

Spring Valley Lake Veterans Club honors those who served at annual banquet

By Monica Solano
Staff Writer

SPRING VALLEY LAKE — A small round table sat in the middle of the room. The lone seat was empty as a reminder for those who'd fallen while serving their country and could not physically be there on a night when a toast was raised in their honor.

The Spring Valley Lake Veterans Club held its second annual Veterans Banquet Tuesday night as honored guest showed their respect and appreciation for those who have served in the military.

Held at the Spring Valley Lake Country Club, the annual banquet welcomed all veterans and their guests to meet fellow brothers and sisters in the military and enjoy a time of storytelling and community while being provided with dinner and live entertainment.

“For me seeing this club form is a dream come true. We have a lot wonderful veterans here in the High Desert who have done so much for our country and this is a great way to recognize them for all they've done,” said Robert Read, founder of the Veterans Club. “For me, it's an honor to give back and for them to leave here with a positive message that we do care and we will never forget their sacrifice.”

Read touched on all the club has accomplished in a short amount of time during his remarks to the crowd, including gaining statewide recognition for its service to fellow veterans by the successful implementation of its Priority Registration for Spouses of Disabled American Veterans Initiative that is now a signature policy at Victor Valley Community College.

VVC became the first community college in the nation to implement this initiative as Read gave special recognition to Dr. Roger Wagner, president and superintendent of VVC .

Other guests attending the banquet included San Bernardino County Sheriff John McMahon, Apple Valley Sheriff Commander Lana Tomlin, Victorville's Cadet Corp Founder Felix Diaz, VVC Trustee Joseph W. Brady and featured speaker and Director of San Bernardino County Veterans Affairs Frank Guevara.

Guevara spoke to crowd about his group's work in ensuring that veterans in the entire Inland Empire are given the help and respect they need.

“As of today we have housed 720 homeless veterans and we hope to continue to offer them the help they need and provide them with the benefits they deserve,” Guevara told the crowd. “We encourage those who need help to get help. We work hard and we're here to serve our vets and to serve our community.”

After more acknowledgements, guests were treated to a cake presentation and raffle drawing.

“This event is awesome and last year was a lot of fun and it’s really nice for these vets to get the recognition they deserve,” said SVL Private Events Director Dottie Smith.

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