



POST 534 ORCUTT  
THE AMERICAN LEGION  
MEMBER HANDBOOK

**Welcome and Congratulations** on your membership in Orcutt Post 534, The American Legion. We hope your involvement in your new Post will be a rewarding experience for everyone.

You are now part of our 4.2 million strong Legion family! Working together all our members, from The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and our American Legion Riders, still serve America.

**The American Legion is a powerful force in our nation's Capitol!** The American Legion is the nation's most influential, effective and dependable veterans service organization. Since our very first meeting in Paris, France in 1919, The American Legion has a vision for a Strong America which includes four pillars of service.



Orcutt Post 534's devotion to The American Legion's vision for a Strong America helps our Legion family grow.

To the extent you are able, we hope you find ways to contribute to the proud future of Orcutt Post 534. Our Post's future will be defined in our service to our veterans, their families, our local communities, state and our great Nation. Orcutt Post 534's future will be stronger and more rewarding because of you.

As you become more involved in our Post, please bring any questions you may have to any Post officer, we will do our best to help you. We are devoted to mutual helpfulness.

**VETERANS – STILL SERVING AMERICA.**



# ORCUTT POST 534

*“FRIENDLIEST POST  
ON THE COAST”*

## MEMBER HANDBOOK

**LEGION LANGUAGE AND PROTOCOLS**

New Legionnaires often find the following information helpful:

- **Meeting Conduct.** Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, governs the conduct of Post meetings
- **Ceremony Dignity.** The ceremonial services of The American Legion must be conducted with the solemnity befitting the dignity of this organization.
- **Gavel** - The commander’s gavel is a symbol of authority and ensures orderly meetings.
  1. One tap is a message to the members to be seated following the opening ceremony, the completion of a business item, or follows the announcement of adjournment.
  2. Two taps of the gavel calls the meeting to order.
  3. Three taps of the gavel is the signal for all members to stand in unison on the third tap.
  4. A series of sharp taps is used to restore order at a meeting.
- **Entering Meeting.** A member entering the meeting room after the meeting has begun shall salute the American Flag and be seated. No one shall be admitted to the Post membership meeting during opening, initiation of new members or closing ceremonies of an American Legion meeting.
- **Enter or Exit.** No one shall enter or exit the Post meeting room through the front entrance during Post membership meetings.
- **Excused from Meeting.** A member desiring to be excused from the meeting room while the meeting is in progress, shall salute the American Flag, and then leave—except during a prayer, or reciting Constitution Preamble or during a period of silence.
- **Sacred Space.** Comrades shall be careful never to pass anything through the space between the Post and American flags and the station of the Post Commander.
- **Legionnaires** standing in silent tribute in memory of departed comrades during meetings or ceremonies will face the U.S. Flag with Legion cap or hand held over their heart.
- **In addressing an officer** of The American Legion, use the title of the officer and then his/her name.
- **PUFL** is an acronym for **Paid-Up-For-Life** of membership dues.
- **The Hand Clap.** This long held Legion tradition is a slow and rhythmic clapping of hands, much like the slow beat of a drum, used to welcome new members and guests when they are brought forward to be introduced and when leaving the lectern. This is a demonstration of respect for the individual being recognized.
- **Transferred to Post Everlasting** refers to one who has died and transferred to the Post Everlasting.
- **Flags are at Rest** - When this occurs, the official business of the Post is on hold, yet the Post Commander still controls the meeting. During the period when flags are at rest, informal discussions and information relevant to the good of the Legion can be discussed. No official minutes are taken or official business of the post conducted when the flags are at rest.



**POST ENTRY RULES**

Orcutt Post 534 is a private organization and our facility is also private. Entrance is limited to members of The American Legion , Sons of the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary & authorized guests.



- A guest may be admitted only when accompanied by a current member of The American Legion and is properly signed in.
- Members are responsible for their guests and members may not leave before their guests.

**NATURE OF ORCUTT Post 534**

*“This Post shall be absolutely non-political and shall not be for the dissemination of partisan principles or for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.”*

*“Rank does not exist in the Post. No member shall be addressed by their military title in any meeting at the Post.”*

**POST UNIFORMS**

Post members are encouraged to wear an official American Legion uniform cap at all Post meetings and functions. Select the California version with the “Bear” insignia and your choice of lined or unlined.



Post officers are expected to wear an official American Legion uniform cap at all Post meetings and functions.

You can purchase a uniform cap online at: [emblem.legion.org](http://emblem.legion.org)

**SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR OUR TROOPS  
BUY A RED SHIRT, WEAR A RED SHIRT -  
RED SHIRT FRIDAYS!**

You can purchase a Post red shirt at the bar.

**IDENTIFICATION BADGES**

All Post leaders are strongly encouraged to wear a personal identification badge with their name and position of leadership at all Post meetings and functions. Guests shall also be provided a name badge.



**ORCUTT POST 534 – A SHORT HISTORY**

Orcutt Post 534 started with a small group of veterans was chartered by The American Legion on October, 13 1980. There were 54 veterans that put their signature on the line as charter members of this new Post in Old Town Orcutt. The Post number of 534 was selected by the charter members because it was the outfit number of charter member, Stan Ruth.

In 2003 our Post facility, at 145 W. Clark and 147 W. Clark where Rick’s Car Care is located, was purchased from Mrs. Virginia Cox, who’s husband Ed Cox was a charter member of Orcutt Post 534.



Cyclists from the 2013 California Adventure , Ride to Recovery after they were served lunch by Orcutt Post 534.

**ORCUTT POST 534 MEETINGS**

Location: 145 W. Clark Ave, Orcutt, CA 93455

Post Phone: 805-937-0651 Web Site: [post534orcutt.org](http://post534orcutt.org)

**General Meeting:** Second Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m.

**Executive Committee:** Is held the Tuesday after the General Meeting at 6 p.m.

**HOURS OF OPERATION**

Monday thru Friday: 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturday, Sunday & Holidays: Noon to 7 p.m.

When there is a Post function we may close later.

Post 534 is closed Christmas Day and Thanksgiving Day.

The Post may be closed when Post events are held away from the Post.



**[HTTP://ORCUTTPOST534.ORG/](http://orcuttpost534.org/)**

Our Orcutt Post 534 (<http://orcuttpost534.org/>) web site is a good place for you to find information about our Post and the Legion.

Our web site, *Old Town Report* newsletter, Facebook page and “Online Updates” via Mail Chimp are all communications tools. They are each important elements of a plan to keep our members and our local community informed about activities, meetings and news that are of interest to the veterans, their families and the communities we serve.

On our Post 534 web site, you can subscribe to our electronic mailing list to receive notification that our newsletter has been posted and receive our weekly e-mail newsletter “*Online Update.*” You can read information “*About*” our post including **contact information for our post leaders** (name, phone & etc.) and also access our online ‘*Calendar.*’ There are also pages dedicated to: Legion ‘*Programs*’; Legion & VA ‘*Services*’; ‘*Membership*’ information and applications for our Legion Family; Our main Post ‘*Committees*’ and what they do; the importance of ‘*Volunteering*’ and reporting your volunteer work; the ‘*Scouting*’ program we strongly support; ‘*Resources*’ page gives you access to a wide variety of local, Legion and VA publications and contacts. The ‘*Media*’ is where you can access past issues of our newsletter, Online Updates and our articles published on the LegionTown.org web site.



**YOUR VOLUNTEER TIME HAS VALUE:**

**Your volunteer time is estimated to be worth over \$26 per hour!**

Time YOU spend as a Volunteer, helping our Veterans, Active Military personnel and local community is added to ‘*The Consolidated Post Report*’ that is sent to the Legion National Commander each year. Post 534’s information is combined with data from of other Legion Post’s across the Nation and the totals are used in testimony The American Legion gives on Capital Hill to support our Veterans, their families and the communities we serve. “Each Post has a story to tell, and when we speak collectively our strength is magnified.”



We track your volunteer time using the “*Volunteer Hours*” form available on the ‘*Resources*’ page of our [orcuttpost534.org](http://orcuttpost534.org) web site.



Orcutt Post 534, as the parent organization, has three other important units in our local Legion family. They are:

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY (ALA) UNIT**

Founded in 1919, the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) is the world’s largest women's patriotic service organization. The American Legion Auxiliary solidly stands behind America, her ideals and, as stated in the Legion Auxiliary preamble;



*“...to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.”*

**AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP MEETING:**

Third Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m.

**SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION (SAL)**

Founded in 1932, Sons of The American Legion (SAL) squadron consists of boys and men of all ages whose grandparents or parents served in the United States Armed Forces and became eligible for membership in The American Legion.



**SAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:**

First Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m.

**AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS (ALR)**

The American Legion Riders (ALR) Chapter is a diverse group of Legionnaires, SAL members or spouses who are also motorcycle enthusiasts and united by patriotism.



**ALR MEMBERSHIP MEETING:**

Second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m.

**POST LEADERSHIP**

Leadership in The American Legion and Orcutt Post 534 is provided by volunteer members, like you. They serve in leadership roles as committee members, chairmen and Post officers. Our Post leaders provide honorable and noteworthy service to our veterans, their families and our communities we serve.



Leadership is not something you are born with and it cannot be awarded or appointed. True leadership is learned and earned through the hard work of service to others. Legion leaders must have stellar character and transparent integrity. The men and women who accept leadership roles in The American Legion are often self motivated by a desire to serve others and seek out leadership training. We serve for the benefit of our veterans, their families, and our communities.

The Executive Committee governs the affairs of our Post. It consists of following voting members: Commander, 1st. Vice-Commander, 2nd. Vice -Commander, Sergeant-at-Arms, Adjutant, Finance Officer, Service Officer, Ways and Means Officer, Judge Advocate, Chaplain, Historian, Parliamentarian, Junior Past (most recent) Commander and Executive Committeemen

Non-voting members of the Executive Committee are: President of The American Legion Auxiliary, Commander of The Sons of The American Legion (SAL), the President of the American Legion Riders, Scouting Advisor and The SAL Squadron Advisor.

A Post’s membership record is a reliable barometer of how the Post leadership is doing. An active post where members enjoy themselves often creates a “word of mouth” membership campaign. The members are proud to belong. It’s natural for them to talk “Legion” to their friends neighbors, relatives, relatives, coworkers and business associates. Since they enjoy belonging to the Legion, they want their friends to get in on a good thing, too.

Detailed information on all Post leadership responsibilities can be found in the Post 534 534 Constitution, By-Laws and Post Rules.

The following page contains information on some of the key Post leader duties.

**SUMMARY POST LEADER DUTIES**

**POST COMMANDER** — (Elected)

Presides at all meetings of the Post and shall supervise the business and affairs of the Post. The Commander performs other duties as directed by the Executive Committee.



**FIRST VICE-COMMANDER** — (Elected)

Assumes & discharges the duties of the office of Commander in the absence or disability or when called upon to do so by the Commander. The First Vice-Commander oversees the membership functions of our Post.

**SECOND VICE-COMMANDER** — (Elected)

Assumes & discharges the duties of the office of 1st Vice-Commander in the absence or disability of the 1st Vice-Commander and traditionally oversees the Ways and Means functions of our Post.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMEN** — (2 Elected Annually)

The Executive Committeemen shall perform such duties as directed by the Commander or Executive Committee

**ADJUTANT** — (Appointed) The Adjutant is like the company First Sergeant or secretary. The Adjutant keeps meetings records, keep records as the Department and National may require and under direction of the Post Commander handles all correspondence.

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS** — (Elected) preserves order at meetings. The Sergeant-at-Arms may be select an additional Sergeant-at-Arms with the consent of the Post Commander.

**FINANCE OFFICER** — (Appointed)

Manages Post finances and advises the Executive Committee concerning all financial matters when called upon.

**SERVICE OFFICER** — (Appointed) assumes and discharges the duties of the Chaplain in the absence or disability of the Chaplain. The Service Officer oversees the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation functions of the Post.

**JUDGE ADVOCATE** — (Appointed) advises Post officers on the content and interpretation of the Post 534 Constitution, Bylaws and Rules.

**CHAPLAIN** — (Appointed) is charged with the spiritual welfare of members and will offer divine but nonsectarian service at dedications, funerals, or other public functions as set forth in the Post Officers Guide.

**POST COMMITTEES**

Post committees are critical to increasing active membership, new leader development and a key to the long term success of our Post. Through their work on committees members provide the hard work needed for our Post’s success as they plan, organize, communicate and implement the programs of our Post and The American Legion.

**“MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK”**

Whether our program involves providing care to disabled veterans, support for a family with a parent deployed away from home, supporting the Legions youth programs or a monthly Post breakfast, the work will be accomplished through Post members, like you, serving on committees.



Committees in The American Legion create a forum for members to be represented, pursue personal interests, help solve problems, and allow personal strengths to be utilized.

Work in committees also provides opportunities for the personal growth of individual members and encourage active participation by limiting time commitments. Committee work also functions as a very important training grounds for future Post leaders.

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

To help advise the Commander and Executive Committee the Post shall have a Membership, Finance, Ways and Means, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, Americanism, Uniformed Groups, Audit, Facilities, Public Relations, and such other committees as may be established by the Executive Committee.



With the consent of the Commander, each chairperson shall select at least two other members to serve on each committee and they will serve for an indefinite term at the discretion of the chairperson.

**Committee Membership.** With the exception of the Post Audit Committee any member in good standing is eligible to serve as a committee member.

**COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS**

**Executive Committee.** The Post Executive Committee (*aka E-Board*) governs the affairs of the Post. The Executive Committee provides authority for Post leaders to guide Post 534 to success in our mission.

**Membership Committee**—shall have charge of all matters pertaining to membership eligibility, growth, acceptance, retention, and renewals. Guidance is provided by the First Vice Commander.

**Ways and Means Committee** — develops projects to raise money for the Post. Once a project is approved by the Executive Committee the Ways and Means Committee, under the guidance of the Ways and Means Officer, is responsible for the implementation and success of the project. Guidance is provided by the Second Vice Commander.

**Finance Committee**— supervises the financial duties of the Post; prepares annual budget; and advises the Executive Committee on financial policies.

**Public Relations (PR) Committee** –promotes Post programs and social activities to members and local community. Also responsible for post news-letter, fliers and all Post online communication tools



**Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Committee** – is responsible for bringing to the attention of members and their dependents the rights and benefits granted them by law. They shall assist veterans in the pursuance of claims and in obtaining other veteran’s rights and benefits; to visit comrades who are sick or disabled; to visit and comfort members of their families when sick or bereaved.

**Audit Committee** -The Post shall keep books of account, and shall cause said books to be examined by a licensed accountant or Audit Committee of three (3) members.

**Uniformed Groups Committee**— Uniformed groups are The American Legion’s “display cases,” so to speak. At parades, funerals and special events, they advertise the Legion’s size, scope and substance to the public at large; they are one of the finest opportunities for post public relations. They afford those involved a sense of accomplishment, and a great deal of satisfaction and enjoyment.

**Facilities Committee** - handles overall maintenance of our Post facility.

**Americanism Committee** - seeks to inspire love of country and good citizenship through patriotic observances, flag etiquette, civic instruction in schools, the Americanization of immigrants, community service, and youth activities such as Boys State, Boy Scouts, Oratorical Contest and School Award Medals.

**Children and Youth Committee** — has three main objectives:

- 1) to strengthen the family unit
- 2) to maintain well-rounded youth programs
- 3) to support other organizations which serve children and youth.

## PREAMBLE TO THE AMERICAN LEGION CONSTITUTION

**For God and Country we associate ourselves together  
for the following purposes:**

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the  
United States of America;

To maintain law and order;

To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;

To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations  
in the Great Wars;

To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the  
community, state and nation;

To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;

To make right the master of might;

To promote peace and goodwill on earth;

To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice,  
freedom and democracy;

To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our  
devotion to mutual helpfulness.

**ORCUTT POST 534, THE AMERICAN LEGION**

145 W. Clark Ave., Orcutt CA 93455-4624 \* 805-937-0615

[post534orcutt.org](http://post534orcutt.org)

**General Meeting:** Second Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m.

**Executive Committee:** Third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m.

*revised: July 9, 2014 rcbp*