfast and fast service. Third Sunday monthly at 1000, 15609 W Bell Rd.**



The Marty Schwab Breakfast crowd. Standing in the back with the blue shirt is Richie Borici, owner and manager of Richie's Diner.







# **2024 Wickenburg Veterans Stand Down**

***"Bringing VA Services to YOU"***

**January 20th, 2024  
10am-2pm**

**176 N Frontier St, Wickenburg AZ 85390**



**Hosted by American Legion Kellis-Draper Post 12 Arizona  
And  
Elks Lodge 2160**

**Veterans and Families of the Military and Reserves  
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**PRESENTS**

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and  
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**With the Desert Brass Band**

**A Patriotic Ceremony in Memory of Our POWs, MIAs, and Our Deceased  
Military Men and Women Who Have Served Our Country**

**Featured Speaker**

**Wanona “Winnie” Fritz**

**“Life in the US and Jordan Military”**

**“Memories, Lessons and Gifts”**

**Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 11:15 a.m.**

**Palm Ridge Recreation Center,**

**13800 W. Deer Valley Drive, Sun City West, AZ**

The City of Surprise is excited to announce the inaugural Vet Fest – an event focused on bringing veterans together for fun, community and connections to services.

Saturday, February 10, 2024, 5 – 8 p.m.  
Mark Coronado Park, 15960 N. Bullard Ave.

Enjoy music, food, vendor booths, information from veteran service providers and more!

## CITY OF SURPRISE VET FEST SPONSORSHIP

The City of Surprise is excited to announce the inaugural **Vet Fest** will be held on **Saturday, February 10, 2024 from 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.** at Mark Coronado Park, 15960 N. Bullard Ave.

The City would like to invite everyone in your organization to attend and for your business to consider supporting this event with a financial sponsorship. Your sponsorship will contribute to the ongoing mission of Surprise to be Veteran-friendly city, offering support services and building community connections.

Below you will find the various sponsorship levels. Sponsor registration must be completed by **December 22, 2023**.

For questions, please contact Danielle Osborne, Community Initiatives Supervisor at 623-222-1034 or [danielle.osborne@surpriseaz.gov](mailto:danielle.osborne@surpriseaz.gov).

For more information, visit:  
[surpriseaz.gov/VetFest](https://surpriseaz.gov/VetFest)



### SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

Note on Display Tables:

The event will only allow promotion of free services for veterans at the tables;  
Promotion of services for a fee will not be allowed.

TITLE SPONSOR	ENTERTAINMENT SPONSOR	STAGE SPONSOR	TABLES & CHAIRS SPONSOR	FRIEND OF EVENT
<b>\$4000</b>	<b>\$3500</b>	<b>\$2000</b>	<b>\$1000</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Diamond Sponsor” distinction &amp; logo placement on marketing material</li><li>• Display table (6’) for organization marketing</li><li>• Organization logo on a sponsorship banner at event</li><li>• Sponsorship acknowledgement during announcements</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Platinum Sponsor” distinction &amp; logo placement on marketing material</li><li>• Display table (6’) for organization marketing</li><li>• Organization logo on a sponsorship banner at event</li><li>• Sponsorship acknowledgement during announcements</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Gold Sponsor” distinction &amp; logo placement on marketing material</li><li>• Display table (6’) for organization</li><li>• Organization logo on a sponsorship banner at event</li><li>• Sponsorship acknowledgement during announcements</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organization logo on a sponsorship banner at the event (“Silver Sponsor”)</li><li>• Display table (6’) for organization</li><li>• Organization logo on a sponsorship banner at event</li><li>• Sponsorship acknowledgement during announcements</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organization logo on a sponsorship banner at event (“Bronze Sponsor”)</li><li>• Display table (6’) for organization</li><li>• Sponsorship acknowledgement during announcements</li></ul>



**REGISTER AT THE GOOGLE LINK BELOW.**

You will be notified when Ticketmaster tickets go on sale for your families.  
This notice is for registration for only the Military and Veteran Women.

# Ceremony & Concert

## Honoring Military & Veteran Women



**General Admission for Veterans, Family, Friends, Public**

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TICKET INFO COMING SOON

**Saturday, March 23, 2024**

**3 pm to 6 pm**

**Madison Center for the Arts**

**5601 N 16th St, Phoenix AZ 85016**

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**Need more info or want to sponsor?**

Contact: Darlene Gonzales, US Navy Res (ret.) [dgonzales@veteransfirstltd.org](mailto:dgonzales@veteransfirstltd.org)





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