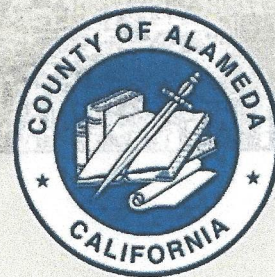


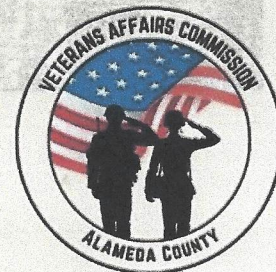
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION



TOWN HALL MEETING

Location:

Alameda Veterans
Memorial Building
2203 Central Ave
Alameda, 94501



**Monday, Nov 17th,
2025, 10 am to 12 pm**

Tentatively available via Zoom:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84973202907?
pwd=SiaSb3z1MLosq3X0s2vxTHTFC4NabD.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84973202907?pwd=SiaSb3z1MLosq3X0s2vxTHTFC4NabD.1)

Dial-in #: 1-408-638-0968

Meeting ID: 849 7320 2907



ALAMEDA COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

General Meeting Agenda

Monday, November 17, 2025

10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Alameda Veterans Memorial Building

Address

2203 Central Ave., Alameda CA

Tentatively Available Via Zoom Video Conference Call, use link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84973202907?pwd=SiaSb3z1MLosq3X0s2vxTHTFC4NabD.1>

For Dial-in Option, use the number below:

1-408-638-0968

Meeting ID: Meeting ID: 849 7320 2907

Passcode: 798737

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84973202907>

Public participation at Commission meetings is encouraged. Individual public comments per agenda item shall be no more than two minutes.

10:00 – 10:02

CALL TO ORDER:

- Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum
- Review and Approval of October 2025 General Meeting Minutes

10:02 – 10:03

SALUTE COLORS-IN-PLACE

10:03 – 10:04

RECITE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

10:04 – 10:05

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR POW/MIA & VETERANS LOST BY SUICIDE

10:05 – 10:10

PUBLIC COMMENT

10:20 – 10:30

STAFF UPDATE:

10:30 – 11:00

Speaking Topic:

Swords to Plowshares: Eric Wick

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:

11:00 – 11:05

- Outreach (Owens/Farmer): [5 min]

11:05 – 11:10

- Executive Meeting (Owens) [5 min]

11:10 – 11:15

- PAL Legislation (Phair) [5 min]

11:15 – 11:20

- Veteran Observance Days (Owens/Farmer) [5 min]

11:20 – 11:25

- Veteran Memorial Buildings. (Farmer) [10 min]

11:25 – 11:35

- Nomination Committee [Cole, Yohannes, Harrison] [10 min]

11:35 – 11:45

- Meeting Sites 2026 (Yohannes/Owens) [5 min]

11:45 – 11:50

- Membership (Owens) [5 min]

11:50 – 11:55

- New Business / Announcements

1155

12 PM

- Adjournment

Alameda County Veterans Affairs Commission Roster

No.	Name	Representing	Current Appt	Expiration
#1	KEISUKE "KASEY" WARNER	District 4	3/7/2023	12/3/2026
#2	JAMES "SKIP" PHAIR	At-Lg	5/16/2023	6/22/2026
#3	ALFRED GORDILLO	Vietnam Veterans of America	7/9/2024	7/9/2027
#4	MICHAEL GILMORE	Veterans of Foreign Wars	3/11/2025	3/11/2028
#5	FRED JAFFIN	District 2	10/6/2020	11/2/2026
#6	NATHANIEL "NATE" HARRISON	Disabled American Veterans	3/28/2023	1/12/2026
#7	RONALD (RONNIE) FORBES, SR.	District 1	6/29/2021	9/17/2026
#8	JOSEPH "JOE" C. LOPARO	Vietnam Veterans of America	12/7/2021	12/7/2024
#9	STEVE DOLGIN	AMVETS	4/16/2024	4/16/2027
#10	ROBERT COLE	Disabled American Veterans	4/30/2024	4/30/2027
#11	ROBERT HART	Marine Corp League	9/9/2025	9/9/2028
#12	LISA BRUNNER	American Legion	5/28/2024	5/28/2027
#13	OMAR FARMER (VICE-CHAIR)	District 5	9/19/2023	10/21/2026
#14	SHEWEET YOHANNES	Women Veterans	4/28/2024	4/28/2027
#15	DYLAN BOLDT	Veterans of Foreign Wars	5/8/2024	5/8/2027
#16	GREG OWENS (CHAIR)	At-Lg	3/28/2023	4/29/2026
#17	MADELEINE REED	Widows & Dependents	3/11/2025	3/11/2028
#18	DIANE WILLIAMSON	Women Veterans	3/7/2023	11/20/2025
#19	JACK McILVAIN	District 3	4/4/2024	4/4/2027
#20	DANIEL BITNER	Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)	5/13/2025	5/13/2028
#21	DON REED	American Legion	3/11/2025	3/11/2028
#22	JOSH JONES	Iraq Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)	4/29/2025	4/29/2028

Minutes



Alameda County
Veterans Affairs Commission
General Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 20, 2025

Alameda County
Social Services Agency
6955 Foothill Blvd – Ste. 300
Oakland, CA 94605
<http://alamedasocialservices.org>

CALL TO ORDER

- Meeting called to order at 10:06 am
- Roll Call, Quorum Achieved.

In Attendance: (P=Present, E=Excused, A=Absent, O=Online Attendance)		County Staff Present:
G. Owens (Chair) = P	J. Loparo = E	Jonathan Montano-Flores Rhoda Turner Sonya Frost = online
O. Farmer (Vice Chair) = A	D. Boldt = P	
R. Forbes = P	R. Cole = P	
F. Jaffin = E	D. Reed = P	
J. McLvain = P	S. Yohannes = P	
K. Warner = E	A. Gordillo = A	
J. Phair = P	M. Reed = P	
S. Dolgin = P	D. Williamson = P	
M. Gilmore = P	J. Jones = P	
N. Harrison = P	D. Bitner = P	
L. Brunner = A	R. Hart = P	

AGENDA/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Item	Discussion/Recommendations
Adopt Agenda	Meeting agenda adopted by Commission as read.
Approval of Meeting Minutes	Motion to accept meeting minutes from 9/15/2025: Motion to approve: Commissioner Robert Cole (M) Commissioner Dylan Boldt (S) Motion Passed
Public Comment	Cara Williams, SEIU Chapter President for Veterans Service Representatives and clerical staff, attended as an SEIU representative and veteran (former Navy) commented on the following: - o Reported that SEIU meets regularly with Social Services management regarding department changes and expectations. - o Expressed concern about the relocation of the Veterans Service Office from Eastmont to Hayward and noted uncertainty over who made the decision. - o Stated that removing services from Eastmont would be a disservice to veterans, as the Hayward site is not easily accessible. - o Due to the bureaucracy of public service and classification processes, there is currently a staffing shortage. It was noted

	that training for Specialist Clerks who support veteran services involves many nuances related to certification requirements. Her primary reason for attending was to address the availability and locations of services for veterans. There was further discussion regarding the new stand-alone office with Cara Williams and commission members.
County Updates:	Sonya Frost, Division Director gave updates to the following: Staff Update: Staffing remains stable. One Veteran Service Representative (VSR) returned briefly for one or two days but has since gone back out. We currently have five Veteran Service Representatives working, and there is one vacancy within the CVSO). ○ Stand-Alone Update: There is no confirmed move-in date yet; we're aiming for the end of the year or early next year. The military and American flags have been delivered and will be installed soon. Orders for Wi-Fi and the security system are in progress. Furniture has been finalized, and we're working on securing the contract with the security company. ○ On Monday, October 27, the Veterans Service Office, represented by Anthony Simpson, Veterans Service Officer, will present at the Alameda County Board of Supervisors meeting at 2:30 p.m. ○ Anthony, along with one of the Veteran Service Representatives, is attending the CVSO Fall Conference this week. Jennifer is on vacation, which is why they are not present. Diarra Piggue, who was recently promoted to an Out-of-Class position as Administrative Specialist I, has left; currently, there is no administrative staff aside from Jonathan. Jennifer will hold interviews as soon as HR can schedule them. In the meantime, we may post another out-of-class position until a permanent hire is made.
Guest Speaker: Michael Singleton Topic: Honor Flights	Guest speaker Timothy Smith was not present; Michael Singleton, President of Honor Flight Bay Area Foundation, attended in his place. He presented while the accompanying presentation was shown and stated that the organization, founded in 2014, transports veterans from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam to Washington, D.C., to visit memorials honoring their service. Discussion/Q&A followed.
Sub-Committee Reports	➤ Outreach: Edgar Reyes, Veterans Outreach Specialist for the Veterans First Program at Las Positas College, mentioned the upcoming events they will be hosting, which include: ○ A Veterans Summit, facilitated by the Veterans First Program and hosted by Alameda County Behavioral

Health, is a free event scheduled for January 26, 2026, at Las Positas College in Livermore, CA.

- Trunk or Treat on October 28, 2025.
- Veterans Day event on November 6, 2025, with guest speaker Dr. Harold Strunk.

Commissioner Owens mentioned the following outreach opportunities:

- Operation Green Light (November 3–11): Change an exterior light to a green bulb in recognition of veterans.

➤ **Executive:**

- The Executive Meeting was held on October 6, and various topics were discussed, including the Stand Down, Honor Flight guest speaker, Veteran Observance Days, the Nomination Committee, Legislative Affairs, Veteran Memorial Buildings, membership, the Board of Supervisors meeting, and topics for October.

➤ **Veteran Observance Days:**

- Commissioner Owens highlighted upcoming Veterans Observances: October 26 – National Day of Deployment; November – National Veterans and Military Families Month; November 10 – U.S. Marine Corps Anniversary; and November 11 – Veterans Day.

➤ **Veteran Memorial Building:**

- Commissioner Williamson discussed their efforts to have certain veterans memorial buildings/senior centers officially recognized as veterans buildings.
- She read an email from a fellow veteran inviting others to the North Oakland Senior Center, located at 5714 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, this coming Thursday at 9 a.m., to support efforts to eliminate the veterans committee at the senior center.

➤ **PAL Legislation:**

- Commissioner Phair stated they will hold a meeting to draft a proposal asking the Board of Supervisors to formally endorse SB 694, which assists veterans in obtaining their benefits. Commissioner Phair stated he is awaiting the governor's clarification on which bills were passed.
- AB 54, which excludes disability income from determining a veteran's eligibility for court fee waivers, was signed by the governor.
- AB 88 allows dependents of California active-duty service members stationed out of state to remain eligible for Cal Grants was passed.
- AB 81, which would have established a mental health study for women veterans, was vetoed by the Governor.
- AB 1509, which creates the California State Accrediting Agency for Veterans Education (CSAAVE) within the

	California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet), has passed and was chaptered into law. ○ AB 1508, which reestablishes the Veterans' Military Advisory Committee following its recent expiration, has passed and is now extended for another 10 years. ➤ Stand Down: ○ Slides of the Stand Down event were presented, and Commissioner Owens provided explanations for each slide. ○ Commissioner Owens explained that various vendors participated, including DAV (which had its own room) the Department of Veterans Affairs, a barbershop, the VA Health Care System, and Child Support, among others. ○ A total of 176 veterans attended, representing various locations. The breakdown by branch of service was: 79 Army, 50 Navy, 23 Air Force, 18 Marine Corps, 2 Coast Guard, and 4 unidentified. ○ The Alameda County Treatment Court was a huge success, serving 32 veterans. A total of 135 cases were resolved, including 75 criminal cases and 60 traffic cases. ➤ Membership: ○ Commissioner Owens announced that Robert Hart is the newest member of the commission, bringing its full membership to 22. ➤ Nomination: ○ Commissioner Yohannes reiterated that the Nomination Committee consists of Nate Harrison, Sheweet Yohannes, and Bob Cole. ○ Commissioner Yohannes mentioned that voting for Chair and Vice Chair will take place next month and noted that members can email the Nomination Committee with their nomination suggestions. ○ Commissioner Yohannes reminded everyone that Commissioner Farmer nominated himself and Commissioner Yohannes for Chair. ○ Commissioner Yohannes noted that there are currently no nominations for Vice Chair. ○ Commissioner Yohannes mentioned that anyone being nominated will be informed and must accept the nomination before being placed on the slate.
ORAL COMMUNICATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS	The next meeting will be held at the Alameda County Memorial Building on November 17. Commissioner Reed discussed holding a meeting at the Oakland Memorial Building and noted progress in revitalizing the old Castro Valley library, now managed by Hayward Parks & Recreation. Commissioner Cole discussed an invitation from the Alameda Veterans Group to set aside a room at the Alameda Veterans Memorial Building,

	enabling volunteer DAV chapter service officers to process claims. He also noted favorable results from the Stand Down, including a DAV Claims Information Seminar designed to inform participants about benefits they are entitled to but may not be aware of. Lastly, he shared two success stories. Commissioner Reed commented that Pleasanton will hold a parade for Veterans Day. Commissioner Williamson introduced Dawn Hill, who was present at the Stand Down and spoke about living benefits available to veterans and ways to create a legacy. Commissioner Williamson shared her testimony on how Dawn Hill assisted her and her daughter. The Veterans Luncheon will be held on November 14th at the Hayward Veterans Memorial Building.
ADJOURNMENT	Meeting adjourned at 11:59 pm.

Staff Updates

GUEST SPEAKER

**SUB-
COMMITTEE
REPORTS**

ACVAC Subcommittee Assignments 2025			
Membership	Women Veterans Recognition Days	BVHC	
Greg Owens	Joe LoParo	Omar Farmer	
Omar Farmer	Greg Owens	James "Skip" Phair	
PAL Legislation	Diane Williamson	Diane Williamson	
Robert Cole	Lisa Brunner	Nathanial Harrison	
James "Skip" Phair	Shewee Yohannes	Transportation	
Omar Farmer	Veteran Observance Days	Omar Farmer	
Dylan Boldt	Omar Farmer	Robert Cole	
Fred Jaffin	Fred Jaffin	Diane Williamson	
Nomination Committee	Mike Gilmore	Bylaws	
Shewee Yohannes	Veterans Day/Month	Omar Farmer	
Bob Cole	Omar Farmer	Greg Owens	
Nathanial Harrison	Fred Jaffin	Robert Cole	
Executive	James "Skip" Phair		
Omar Farmer		Vietnam Veterans (unofficial)	
Greg Owens	Veteran Memorial Buildings	Greg Owens	
James "Skip" Phair	Omar Farmer	Fred Jaffin	
Shewee Yohannes	Diane Williamson	Nathanial Harrison	
Robert Cole	Lisa Brunner	Joe LoParo	
Stand Down	Joe LoParo	Alfred Gordillo	
Omar Farmer	Jack McIlvain	Castro Valley Library (unofficial)	
Ronnie Forbes	Flag Day	Kasey Warner	
Diane Williamson	Jack McIlvain	Omar Farmer	
VSO	Omar Farmer	Budget	
Omar Farmer	Alfred Gordillo	James "Skip" Phair	
Mike Gilmore	Outreach	Omar Farmer	
Ronnie Forbes	Steve Dolgin	Greg Owens	
Robert Cole	Omar Farmer		

Outreach

From: Evelyn Andrews <eandrews@laspositascollege.edu>
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2025 4:31 PM
To: 'Omar Farmer'; Greg Owens
Subject: Call for Proposal/Workshop Presentation: VETERANS SUMMIT - January 2026 @ LPC

Dear Omar and Greg,

How are you? Special Request - please forward to the Veterans Affairs Commissioners. Thank you!!

Sharing an update ... I am serving on the 2026 Veterans Summit Planning Committee with the Alameda County Behavioral Health Department (Office of Ethnic Services, Health Equity Division) and am pleased to invite you to join us at the upcoming **Veterans Comprehensive Support Summit, Stronger Together: Integrated Support for Our Veterans**, taking place on **January 15, 2026, at Las Positas College.**

This Summit will bring together community members, educators, behavioral health professionals, equity leaders, and employers to explore holistic strategies for supporting Veterans. Our goal is to foster a safer, more informed community where Veterans, their families, and service providers feel empowered, connected, and equipped with resources—including pathways to meaningful employment.

We believe your expertise would be a valuable addition to the conversation. Key topics include:

- Integrated Mental Health Services & Substance Use Recovery
- Stable Housing, Peer Support, and Family Connection
- Current Challenges Facing Veterans in Alameda County
- Peer Perspectives and Lived Experience
- Building a Continuum of Care Across Systems
- Employment Pathways and Workforce Development for Veterans

Veteran Employment Component

As part of the Summit, we are excited to host a **Veteran Job Fair**, featuring employers, workforce development agencies, and career support organizations. This component will provide Veterans with direct access to:

- On-site job opportunities and interviews
- Resume and career coaching
- Information on apprenticeships, internships, and training programs
- Networking with employers committed to hiring Veterans

We encourage speakers and facilitators to also engage with this portion of the event, as it complements our mission to support Veterans in achieving long-term stability and success.

As a leader in our community, we would invite you and your colleagues to be a workshop presenter or be a panelist. The deadline is 10/31/2025 to submit a proposal. Click [HERE](#) for the [Call for Proposals Form](#).

- Contribute to a **panel discussion/workshop/keynote session**

VETERANS SUMMIT

Stronger Together:
Integrated Support for Our Veterans

NETWORK, COLLABORATE,
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SAVE THE DATE
JANUARY 15, 2026

LOCATION:
LAS POSITAS COLLEGE
3000 CAMPUS HILL DRIVE
LIVERMORE, CA 94551

FREE EVENT
CHECK-IN: 8:30-9 AM
PROGRAM BEGINS: 9 AM
Presentation of Colors;
National Anthem;
Keynote Speaker; Workshops

LUNCH INCLUDED
RESOURCE FAIR

SPONSORED BY:



**Behavioral Health
Department**
Alameda County Health

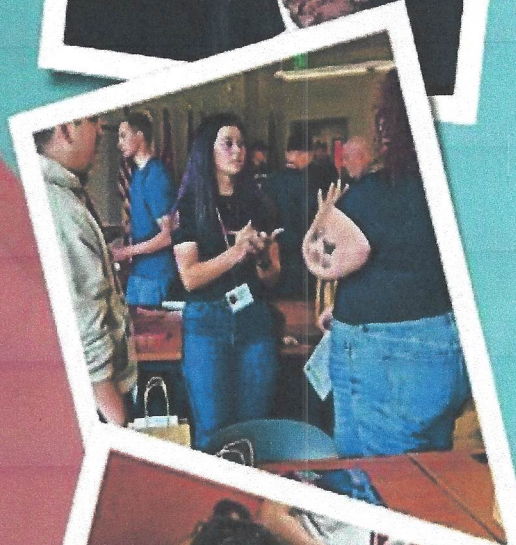
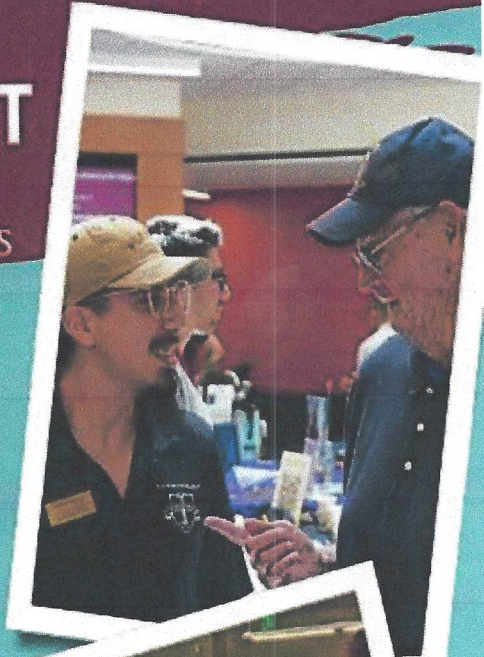


CALL FOR PROPOSALS
SCAN QR CODE
DUE OCT 31, 2025



FOR INFORMATION:

<https://www.acbhcs.org/>



Executive Committee

Date: November 3, 2025

Executive Committee Meeting

Members: Greg Owens, James "Skip" Phair, Shewee Yohannes, Bob Cole, Omar Farmer

Agenda:

- Nomination Committee [10 min]
- Speaker Eric Wick (Swords to Plowshares) [2 min]
 - Alameda VMB 2203 Central Ave.
- Veteran Observance Days (10 min)
 - Pearl Harbor Day Dec 10
 - National Wreaths Across America Day Dec 13
 - National Guard Birthday Dec 13
- Legislative Affairs (5 min)
- Veteran Memorial Buildings (5 Min)
- Meeting Sites (2 min)
- Membership (3 min)
- Topics for November (5 min)

PAL-LEGISLATION

Veteran Observance Days

Veteran Observance Days Ad hoc:**Members: Omar, Fred, Mike, Joe, Skip**

Date & Name	Commissioners Attending	Events
Jan. 25 — Anniversary of the U.S. & Allied Victory at the Battle of the Bulge		
Feb. 3 — Four Chaplains Day		
Feb. 9 — Anniversary of the U.S. Victory at the Battle of Guadalcanal		
Feb. 28 — Anniversary of the U.S.-Led Victory in the Persian Gulf War		
March 3 — Navy Reserve Birthday		Naval Reserve Base Alameda event?
March 13 — K-9 Veterans Day		
March 15-17 — Anniversary of the First Caucus of The American Legion		
March 25 — National Medal of Honor Day		
March 26 — Anniversary of the U.S. Victory at the Battle of Iwo Jima		
March 29 — Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day		USS Hornet event.
April — Month of the Military Child		
April 5 — Gold Star Spouses Day		Lone Tree Cemetery event?
May — National Military Appreciation Month & the Military Caregiver		
May 1 — Silver Star Service Banner Day		
Friday before Mother's Day in May — Military Spouse Appreciation Day		
May 8 — Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day		
May 13 — Children of Fallen Patriots Day		
Armed Forces Day - May 17th (3rd Sat in May)		Mike Paddle discount. Stand Down?
The Last Monday in May — Memorial Day		American Legion Alameda Event, USS Hornet.
June is PTSD Awareness Month		Collaborate with Mission 22? Las Positas event?
June 6 — Anniversary of the D-Day Landings at Normandy		BoS Proclamation?
June 7 — Anniversary of the U.S. Victory at the Battle of Midway		BoS Proclamation?
June 12 — Women Veterans Day		Planning for VAC Event on 6/12 in progress
June 14 — Flag Day and the Founding of the U.S. Army (Army Birthday)		Identify worn local flags that need to be replaced and deliver new flags via a flag detail.
June 22 — Anniversary of the U.S. & Allied Victory at the Battle of Okinawa		
June 23 — Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday		
June 27 — PTSD Awareness Day		Promote through VAC. Organize a community wellness walk at Lake Merritt.
July 4 — Independence Day		Participate in Alameda parade.

July 27 — National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day		
Aug. 4 — Anniversary of the Founding of the U.S. Coast Guard (Coast Guard Birthday)		Attend Coast Guard Island event?
Aug. 7 — National Purple Heart Day		
Aug 29 — Marine Force Reserve Birthday		
Aug. 30 — Anniversary of the Final Withdrawal from Afghanistan		
September is National Suicide Prevention Month		Veteran Suicide Prevention Forum at Hayward VMB. Stand Down Sept 19-20?
Sept. 2 — Anniversary of Victory Over Japan Day		
Sept. 11 — Patriot Day		Union City event?
Sept. 18 — Anniversary of the Founding of the U.S. Air Force (Air Force Birthday)		
Sept. 19 — POW/MIA Recognition Day (3rd Fri in Sept)		Stand Down day 1?
Sept. 29 — Gold Star Family Day		Lone Tree cemetery event?
Oct. 13 — Anniversary of the Founding of the U.S. Navy (Navy Birthday)		
Oct. 26 — National Day of the Deployed		
November is National Veterans and Military Families Month		Operation Green Light, Veterans Day Celebration
Nov. 10 — Anniversary of the Founding of the U.S. Marine Corps (Marine Corps Birthday)		
Nov. 11 — Veterans Day		VAC annual event at Frank Ogawa plaza. Alameda American Legion event.
Dec. 7 — Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day		Mt. Diablo event? Naval Order in SF dinner?
Dec. 13 — National Wreaths Across America Day		Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland
Dec. 13 — National Guard Birthday		
Dec. 15 — Anniversary of the Official End of War in Iraq		
Dec. 20 — Anniversary of the Foundation of the U.S. Space Force (Space Force Birthday)		Binge watch 1st season of Star Trek
Dec. 20 — Anniversary of the Foundation of the U.S. Space Force (Space Force Birthday)		

Veteran Memorial Buildings

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Nomination Committee

Sheweeet Yohanes

Bob Cole

Nate Harrison

ACVAC MEETING SCHEDULE 2025

JAN 21 ST	San Leandro VMB	San Leandro-D3
FEB 18 th	College of Alameda	Alameda – D3
MAR 17 th	Pleasanton VMB	Pleasanton – D1
APR 21 st	CSU East Bay	Hayward – D2
MAY 19 th	UC Berkeley	Berkeley – D5
JUN 16 th	St. Vincent De Paul	Oakland - D4
JUL 21 st	Eastmont Town Center	Oakland - D4
AUG 18 th	Berkeley VMB	Berkeley – D5
SEP 15 th	Chabot College	Hayward – D2
OCT 20 th	Las Positas College	Livermore – D1
NOV 17 th	Alameda VMB	Alameda – D3
DEC 15th	ACO VSO Office ?	Hayward – D2