The American GI Forum of California

Commander: Mario Sanchez
1st Vice: Esau Ruiz Herrera -- 2nd Vice: Jake Alarid (RIP)

Summer 2021 Edition

A hearty and healthy Greetings to you, AGIF Familia. This is my first issue of a newsletter for AGIF of CA. My goal is to re-establish a newsletter that helps us keep in touch with each other at the local, state, and national levels. I hope to earn your respect and trust as I produce this document for our AGIF Familia. I thank Commander Mario Sanchez for this opportunity to be of service through this newsletter. Please know that I pray to be an Instrument of the Great Spirit (God) that guides us. “Lord, make me an Instrument of Thy Peace.”

Attached is a Whittier Daily News article about Commander Jake Alarid, Que En Paz Descanse

Who Are We in California?
We have seven AGIF Chapters in California and they are as follows:

Cesar Chavez Chapter (Sacramento), Cmdr. Fred Romero
El Camino Real Chapter (Whittier), Cmdr. Howard Hernandez
Lompoc Chapter, Cmdr. Manuela Venegas
Oceanside Chapter, Cmdr. Gerardo Garcia
Pfc Oscar Sanchez/Modesto Chapter, Cmdr. Steve Fimbres
San Jose Chapter, Cmdr. Esau Ruiz Herrera
Santa Maria Chapter, Cmdr. Willie Galvan

Who Is The Board of Directors of AGIF CA?
The Board of Directors of AGIF of CA is comprised of the Chapter Commanders and the members of the Executive Committee.
Who Are The Executive Committee Members of AGIF CA?
Election and Appointive Officers comprise the Executive Committee. “The officers of the AMERICAN GI FORUM OF CALIFORNIA” are the following:
Commander: Mario Sanchez
1st Vice-Commander: Esau Ruiz Herrera
2nd Vice-Commander: Jake Alarid (Que En Paz Descanse)
Secretary: Dolores Marquez
Treasurer: Joel Ruiz Herrera
Chaplain: Paul Calais
Sgt.-at-Arms: Vacant
Executive Secretary: Jerry Alaniz (Appointive)
Immediate Past Commander: Fred Romero
The above elective offices are elected by ballot on the last day of the State Annual Conference.

Member Corner – El Rincón Calífas
I hope to feature a member or two with every issue. Please help by letting me know who you recommend for a short feature. I am willing to call members and interview them over the phone and create a “feature” based on the call. Thank you! Muchísimas Gracias! Let’s honor all the great members we have, please.

AGIF CA Upcoming Events
This section is for all Chapters to share upcoming events, especially as to how we can support each other. We are AGIF CA Familia! The next issue will come out in September so share what you are doing for Veteran’s Day!

Activity Reports by AGIF CA Chapters
Share what you have done as a way to keep ourselves informed and to provide inspiration to all Chapters. We are a TEAM! Together Everyone Achieves More!

State and National Annual Conferences 2021
See the attached information for the upcoming State (Whittier, July 23-24) and National (San Antonio, TX, August 11 – 14) Conferences. Registration forms are attached. Visit agiftx.com for more information on the National Conference.
Obituary: Jake Alarid, twice national commander of American GI Forum, dies at age of 87

The South Whittier resident also worked on the Apollo space program
Unincorporated South Whittier resident Jake Alarid, who worked on the Apollo space program and served twice as national commander for the American G.I. Forum, has died at the age of 87 of complications related to pneumonia.
Funeral services — a Rosary at 10 a.m. and funeral Mass following at 11 a.m. — will be held Tuesday, May 18 at St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church, 13935 Telegraph Road, Whittier.

A second service — with a Divine Mercy at 10 a.m. and a funeral Mass at 10:30 a.m. — will be held May 26 at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Espanola, New Mexico. Interment will follow at 1:30 p.m. at Santa Fe National Cemetery.

“He was a true community leader,” said Joe Duardo, a former board member for the South Whittier and Whittier Union High School districts of Alarid who died on May 3.

Alarid helped create the El Camino chapter of American GI Forum to serve the Whittier area and later was national commander for the American GI Forum in 1983-1984, and 1994-1998.

American GI Forum was founded in 1948 as a veterans organization in Corpus Christi, Texas, to address the problems of discrimination and inequities endured by Latino veterans after World War II, according to its web site.

“He was totally dedicated to serving the veterans,” Duardo said. “It’s a great loss, not only to his family but to all the families he helped.”

La Mirada resident Victor Ledesma, also a member of the American GI.I. Forum, said Alarid will be missed, not only in California but throughout the nation.

“He was a very giving person,” Ledesma said. “He loved to help people help themselves.”

Ledesma said Alarid, while working for Boeing, pushed for the company to hire more Hispanic engineers.

When the company came back and said they couldn’t find any qualified people, Alarid located qualified candidates to hire, Ledesma said.
Born in Terrero, New Mexico, Alarid was the oldest of 13 children. In 1953, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and was deployed to Korea and then to Nara, Japan, where he supported the prisoner exchange program in Korea.

After the war, Alarid obtained an aeronautical engineering degree at Northrup Institute of Technology.

He and his wife, Marie, were married in 1956. They moved to Whittier in 1961.

Alarid was a test engineer for Apollo 11, which ferried Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins to the moon and back to earth. He later worked on the space shuttle program as a manager and retired in 1994.

As national commander of the American GI Forum, he met with Presidents Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton to discuss issues facing Hispanic veterans. His son, Patrick, remembers his father's involvement in the American GI Forum boycott of Coors over its lack of hiring Latinos.

“I remember my dad flying back and forth to Colorado meeting with people,” Alarid said.

Following his years as national commander, Alarid continued to remain an active advocate, serve as a voice for veterans, and recognize the contributions made by the Latino community.

During the 1980s, he and other Latino leaders sponsored **Proposition RH**, a 1982 voter-approved ballot measure that sought to end the at-large election system on how Rio Hondo College trustees were elected.

In 2010, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed Alarid to the state Department of Veterans Affairs’ board of directors.

He also remained as commander of the El Camino chapter of the American G.I. Forum that represents the Whittier area.

In 2019, the El Camino Real chapter for the first time held a ceremony to recognize those who served in Korea.
He is survived by his wife; children Patrick Alarid, Kathleen Alarid, Christine Decker and Elaine Alarid; grandchildren Elizabeth Fawcett, Gabriella Decker, Gabriel Alarid and Jacob Arrant; and great-grandchild James Fawcett.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Jake Alarid Scholarship Fund of the American G.I. Forum.

Tags: community, diversity, military, Obituaries, Top Stories LADN, Top Stories PSN, Top Stories SGT, Top Stories WDN, Veterans

Mike Sprague
Reporter

Mike Sprague has worked in the newspaper field since July 1977, beginning with the Huntington Park Daily Signal, and later moving to Southern California Publishing Co. where he was sport editor and editor of the Pico Rivera News. Mike began at the Whittier Daily News in April 1984. Since then, he has covered every city in the Whittier Daily News circulation area, as well as
Registration Information

First Name __________________________ Last Name __________________________

Mailing Address __________________________________________________________

Title or Office Held __________________________ AGIF Member? Y N

AGIF Chapter or Company Name ____________________________________________

Phone # __________________________ E-mail __________________________

Registration no later than JULY 16: $75.00/member After July 16: $100/member
$100.00 for non-member $25 for Youth

Cancellation, minus 15% fee, accepted in writing or via email (jrhesu@gmail.com) until July 16. After July 16, registrations are non-refundable but may be assigned to a different member. Refunds to be issued after the conference. Returned checks incur $35.00 fee.

Payment can be made by check, PayPal, or Venmo
Check payable to: AGIF CA PayPal: 408-569-7247 Venmo: @Joel-Herrera-27

Mail Completed Registration Information and Check to:
Dr. Joel Ruiz Herrera
Treasurer, AGIF-CA
3175 Lenark Dr.
San Jose, CA 95132

Registration can also be completed without printing the form or mailing anything! 😊
Simply email the above Registration Information to Treasurer Herrera at jrhesu@gmail.com. In your email, indicate your method of payment—PayPal or Venmo. Registration is complete after Registration Information and funds are received.
Or, email the Registration Information and mail your check. Any method is acceptable.

Questions about the Conference can be directed to Commander Mario Sanchez:
408-505-4196, mariosanchezmas@sbcglobal.net

Questions about the registration process or payment can be directed to Treasurer Joel Herrera:
408-569-7247, jrhesu@gmail.com

"Education Is Our Freedom, And Freedom Should Be Everybody’s Business!"
A Message Texas State Commander

Greetings Members, Friends and Supporters!

The American GI Forum (AGIF) of the U.S. will hold its 2021 Annual National Conference on August 11-14, 2021 at the Sheraton Gunter Hotel in San Antonio, Texas. Last year, because of the horrific Pandemic, we postponed all AGIF activities. We are back and we welcome the opportunity to once again meet in person. This year, the 73rd Anniversary of the Organization Pioneer and Legend Cristobal Aldrete will be remembered at our Luncheon as we remember our history, pioneers, accomplishments, programs and the leaders who made it all possible. We will also remember members lost to the Pandemic. As we salute our early pioneers and their accomplishments we continue our efforts of serving veterans with Chapter volunteers and our National Veterans Outreach Program (NVOP).

We continue to honor our present and past National, State and Local Commanders at our Annual Commanders’ Banquet. We invite you to take part in this event remembering our history and honoring the leaders who made this possible. This conference allows us to continue our Organization’s programs for veterans as America’s longest serving Hispanic Veteran’s Organization.

AGIF/US and AGIF/TX welcome our members, friends, supporters, partners and collaborators in Texas and throughout the nation to join us at this extraordinary event. The 3-day event will include ‘Exhibits’ showcasing Veterans Benefits and opportunities, a special Luncheon and Reception honoring Cris, one of our early leaders. We’ll ask you to join us at a Special Ceremony on Carlos Martinez Drive on Friday Morning. A portion of South Medina was recently renamed to honor Carlos Martinez who passed away last year having served as President and CEO of the successful and longest running AGIF Award-Winning Program, the NVOP. Naming the street next to a business he created is most appropriate. On Saturday, August 14, 2021 we will be honoring our Women’s accomplishments and their important role in the organization at our Annual Women’s leadership Luncheon. The Women of the AGIF will be honoring our Gold Star Mothers and remembering their lost loved ones.

Leaders from the VA, DOL, the Texas Veterans Commission and other U.S. and State agencies and important dignitaries have been invited to participate and show support for all Veterans who have sacrificed so much for our Nation.

To our Sponsors and Supporters, we ask you to Join us in support of our 73-year-old organization and assist us and other organizations focused on serving the military and veteran community. You are invited as a partner to this important event by being a participant in some or all our activities and events. Please contact the Texas State Office for more information or questions.

Thank you for making a difference in this effort to help our present and past heroes, our veteran community and the Gold Star families. It is an honor to work with you.

Respectfully,

Ceasar R. Ruiz, Commander
The American GI Forum of Texas, Inc.

"Education is Our Freedom and Freedom Should be Everybody’s Business"
2021 AMERICAN GI FORUM NATIONAL CONFERENCE
Conference Conference Registration Form

Please Print or type the requested information as it will appear in the conference brochure and name badge:

Last Name _____________________ First Name _____________________ MI __________

Title _____________________ Date _____________________

Chapter/Company Name _____________________

Street Address _____________________

City _____________________ State _____________________ Zip ________

Home Tel. _____________________ Bus. Tel. _____________________

Fax No. _____________________ E-mail _____________________

Notice: Proof of Membership will be required at registration desk, i.e., current membership card or chapter transmittal form.

Check One  □ Forum  □ Women  □ Youth  □ Corporation/Exhibitor  □ Guest
       □ Delegate  □ Delegate  □ Delegate
       State __________ Chapter __________

Deadlines for Registration: July 12, 2021 for $230.00. Pre-registration forms will be accepted only through July 10, 2020. After that date, participant must register on-site for $250.00. Youth members will remain constant at $230.00. Non-member registration is $275.00.

Cancellation/Refund Policy: Cancellation minus a 15% penalty will be accepted in writing through July 29, 2021. After that date, registrations are non-refundable. Refunds will be issued after the conference. Please make your reservations with the hotel prior to the deadline to receive conference rates. Please let the Hotel know if you require special accommodations.

Payment can be made by check or money order. Cash will be accepted on-site. For pre-registration, mail completed registration form along with check payable to 2021 American GI Forum National Conference. There will be a $35.00 handling fee for all returned checks.

Mail Completed Form and Check to: AGIF National Conference
8833 Capitol View Drive
Austin, Texas 78747

For more information (512) 992-7066, stateoffice@agiftx.com or visit us at: www.agiftx.org