

***GUNS  
UP!***



**COMBAT VETERAN HUNTS**

*More Than Just One & Done*



# THE STORY OF GUNS UP! COMBAT VET HUNTS

---

After returning from Marine Corps deployments in Iraq and finding the resources he needed to manage post-combat stress, our founding member, Daniel Job, felt compelled to help other veterans facing similar challenges. As a rice farmer in the heart of the Pacific Flyway, Daniel had access to some of California's best duck hunting land and recognized that waterfowl hunting could create a powerful environment for camaraderie and healing. Partnering with his cousin and hunting partner, Caleb Balbuena—a former Seattle Mariners minor league pitcher—they developed a plan to take returning veterans on hunts to build connection and share resources. Working with Todd Stevens and the California Deer Association's El Dorado County Chapter, they launched the Combat Vet Hunt Program, which quickly grew from taking out one veteran to serving eight annually, eventually laying the groundwork for what became Guns Up.



# THE STORY CONTINUES

As the program evolved, the founders formalized their vision by establishing Guns Up as an independent 501(c)(3). What makes Guns Up unique is its commitment to long-term relationships—veterans are invited back each year to hunt, help maintain blinds, and join an annual preseason barbecue. As we are headed into our 4<sup>th</sup> year this continuity provides a critical lifeline, as PTSD can resurface at any time, and knowing you belong to a supportive brotherhood can make all the difference. Looking ahead, Guns Up plans to expand its offerings to include fishing trips, upland and big game hunts, and a vacation retreat in Tahoe City for veterans who give back through the program.





# OUR FIRST HUNT!

Participating chapters will be offered the chance to select a veteran from their county office of veteran's affairs to send on the duck hunt through the same EDC Vet raffle. Waterfowl gear, shotgun, licenses, shells, lunch and the duck hunt will be provided. A private hunter education class will be available for new hunters. The vets selected will be welcomed back in subsequent years to hunt and support others who are there for their first time.

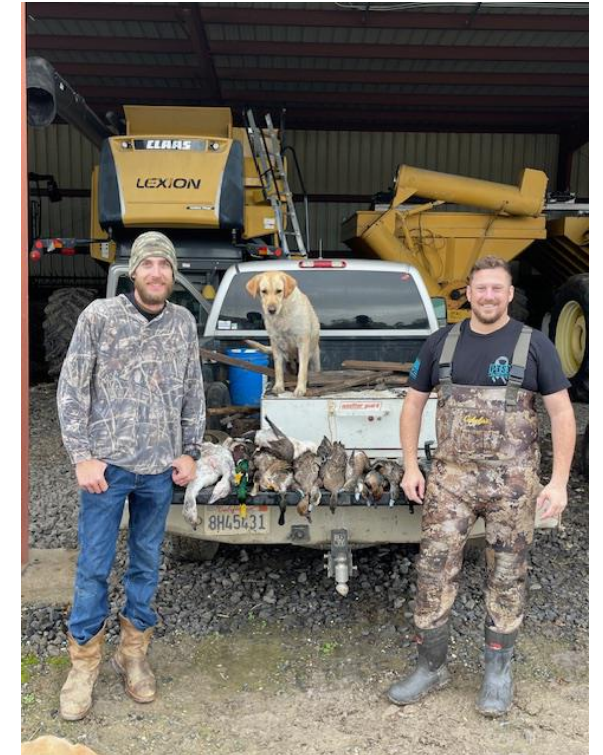


Last year's first combat vet duck hunter for EDC in the picture to the right was Doug McNett. Doug also served in the United States Marine Corp and currently serves on the pastoral staff at Foothills Church. Doug will be a huge help to the program as we go forward. I don't know much about duck hunting but I am told the banded bird Doug harvested on his first hunt was a really special event.

In the following page I will include the advertisement for Captain Steve who also sells his art directly and is very customizable. On the ad each quarter I will include the photos of the process of creating that quarter's project. Hopefully additional chapters will join the effort and EDC will donate a Captain Henline Statue display to their Live Auction. Contact me at the email below for any questions for your chapter to join the program.



**TODD STEVENS**  
toddstevens@caldeer.org

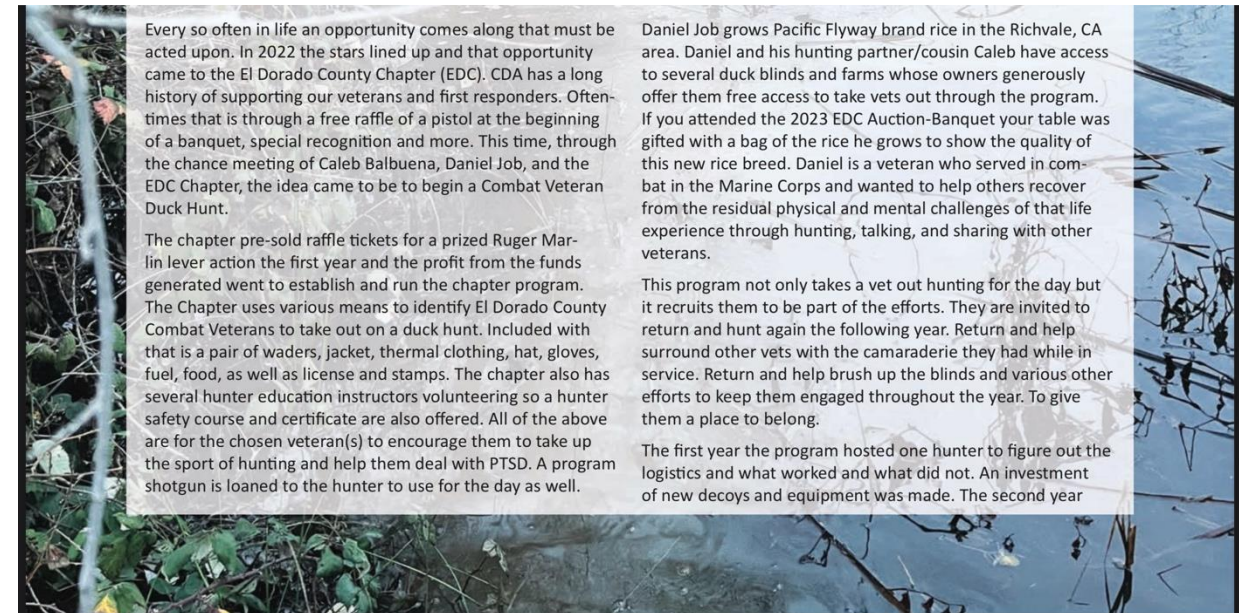




# GUNS UP PRESS RELEASE



## Combat Vet Hunt Give Back CDA Supports Our Country's Veterans



Every so often in life an opportunity comes along that must be acted upon. In 2022 the stars lined up and that opportunity came to the El Dorado County Chapter (EDC). CDA has a long history of supporting our veterans and first responders. Oftentimes that is through a free raffle of a pistol at the beginning of a banquet, special recognition and more. This time, through the chance meeting of Caleb Balbuena, Daniel Job, and the EDC Chapter, the idea came to be to begin a Combat Veteran Duck Hunt.

The chapter pre-sold raffle tickets for a prized Ruger Marlin lever action the first year and the profit from the funds generated went to establish and run the chapter program. The Chapter uses various means to identify El Dorado County Combat Veterans to take out on a duck hunt. Included with that is a pair of waders, jacket, thermal clothing, hat, gloves, fuel, food, as well as license and stamps. The chapter also has several hunter education instructors volunteering so a hunter safety course and certificate are also offered. All of the above are for the chosen veteran(s) to encourage them to take up the sport of hunting and help them deal with PTSD. A program shotgun is loaned to the hunter to use for the day as well.

Daniel Job grows Pacific Flyway brand rice in the Richvale, CA area. Daniel and his hunting partner/cousin Caleb have access to several duck blinds and farms whose owners generously offer them free access to take vets out through the program. If you attended the 2023 EDC Auction-Banquet your table was gifted with a bag of the rice he grows to show the quality of this new rice breed. Daniel is a veteran who served in combat in the Marine Corps and wanted to help others recover from the residual physical and mental challenges of that life experience through hunting, talking, and sharing with other veterans.

This program not only takes a vet out hunting for the day but it recruits them to be part of the efforts. They are invited to return and hunt again the following year. Return and help surround other vets with the camaraderie they had while in service. Return and help brush up the blinds and various other efforts to keep them engaged throughout the year. To give them a place to belong.

The first year the program hosted one hunter to figure out the logistics and what worked and what did not. An investment of new decoys and equipment was made. The second year



# MORE PRESS

the program took a jump as the Job family donated the use of their VRBO house in Tahoe City and the El Dorado County Sheriff donated a ride along on the Lake Tahoe Patrol Boat. The funds generated from the 2023 banquet were used to take out 3 veterans from the county and expanded from shooting in the primary blinds to jump shooting mallards and wood ducks.

Hopefully these pictures are worth a thousand words as you see guys who were willing to give of themselves through their service to our country, and be appreciated by CDA, its members and its volunteers. The veterans had a great time, with a lot of deep conversations and a brotherhood began to form. The program is currently applying for grant funds from El Dorado County and once that is in place the funding will allow more and more veterans to go out hunting and join the effort. As folks want to support these efforts, offers of access to turkey hunts, a turkey guide has volunteered his services, access to land with deer to



*Two veterans show through their smiles the enjoyment had that day hunting.*



*Marines are known to make do with whatever is at hand as the newest duck boat is being debuted in a creek too deep to wade.*



*Nothing calms the soul like watching God's handiwork reveal itself with the morning sunrise.*

*Hunting the timber for wood ducks and mallards.*

hunt along the river and more as folks want to support these efforts have occurred. This not only helps those who went off to protect our country but it aligns with the R3 efforts currently happening in the state and across the country. With the number of hunters diminishing, every person we can encourage to join in our hunting traditions helps keep the sport alive.

If your chapter would like to join our efforts and sponsor some vets from your chapter area to go on hunts reach out to me as we have enough opportunities available to take more vets out for next fall and winter.



**TODD STEVENS**  
[toddstevens@caldeer.org](mailto:toddstevens@caldeer.org)

# MAKING US LEGAL OUR SOLICITAION LETTER -CONT

- **Dear Friends,**
- As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Guns Up Foundation (Tax ID: #33-4006715) is dedicated to giving Disabled and Combat Veterans—and their spouses—the chance to experience waterfowl hunts and weekend getaways in Lake Tahoe, CA. More than a one-time trip, our program builds lasting connections. We invite veterans to return each year, not only to enjoy the outdoors but to find community and support. The bonds formed help combat the ongoing challenges of PTSD and provide a network where veterans feel valued and never alone.
- Daniel James Job  
Born June 24, 1991 – Chico, California
- Daniel James Job is a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, ranch manager, and founder of Guns Up Waterfowl, a nonprofit built on resilience, healing, and a deep love for the outdoors.
- A 2009 high school graduate, Daniel enlisted in the United States Marine Corps that same year, beginning boot camp at MCRD San Diego in October. He graduated as a squad leader and was meritoriously promoted to Private First Class. After completing 0331 machine gunner training at SOI in Camp Pendleton, Daniel was stationed with 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines.
- He deployed on the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit in 2011, and in 2012, served in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, in the Musa Qala District. In May 2012, while serving as lead VIC driver for his platoon, his vehicle struck an improvised explosive device, causing traumatic brain injuries to him and others aboard. Just two days later, Daniel and his team were back on patrol—a testament to the grit and resolve he carried throughout his service.
- After completing his enlistment in September 2013, Daniel returned to Northern California and began managing operations on the family rice farm, duck club, and L&L Farms. There, he raises his three sons and oversees wildlife habitat restoration, land management, and waterfowl conservation.

# MAKING US LEGAL OUR SOLICITATION LETTER

Guns Up Waterfowl was born from a thought Daniel had on his way to Afghanistan: *If I get injured, will I still be able to duck hunt?* After returning home—grateful to be alive and physically capable—he felt a calling to support veterans who were not as fortunate. A conversation years later in a duck blind with his cousin, Caleb Balbuena, brought that mission into focus. Together, they began connecting with others, and today, Guns Up Waterfowl is a full-fledged nonprofit helping veterans reconnect through hunting, camaraderie, and the outdoors.

From combat zones to conservation fields, Daniel Job continues to lead by example—serving his country, his community, and his fellow veterans with unwavering purpose.

We are asking for your support through a tax-deductible donation. Your contribution helps us cover everything from adaptive equipment and transportation to hunting gear, licenses, and meals. It also funds inclusive activities and outreach to ensure all veterans, regardless of ability, can take part. With your help, we can create a safe, welcoming space where veterans and their families can build friendships, access resources, and heal together. Thank you for considering a gift to Guns Up Foundation—your support is key to expanding these opportunities for those who have sacrificed so much.



# WHO WE ARE!

## -Cont

- **Daniel James Job - Bio Highlights**
- Born June 24, 1991, in Chico, California
- **Military Service**
- Enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 2009 after graduating high school
- Completed boot camp at MCRD San Diego, graduating as a squad leader and meritoriously promoted to Private First Class
- Trained as an 0331 machinegunner at SOI Camp Pendleton and stationed with 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines
- Deployed on the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit in 2011 and to Helmand Province, Afghanistan, in 2012
- In May 2012, while serving as lead VEC driver, his vehicle struck an improvised explosive device, causing traumatic brain injuries to him and others; returned to patrol just two days later
- 
- **Post-Military Career**
- Completed his enlistment in September 2013 and returned to Northern California
- Manages operations on the family rice farm, duck club, and L&L Farms
- Oversees wildlife habitat restoration, land management, and waterfowl conservation while raising his three sons
- 
- **Guns Up Waterfowl**
- Founded Guns Up Waterfowl, inspired by the thought: "If I get injured, will I still be able to duck hunt?"
- Committed to supporting veterans who face physical and mental challenges after combat
- Launched Guns Up in collaboration with his cousin, Caleb Balbuena, creating a nonprofit that helps veterans reconnect through hunting, camaraderie, and the outdoors
- 
- **Leadership and Legacy**
- From combat zones to conservation fields, Daniel continues to lead by example, serving his country, community, and fellow veterans with unwavering purpose



# WHO WE ARE!

## Caleb Balbuena – Bio

Caleb Balbuena is a former professional baseball pitcher, dedicated coach of close to 22 years, and passionate advocate for veterans. Born and raised in Northern California, Caleb's competitive spirit and commitment to excellence led him to a successful career as a minor league pitcher for the Seattle Mariners organization. His time in professional baseball instilled the values of discipline, teamwork, and perseverance—qualities he has carried into every aspect of his life.

After retiring from baseball, Caleb turned his focus to coaching, mentoring athletes at all levels to help them unlock their full potential on and off the field. His love of the outdoors and deep respect for service members inspired him to co-found the Guns Up Foundation alongside his cousin, U.S. Marine Corps veteran Daniel Job. Through Guns Up, Caleb works to create meaningful experiences for combat veterans, providing them with opportunities to connect, heal, and find purpose through waterfowl hunting and other outdoor adventures.

Driven by a commitment to service and community, Caleb has helped grow Guns Up from a small, grassroots effort into a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to foster lifelong bonds and provide critical support resources to veterans and their families. Whether he's coaching on the baseball diamond or welcoming veterans into the hunting blind, Caleb leads by example—demonstrating that dedication, compassion, and shared purpose can change lives.





# WHO WE ARE!

## Todd Stevens's - Bio

I was born in 1968 and grew up in the Richmond/San Pablo, CA area of the East Bay. This was a very blue-collar area back at that time, complete with neighborhood bars every couple of blocks, which were full in the afternoons of returning factory and refinery workers. I was introduced to fishing by my Dad and Grandpa Joe. One of the most treasured memories I have is spending weeks each spring, summer, and Christmas break at my Grandma Lori and Grandpa Max's house near Los Molinos, CA. I'd wake up early to get my chores done for the day before it got blistering hot. Once that was completed, I was allowed to head to their creek and fish. At 7 years old, climbing a barbed wire fence and hiking through a pasture of cattle to spend the day fishing was a big adventure. That experience, along with others, sparked my passion for the outdoors, including hunting.

I never served in the military; however, my family was touched by post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). My paternal grandfather, whom I did not know until I was an adult, served as a paratrooper in the Pacific theatre during WWII. He brought PTSD back with him and tried alcohol and physical abuse as his coping tools, leading to estrangement from his family. That is where my Grandpa Joe entered the scene. He also served in the army in the European theatre of WWII after leaving the reservation in Oklahoma at the age of 16 to enlist. He told them he was 18 years old since birth records on the reservation were not kept, and they took him. He spent 4 years in theatre and earned 4 Purple Hearts after being shot on 4 different occasions and returning to fight. I never knew about his experience and PTSD until the end of his life, as he never wanted to talk about that experience. He was able to deal with the PTSD more positively through his love of the outdoors resulting in an improved return to life after the war. My family has a history of service, including my Dad who joined the Navy, and then moved to the Marines as a medic trainee. My Grandpa Max served in the Army in the 1950s in Europe as a career, and my youngest brother served as an MP in the Air Force more recently.

I have witnessed what PTSD has done to good people and how folks who dealt with it in a positive manner fared. When I was talking with Caleb Balbuena about his cousin Daniel's idea of starting up the Guns UP! Combat Veteran Hunt program to help returning veterans, I was interested. I am enthusiastic about contributing my career skills to help get this program in the air and flying. At the bare minimum taking a vet out on a hunt or trip is a Thank You for your Service without the words.



# GUNS UP GROWTH



Live Auction Item  
LA - 20

## Goose Hunt for 2 Near Richvale, CA

December/January Timeframe

Meal, Private Blind, Guide, Dog Provided

Duck Hunt Substitution Available Upon Request and Depending on Weather May Be Required



- **Guns Up – Program Growth Highlights**
- In our first year, we took out one veteran on a waterfowl hunt.
- Each year, the program has grown steadily, expanding our ability to serve more veterans.
- We provide gear, ammunition (shells), and currently have 2 shotguns available for use by participating veterans.
- Last year, we successfully took out 8 veterans on duck and/or goose hunts.
- With the support of Todd Stevens and the California Deer Association (CDA), we've raised critical funding for the program through raffle ticket sales and other fundraising activities.



# OUR NEEDS

- **Guns Up – Equipment Cost Breakdown**
- Below is a cost breakdown for essential equipment needed to support disabled veteran participation in outdoor hunting activities.
- Polaris Ranger 1000 (4-seat ATV): \$17,500
- Wheelchair hoist (UTV-compatible): \$4,500
- Outdoor camouflage bar stool (durable, weather-resistant): \$150
- 3 sets of waterfowl gear from Drake Waterfowl (jackets, waders, gloves, and layering gear): \$1,500



## PRODUCT INFORMATION

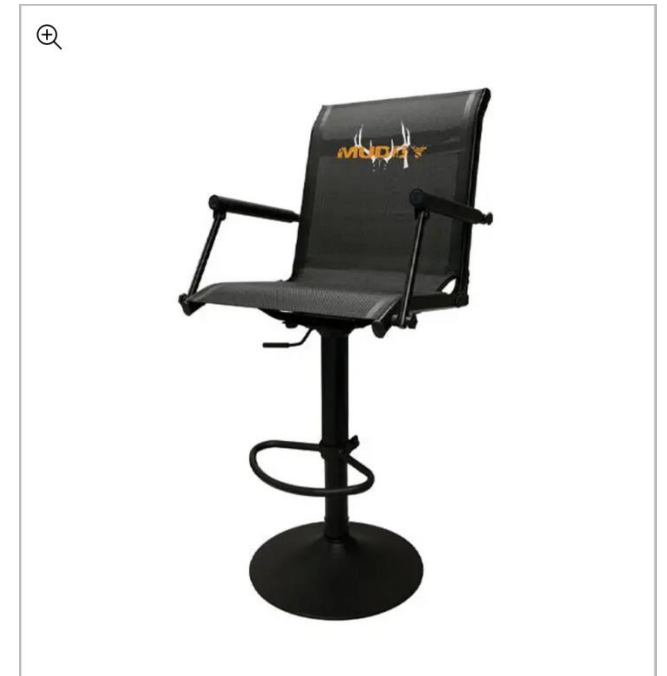
CONSTRUCTION: Steel frame

MATERIAL: Flex-Tek seat

WEIGHT: 16 lbs.

WEIGHT RATING: 300 lbs.

Click [HERE](#) for the instruction manual



# GETTING THE WORD OUT

- **Promoting Guns Up Nonprofit – Outreach Strategy**
- Below are five key ways to leverage social media and personal contacts to promote the Guns Up nonprofit and expand support for our mission.
- **Leverage Personal Networks:** Encourage board members, volunteers, and past participants to share Guns Up stories, photos, and donation links on their personal social media accounts, amplifying reach through authentic testimonials.
- **Engage with CDA and Sweatline Calls Communities:** Tag and collaborate with the California Deer Association (CDA) and Sweatline Calls on posts featuring joint events, raffles, and success stories—building trust and exposure through shared audiences.
- **Highlight Veteran Impact Stories:** Regularly post content that showcases the experiences of veterans who have participated in Guns Up hunts—use compelling imagery, short videos, and quotes to connect emotionally and drive sharing.
- **Utilize Event Coverage and Raffles:** Promote fundraising raffles and events with countdown posts, behind-the-scenes photos, and live updates to create momentum. Ask partners like CDA to cross-post for added visibility.
- **Create Shareable Campaigns:** Design short video clips, infographics, or reels that communicate the mission and results of Guns Up—making it easy for followers and organizations to repost and tag others who support veteran causes.



## CALIFORNIA DEER ASSOCIATION

Gridley Chapter Auction/Banquet

**March 9th, 2024**

Contact Info Betsy Teesdale: 530-701-8829

*Conserving California's Wildlife*



### Owens Valley Elk Fundraising Tag California Department of Fish & Wildlife

Here is your chance for a unique opportunity to hunt Tule Elk that are only found in California. All five zones within the Owens Valley hunt area are open to the purchaser of this tag with any legal method of take in California. Good access to public property is found throughout this zone.

The Dept. of Fish and Wildlife will issue a Hunting License!

**Please check with the California Department of Fish & Wildlife for hunt dates.**



# Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to listen to our presentation. We appreciate your interest in the mission and vision of our organization, and the opportunity to share how we're making a meaningful impact. Your support—whether through your attention, feedback, or future involvement—helps us continue creating opportunities and making a difference in the lives of those we serve. We're truly grateful for your time and consideration.

