

The AMERICAN LEGION

Department of France



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September 2015

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER Keith Abernathy



Sorry about the late Newsletter this month. It's entirely my fault. I couldn't get the Computers in the hotel to do what I wanted them to do. I just returned last evening and now I'm making my contribution to the Newsletter. I just attended the best American Legion National Convention that I've ever been to. Of course this is the first one I've ever been to and I thought that it was not only well run but for me very informative. The new National Commander is Dale Barnett from Georgia. He is a West Point Graduate from the Class of 1974, married with children. He will be with us next may. I'm looking forward to his visit. I met him while we were doing Community work in Baltimore. Oh by the way, they don't take breaks for anything at convention.

Membership, membership, membership. I was on the Membership Committee at the convention and had to sit in on the committees meeting on Saturday and Sunday. What we need to do here in the Department Of France is get out and enlighten people about the American Legion and try to get to new members. We cannot conduct Membership Drives any longer. We must enlighten people about the Legion and it's programs. I'll explain why at the 2nd DEC. We should come out of the basement when IR01 and TH01 comes on line, As of 1 January the \$5.00 dues increase imposed at National takes effect. However we have until 10 January to get our transmittals in at the old rate. After 10 January you will have the increase so get those Transmittals in.

Keith Abernathy – Commander - keithabernathy1942@yahoo.de

Did You Know?

The American Legion changed the course of history — writing the original GI Bill.
We remain committed to making sure that all veterans receive the benefits they
deserve for the sacrifices they've made to America.

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS - 2016 MEMBERSHIP YEAR

COMMANDER Keith Abernathy GR79 <i>keithabernathy1942@yahoo.de</i>	ADJUTANT Maxwell Rice GR79 <i>colwichboy@yahoo.com</i>	NECMAN John Miller GR1982 <i>miller-roth@t-online.de</i>	ALT. NECMAN Ronald Moore GR05 <i>gypsy_moore@yahoo.de</i>
VICE COMMANDER AT LARGE Joe D. Brown GR79 <i>vcalbrown50@gmail.com</i> GR07 GR20 CH01 DK01 NL01 TH00(Thailand) Post9999 & New Post Development	VICE COMMANDER Lyndon Hudson FR01 <i>lyndonandmargaret@yahoo.com</i> GR03 GR06 GR09 GR13 GR79 BE02	VICE COMMANDER Quincy Foster GR05 <i>achange@qcfoster.com</i> GR01 GR02 GR14 FR01 IR01 FR05 IR63	VICE COMMANDER John Shanahan IR63 <i>jhshanahan@gmail.com</i> IR02 IR03 IT01 PO01 GC01 SP292
VICE COMMANDER Casby Logan GR07 <i>casbyj@hotmail.com</i> GR05 GR30 GR45 GR1982	CHAPLAIN Jimmie Dale GR07 <i>jimmiedale.87@gmail.com</i>	HISTORIAN Michael Keating IR02 <i>michael.keating@t-online.de</i>	FINANCE OFFICER Gary Miller GR06 <i>billsfan_gary@hotmail.com</i>
SERVICE OFFICER Paul Claybough GR1982 <i>profsoldier72@yahoo.com</i>	JUDGE ADVOCATE James M. Settle GR42 <i>james.settle@kabelbw.de</i>		SERGEANT-AT-ARMS Christopher Buchanan GR1982 <i>christoperbuch@hotmail.com</i>

Please send all input for the Department Newsletter to my email address at the latest three days prior to the end of the month. If possible, please use Word document format. PDF files are sometime unclear when copied. Constructive suggestions to improve the Newsletter are also welcome.

If you want to stay informed on what is happening with **YOUR** Department you can also visit the following sites,
www.AmerLegionDeptFrance.org / www.Facebook.com/ALDeptFrance / www.legion.org/fodpal

Thank You.

David N. Greaux / *davidgreaux@t-online.de*



From the Editor

Duty, honor, country

By Steve B. Brooks



New National Commander Dale Barnett is sworn into office by Past National Commander Dave Rehbein. (Photo by Lucas Carter)

Legion family members will have no trouble remembering newly elected American Legion National Commander Dale Barnett's motto. The Department of Georgia Legionnaire made sure to have it placed on this year's membership shirt.

"Duty, honor, country – these three words have great meaning to my life, and I hope this year will have great meaning to you," Barnett told Legionnaires on Sept. 3 at the 97th National Convention in Baltimore. He then broke down what each word means to him.

Duty. "The first lesson of basic training was to know your job and do your job to the best you could," Barnett said. "Your life depended upon it, and the life of your buddies. In The American Legion, people depend on us each and every day to do the right thing. To get them to appointments. To mentor the youth. To help families in need."

Honor. "It was an honor to wear the military uniform, and I'm sure many of you still have your uniforms and you're proud to share those stories," he said. "But I'm also proud to wear the uniform of The American Legion. It's an honor to be in this organization and to serve alongside you. I guarantee you your communities respect what you do, and they understand what you do each and every day. That makes their communities a better place."

Country. "Our country needs us," he said. "It's the greatest country on earth. I'm so proud to be an American, but I'm so proud to be standing before you today to say I'm part of the greatest organization that, since 1919, has been fighting for the principles that have made this country great. We will continue to fight for those principles. Our country needs us, and we must step forward now."

"So this year, when you see those words, I want to challenge you," Barnett added. "When you see them with your eyes, I want you to live it in your heart, and I want you to execute it with your body and soul."

A member of Post 105 in Fayetteville, Ga., and past Department of Georgia commander, Barnett was raised in central Indiana and attended Whiteland Community High School, where he was student body president, captain of the track and basketball teams and president of the Whiteland United Methodist Youth Basketball Team. He also attended Hoosier Boys State in 1969, which he said was the determining factor in his decision to attend the U.S. Military Academy.

“The American Legion has shaped my life,” he said. “When I went to Hoosier Boys State in 1969, it planted for my attendance, and it was only because of The American Legion and Boys State that I think that I was selected to attend the Military Academy. It led to an opportunity of service

Barnett was an Army infantry officer from 1974 to 1996, and served from 1990 to 1991 as the battalion executive officer of the 2nd Battalion, 18th Infantry in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. After retiring as a lieutenant colonel, he taught high school social studies and coached basketball, baseball and cross country.

Walk of Veterans

The former coach is introducing a new initiative this year: Walk of Veterans. Barnett said the walks will take place in communities throughout the nation and are aimed to raise awareness about the Legion’s impact on its communities. Barnett wants the walks to include Legion family members, Legion youth program participants and their families, Scouts and local high school JROTC units, as well as community leaders and anyone else interested in participating.

“We walk for veterans each and every day in our communities,” Barnett said. “We mentor our kids, we do things for our community. I want to walk with all the people we touch, and that’s a lot of people. I want you to walk, and I want you to tell your story about why you joined The American Legion and why you stay a member in The American Legion. I guarantee ... that when people in your community walk with you and walk with us, and learn about what we’re doing, we’re going to see people join this organization. We’re going to see goodwill with public relations. And we’re going to get the message of The American Legion out to the communities.”

VA health care system a priority

Caring for those who have worn the nation’s uniform – and monitoring the health-care system designed to care for them – will be a priority for Barnett.

“I want each and every one of you to know that I pledged to the (Department of Veterans Affairs) secretary – you have pledged to the VA – that it is a system worth saving, and we’re in it together,” he said. “We’re going to do everything possible to make the VA health-care system provide the best health care in the world to our veterans because they have earned it and they deserve it.

“We will continue to look at the timeliness of VA claims, appointments and services, as well as the accuracy of that reporting. We will continue to partner – through our network of service officers, volunteers and town hall meeting – to monitor and to work with VA to ensure timely delivery of health care.”

Barnett said VA employees must perform their responsibilities in an acceptable manner or deal with the consequences. “We will continue to support further empowerment of the VA management to hold people accountable in the VA system who do not perform and provide that quality health care to our veterans,” he said. “The American Legion wants to build bridges with the VA, and I will guarantee you I will do that, and I will be your spokesman in that area. Goal to raise \$1 million for NEF

The National Emergency Fund, which provides financial help to Legion family members impacted by natural disasters, will be Barnett’s fundraising project this year. “It has unique meaning in Georgia,” he said. “Our state was hit by floods in 1994, and it was the NEF that came to the aid of many in Georgia. We need to continue to support this. I would like to see us raise \$1 million this year for the NEF because it does so much for so many people.”

Focusing on membership

Barnett’s own Legion post has grown from 81 to 307 members in the past 20 years. He used that example to encourage Legionnaires to continue to focus on bringing in new Legion family members, as well as the need to share the narrative of the nearly 100-year-old organization.

“All of us need to encourage growth,” he said. “We need to capture our histories. We need to tell our stories to our communities. Our communities want to know more about the history of The American Legion and how your post fits into it. And of course, always ask them to join this great organization.”

“I challenge all our posts, (Auxiliary) units and (SAL) squadrons to grow this year, to know and execute our five-year strategic plan,” he said. “Our communities need The American Legion now more than ever. Do not hesitate to ask someone to join our great organization.”

In closing, Barnett asked the organization’s member to make the most of their time as Legionnaires. “I challenge each of you today to dedicate yourself to the principles of duty, honor, country,” he said. “Don’t count the days. Make the days count.”

Elected as national vice commanders were George E. Cushing (Arizona), Alan A. Davis (Minnesota), David L. Gough (Wisconsin), John W. Hargreaves (Maine) and Jimmy Lane (Arkansas). Rev. Dr. H. C. “Ted” Kelley (Pennsylvania) was appointed national chaplain, while James E. Copher Sr. (Minnesota) was appointed national historian.



Doug Haggan...

National Vice Commander/ FODPAL Secretary/ Past Department of France Commander

Members of the Department of France doing Community Outreach work in Baltimore at the National Convention...





Bob Fuelling, Nola Maloney and Doug Haggan attending the Ye Steivos Reception



Pre-Convention briefing by Chairman Robert Fuelling



DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER AT LARGE / MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN *Joe D. Brown*



My fellow Legionnaire's, Auxiliary and SAL Members

We need to support each other, that is if you need help ask, I am sure with the wealth of knowledge we have within this Department someone is capable, and willing to help you. This year 2016 we on the right course to become No 1 at National for membership, but we still have Posts that have not transmittal any members for 2016, so do no DELAY, just get on the ball and get them transmittal to me. We had an IA meeting in Heilbronn in August, it when well with all the Vice Commanders and the JA.

We did a Membership drive in Wiesbaden PX, it went well thanks to Vice Commander Logan-- Vice Commander Foster and Post Commander GR 07 Jimmie Dale and Francis Vaughan for helping out at the membership drive. I talked to Mrs. Purdy, the Commander of GR 01 is in the Heidelberg University Clinic. Talked to Commander GR 1982 Kenneth Aungst, he was in and out or the hospital. Talked to Commander Hall for GR03, he is working on his post to make it better. Talk to Gary Miller everyday about Legion matters. In contact with the Department Commander Abernathy, Ja, Adjutant Rice and GR 01 First Vice Commander Young, their post is well on the way to the top and GR 79 is the first Post to make the 100%. Department has Two Temporary Charters Thailand TH 01 AND IRELAND IR 01 and were sent to National. The Department Adjutant looking forward to working closely with all the posts in making sure that there needs and problems be taken care of,

As always, remember if you need to contact me I am just an E-mail away joedan.pascal1@googlemail.com M-0170-1888034. In closing please keep those in harm's way and their families, not only in your thoughts but your prayers as well.

Membership Chairman / VCAL / Charlie Brown



GR07 Membership Drive Wiesbaden



New members for GR07



GR49 Commander receives award from Past GR79 Commander Joe Brown



Department Commander Abernathy and Vice Commanders at Heilbronn Volksfest



GR79 Meeting

Post Everlasting



It is my sad duty to report to you that Comrade Horst Hager, a 21 year member of Schweinfurt Post GR42 reported to Post Everlasting on 02 August 2015. He was 82 years old.

Department Vice Commander John Shanahan



My comments this month focus on membership: How we might retain the members we have, and how we might attract new members to join the Legion.

To retain members, we need to ensure that a couple of key ingredients are in place – regular communications and consistent member service. More than just having a membership card in their wallets, members want to know what’s going on. What’s the Legion doing? How about my Post? Is there an annual programme of work, tied to the Legion’s four pillars? Is there a schedule of events for the Post? Are Post news items, the Post’s work programme and a schedule of events published in a regular newsletter? Is the newsletter going out on a basis that’s frequent enough to keep members informed, well in advance? Is there a phone committee in place to check on members who might be home-bound or sick?

When it comes to member service, the Post needs to be pro-active in knowing each of its members and understanding what needs they might have. For some, it may be a medical need or a matter pertaining to military service records. For others, it might be an employment or pension problem. And for yet others, it may simply be a need to be active and useful – perhaps to be invited to perform a task in the Post or to take an office. In each of these instances, Post leaders need to ensure that they know their members and are aware of every individual member’s needs and personal situations.



Member recruiting is an important and continuous process. Time takes its toll on all of us and we need to ensure that we keep our Posts vital and up to strength in order to do the job we’ve signed on for – to serve veterans and their families. The key to this is recruit, recruit and recruit some more. Get some business cards printed up with your contact details on them. (Yes, you can do a very nice job on your personal computer.) Keep a small supply of applications with you when you’re out and about. Organize a post membership committee and ask for regular reports on progress. Ask the membership committee to write down the Post’s USPs – “unique selling points” – and use those USPs as a key part of your recruiting message.

Use electronic media such as Facebook and the Department’s web page to create a sense of Post identity and to display your USPs. Publish news that’s of interest to prospective members. Finally, don’t be afraid to reach out to prospective members and ask them to join. You might be pleasantly surprised at your success!



Will all of this work? A small organizing committee in new Post IR-01 in Ireland set out to put these principles to work recently. We did all of the things listed above. In three months, we had recruited 50 new members. The following month, after a trip to a Navy unit reunion event in Derry City, we had recruited another 12 new members. The photos shown here are evidence of our efforts and their results. The good news is – you can do the same thing. Remember – your Department officers are here to help you and to answer your questions along the way. Best wishes to you all.

God and Country, *John*



DEPARTMENT FINANCE OFFICER Gary Miller

All DEPT officers and committee chairmen. For those individuals that have a budget from Department, You need to ensure that you have an American Bank account. This includes the Commander On down (VCAL, Adjutant, etc). Also, be sure to email The adjutant and the finance officer, with any address Changes for your post. You can expect a check from Dept for online renewals every quarter, (October, January, April and July).

M-F 0800-1500 - 0711-680-4500, 1800 till 2100 - 0711-674-8370/GARY.D.MILLER2.CTR@MAIL.MIL or billsfan_gary@hotmail.com

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES – Finance

14 August 2014

1. MEMORANDUM FOR EXPENSES FOR AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE OFFICERS, POSTS AND/OR OTHER LEGIONNAIRES THAT ARE LISTED ON EACH YEARS BUDGET.
2. MONEY AMOUNTS CAN VARY FROM YEAR TO YEAR IAW THE APPROVED YEARLY BUDGET.
3. RE-IMBURSABLE EXPENSES – TRAVEL, LODGING, MEALS – MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY RECEIPTS.
 - A. VISITS TO OTHERS POSTS
 - B. LEGION CEREMONIES (MEMORIAL DAY, ST. AVOLD, VETERANS DAY, ORATORICAL ETC)
 - C. NATIONAL CONVENTION (NON-CALL IN)-THOSE OFFICERS THAT HAVE A BUDGET.
 - D. NATIONAL COMMANDER’S VISIT (NECMAN, COMMANDER, VCAL, DRIVERS).
 - E. PURCHASE OF APPROVED SUPPLIES.
 - F. OTHER BUDGETED ITEMS (POSTAGE).
 - G. OTHER ITEMS VOTED AND APPROVED AT A DEPT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (DEC) MEETING.
4. ALLOWANCES ARE TO BE PAID TO COMMANDER, ADJUTANT AND FINANCE IAW WITH THE CURRENT YEAR BUDGET.
5. EXPENSES THAT ARE NOT RE-IMBURSABLE
 - A. TRAVEL COSTS TO A DEC MEETING.
 - B. TRAVEL COSTS TO ATTEND THE DEPARTMENT CONVENTION.
 - C. TRAVEL COSTS TO NATIONAL THAT RESULT IN A ‘CALL-IN’. THOSE TRAVEL COSTS THAT NATIONAL PAYS FOR.
6. MEMBERSHIP TRANSMITTALS TO DEPARTMENT SHALL BE SENT TO THE DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN ON A MONTHLY BASIS. THE TRANSMITTALS WILL BE SENT BY MAIL AND AN ELECTRONIC COPY SENT TO THE CHAIRMAN.
- A. EACH MEMBER TRANSMITTED TO DEPT WILL INCLUDE THE DEPT PER-CAPITA AMOUNT (CURRENTLY \$19.50 PER MEMBER). OF WHICH \$13.50 WILL BE SENT TO NATIONAL FOR EACH MEMBER AND \$6.00 FOR THE DEPT.
7. ONLINE RENEWALS - THE FINANCE OFFICER WILL RECORD ALL ONLINE RENEWALS ON THE 1ST AND THE 16TH OF EACH MONTH. AN EXCEL SPREADSHEET WILL BE MAINTAINED, RECORDING THE NUMBER OF RENEWALS FOR EACH POST AND THE PER-CAPITA MONEY OWED TO THE POSTS FOR EACH RENEWAL FOR THE STATED TIMES FRAMES. THE ONLINE RENEWAL AMOUNTS FOR THE PER-CAPITA PER POST WILL BE CALCULATED AND A CHECK WILL BE SENT FROM DEPT TO EACH POST AT THE END OF EACH QUARTER OF THE CURRENT MEMBERSHIP YEAR. FOR EXAMPLE:
 - A. Post GR06 annual dues are \$30.00 per year.
 - B. Online renewals for the period of 1 July-30 September totaled 50 members.
 - C. \$13.50 of the \$30.00 goes right to National. National will send Dept. a check for \$825.00 (\$16.50 x 50 members). Of that \$825.00 - \$300.00 will be kept by Dept. (\$6.00 for Dept. per-capita for each member x 50). \$825.00 - \$300.00 = \$525.00 check to be sent to Post 6. So for each member renewed online at \$30.00 - \$19.50 is kept by National and the Dept. (\$13.50 for National and \$6.00 for Dept.). The \$30.00 - \$19.50 = \$10.50 owed to Post 6 for each online renewal.

DETACHMENT OF FRANCE

Squadrons: GR01, BE02, GR06, GR07, GR14, GR42, GR79, CH01



Lee Preston... *Detachment of France Commander "2016"*

Hello Detachment of France,

Again another month has gone by. It would seem that this year will fly past us before we know it. First, I would like to tell everyone that the location of the next DEC had to be changed due to reasons beyond our control. We will have the October 10th DEC at the DJK guest house in Schweinfurt. The full information will be sent out in the call from the Detachment Adjutant. The change was presented to us too late to make any other arrangements. I would hope that we could get as many Squadrons to attend as possible in order for us to have the next DEC and the convention in other locations. If you cannot attend then send an E-mail to myself or Adjutant Settles stating that your Squadron would like to host the next DEC in March 2016 or a packet for the next convention in June 2016. Second, I would like to talk about membership. As of August 25th 2015 we are number 51 of 55 Detachments with 79.377%. This amounts to 204 members for 2015 and we need 54 more members to reach 100%. Please dig deep and talk to your members that have not renewed for 2015 one more time. Look into you legion posts to see if there are possibilities of gaining new members. Let's give this one more push to try and achieve the 100% for this year. Thank you all for your support and hard work while we make this year a good one and hope to see everyone at the DEC on 10 October.

Lee Preston

Lpreston1957@gmail.com



The American Legion Amateur Radio Club (TALARC). The next special event operation event (SE) is Veteran's Day, November 11, 2015. Operators will operate all day from the basement station K9TAL at national headquarters. During the last SE, on March 14, 2015, more than 500 ham radio operators contacted the national headquarters on a variety of modes. Bill Sloan, Internal Affairs, is now the Federal Communications Commission trustee for radio station K9TAL and is vice president and acting membership director of the American Legion Amateur Radio Club. Membership now exceeds **2,500** American Legion Family members from 1,700 this time last year. TALARC continues to receive 6-10 new member applications each week.



POW/MIA Update

Army Air Forces 1st Lt. William P. Cook, 27, of Alameda, Calif., Flight Officer Arthur J. LeFavre, 22, of Red Bank, N.J., Staff Sgts. Maurice J. Fevold, 21, of Chicago, Frank G. Lane Jr., 21, of Cleveland, and Ward C. Swalwell Jr., 21, of Chicago, and Sgt. Eric M. Honeyman, 21, of Alameda, Calif., have been accounted for and will be buried with full military honors. Cook was buried Oct. 18, 2014, in Oakland, Calif. Fevold was buried Oct. 20, 2014, in Ft. Dodge, Iowa, Lane was buried May 2, 2015, in Willoughby, Ohio. Honeyman was buried on June 22, in Trail, British Columbia, Canada. LeFavre was buried on Aug. 18 in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington D.C. The group representing the crew was buried on Aug. 18, in Arlington National Cemetery. Swalwell will be buried on Aug. 20, in Arlington National Cemetery.

On Dec. 23, 1944, Cook along with five other B-26G Marauder crewmembers took off from Saint Quentin, France, on a mission to bomb an enemy-held bridge in Eller, Germany. The aircraft was shot down by enemy anti-aircraft fire near Seffern, Germany, near the Belgium border.

Following World War II, the Army Graves Registration Command (AGRC) conducted extensive field investigations and was unable to locate the aircraft and the crew. In May 1949, AGRC concluded the crew members were unrecoverable.

In 2006, a group of researchers from Airwar History Working Group Rhine-Moselle and History Flight -99th Division MIA Project located the wreckage of a B-26G associated with the loss of this crew, near Allmuthen, Belgium and notified the U.S. Army Mortuary Affairs Activity – Europe. In 2007, a Department of Defense (DoD) team investigated the site and recommended it for excavation.

In 2012 and 2013, another DoD team excavated the crash site and recovered human remains, aircraft wreckage, and personal effects.

To identify Honeyman's remains, scientists from DoD and AFDIL used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools including, partial Y-Chromosome Short Tandem Repeat (Y-STR) DNA, which matched Honeyman's paternal-line cousins.

To identify Cook's remains, scientists from DoD and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools, including mitochondrial DNA, which matched Cook's maternal-line cousins.

To identify LeFavre's remains scientists from DPAA and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools, including, mitochondrial DNA, which matched LeFavre's maternal-line niece and grandniece.

To identify Lane's remains, scientists from DPAA and AFDIL used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools including, partial Y-Chromosome Short Tandem Repeat (Y-STR) DNA, which matched Lane's paternal-line nephew.

To identify Fevold's remains, scientists from DoD and AFDIL used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools including, mitochondrial DNA, which matched Fevold's maternal-line niece.

To identify Swalwell's remains scientists from DPAA and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools, including, mitochondrial DNA, which matched Swalwell's maternal-line sister and niece.

PARIS POST FR01

Here is a picture of my mother Ginette Crosley, who represented the American Legion last Saturday evening at the cemetery of Montargis where they have a vigil of arms every year before the ceremonies the next day for the "Liberation of Montargis". Thanks/Sincerely, Michèle.

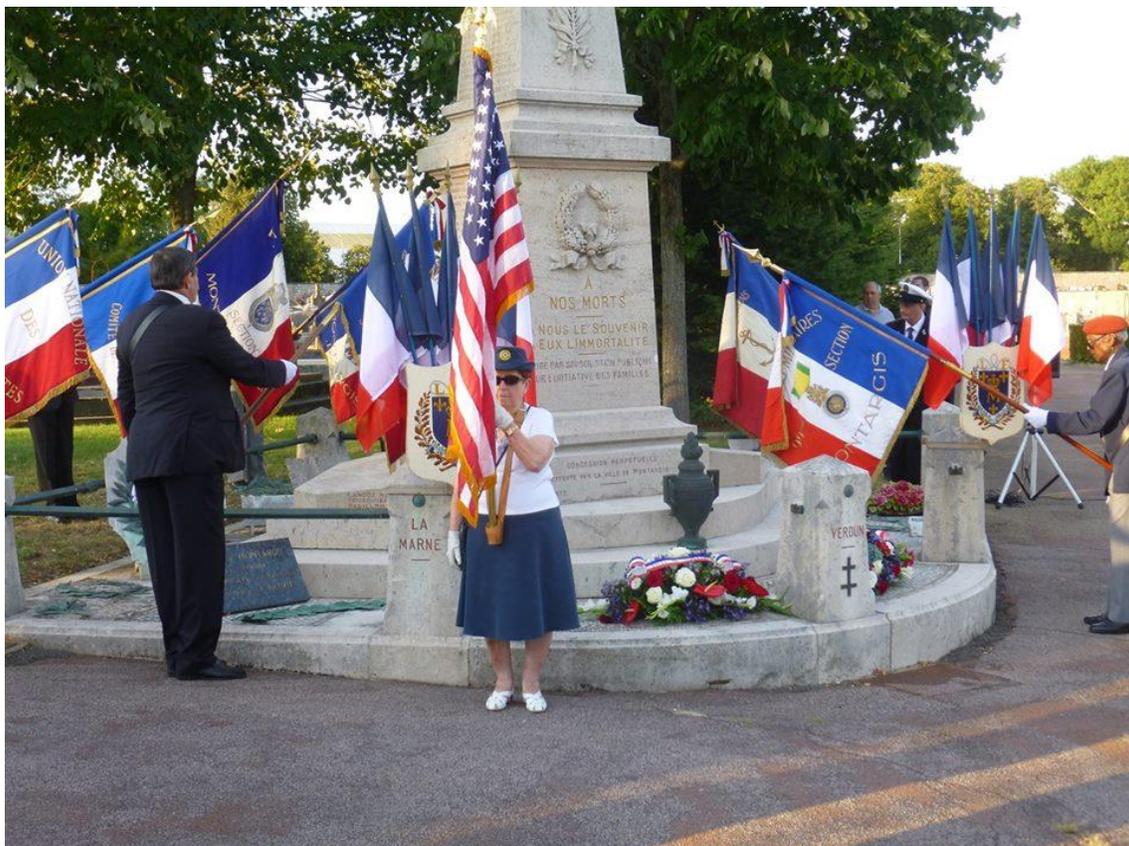
“My daughter Michele Crosley, PP#1 Post Adjutant, sent you a picture of myself at a ceremony in my hometown in Montargis. She forgot to mention that I am the vice-President of ALA Paris Post # 1, it is the reason I am representing the American veterans every year in my home town. My husband SGM Frank Crosley, PP1 member since 1972, went to PEL in 2005. He is buried at Arlington cemetery, and I continue to be present at ceremonies in France, to keep the memory of American Soldiers who fought for freedom.

PP#1 don't have many activities , due to few numbers of legionnaires and auxiliaries.

Thank you.

For the Good of the Legion

GINETTE CROSLY (82 yrs old)”





Membership Drive at AAFES PX on Chièvres Airbase, 01 August

During the course of the day, members of the Post BE02 recruited 10 new members to the American Legion and 2 new members to the Auxiliary. We were also able to present the many programs that we offer to the community.

Legion Riders, 09 August

Members of the Legion Riders made a 250km ride to visit the Belgian cities of Namur, Dinant and Huy.

The American Legion Post BE02's Adopter Appreciation Day, 22 August

Members of American Legion Post BE02 honored adopters of the graves of the fallen American Soldiers at Flanders Field American Cemetery with an Appreciation Day in Waregem, Belgium, Aug. 22.

One year ago, Post BE02 implemented an Adopt-a-Grave program for the 368 Soldiers buried at Belgium's only American World War I cemetery. Adopting the grave meant a promise of paying your respects at the grave twice a year, Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Within two months of the announcement of this program, all of the graves and the names on the Wall of the Missing were adopted, the vast majority of which by Belgian citizens.

Appreciation Day began with a small ceremony conducted at Flanders Field American Cemetery to commemorate the fallen heroes and to honor their adopters.

Chargé d'affaires Mark C. Storella, together with the cemetery's Superintendent Chris Arseneault and Waregem's Mayor Kurt Vanryckeghem, attended the ceremony. Storella, who is the deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Brussels, thanked the adopters for volunteering to adopt a grave and helping to ensure that no one will ever forget the heroes buried there.

During the course of the year, some of our adopters were unable to fulfill their commitment to honor our fallen soldiers. With much regret they have relinquished their adoption. At the completion of the ceremony, Storella and Vanryckeghem presented certificates of adoption to new adopters.

The Adopter Appreciation Day event then moved to Park Stadion in Waregem where the adopters and their families could enjoy an American-style barbecue, view exhibits in the "Adopter Village" and participate in a number of other activities.

Brussels American High School – Back to School Social: 27 August

Commander Schram was given the opportunity to present to the students of the Brussels American High School the several programs that Post BE02 has to offer to the community. Information and brochures regarding the post's Oratorical Contest, Boys State/Girls State, Venture Crew, SAL & Junior Auxiliary were given to the students as well as their parent.





National American Legion College – October 24 - 30



We have received a record number of applications from a record number of departments; 71 applications from 40 departments have been received thus far with two more departments promising applications before national convention.

Focus of the college is:

- How to be an effective leader in The American Legion
- Parliamentary procedures (how to run a district meeting)
- How to develop a department level American Legion College
- The communication process (brand awareness, marketing, etc.)
- The resolution process
- Three train-the-trainer classes covering “Getting AC&Y Programs in your Community”; myLegion.org; ALEI

DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE PAST COMMANDERS CLUB



Jimmie Dale...*President “2016”*

Who is eligible to join the Department of France Past Commanders Club?

PAST AND PRESENT Department Commanders, Department Vice Commanders At Large, Department Vice Commanders, Post Commanders, SAL Detachment Commanders, SAL Squadron Commanders, Auxiliary Department Presidents, Auxiliary Unit Presidents...*so if you were just voted into office you are eligible to join*

Initial dues for the Past Commanders Club is only \$25.00

Renewal dues for the Past Commanders Club is only \$10.00

Our next meeting will be during our Department Second DEC

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE... *David Greaux, PCC Secretary “2016”*

SGT William D. Nelson Post GR09

On 8 August GR 09 participated in a grill fest hosted by the 1906 founded Ulmer Traditional Artillery Association.

GR 09 has joined with the Artillery Association in many events throughout the past seven years and this was the fourth annual grill party shared amongst friends. Hosting of the event alternates each year and this time the Artillery Association was in charge of the arrangements. Weather and location was perfect and it was obvious by the lateness of the evening when the guests departed that everyone had a good time.

Although initially the German members tried their hand at the grill they prudently turned over the task to the more skilled Americans. Department Commander Abernathy also joined the event.



Chaplain Tom Snook demonstrating his grilling skills to Artillery Association president Reiner Miene.



GR 09 Legionnaires and Germans mingling

A poster for Gold Star Mothers and Family Day. The top half features a close-up of a pair of tan suede boots with a blue fabric featuring white stars draped over them. The bottom half contains text and two gold star pins.

Gold Star Mothers and Family Day
September 27, 2015

Gold Star Mothers and Families wear pins of remembrance, sacrifice, and strength.

Survivor Outreach Services honors Mothers and Families of the Fallen.

For more information, contact 910-570-8370 or call Fort Family at 866-345-8248

Dues increase recommended to keep programs strong

The American Legion - August 6, 2015



Nearly a decade has passed since The American Legion's last national per-capita dues increase. During that span, the U.S. cost of living has climbed 13 percent. An economic downturn unseen since the Great Depression has trimmed interest income from American Legion investments by over 35 percent. And the pool of veterans eligible for American Legion membership has declined by about 20 percent. - See more at: <http://www.legion.org/dispatch/229454/dues-increase-price-cup-coffee#sthash.6faqiF15.dpuf>

With more than 3 million veterans of the global war on terrorism restarting civilian lives, or soon to do so, and looking to The American Legion for help, the National Executive Committee passed a resolution at the 2015 Spring Meetings in Indianapolis to recommend a \$5 per-capita annual increase in national membership dues. It amounts to about 1.4 cents a day. - See more at: <http://www.legion.org/dispatch/229454/dues-increase-price-cup-coffee#sthash.6faqiF15.dpuf>

The NEC's recommendation comes at a time when the need for American Legion advocacy, expertise, influence, services and programs are sorely needed in every corner of our nation. Veterans are waiting too long for benefits claims decisions and medical appointments, and need well-trained and accredited American Legion service officers right now and for years to come. Nearly 4,000 veterans sought help at about two dozen Veterans Benefits Center events over the last year where they received firsthand, on-the-spot assistance, including over \$1 million in retroactive, past-due disability benefits. - See more at: <http://www.legion.org/dispatch/229454/dues-increase-price-cup-coffee#sthash.6faqiF15.dpuf>

The most obvious takeaway from those events is that veterans and their families need, and will continue to need, American Legion representation because the road to VA reform is certain to be long and fraught with challenges. - See more at: <http://www.legion.org/dispatch/229454/dues-increase-price-cup-coffee#sthash.6faqiF15.dpuf>

This is not a time to divest from The American Legion's ability to serve veterans, members of the U.S. armed forces or young people. A national \$5 per-capita dues increase can prevent National Headquarters from having to cut programs and services over the course of an entire decade. - See more at: <http://www.legion.org/dispatch/229454/dues-increase-price-cup-coffee#sthash.6faqiF15.dpuf>

The natural attrition of veterans from early-20th-century war eras has contributed greatly to a 16 percent drop in membership since the last dues increase passed. That accounts for a nearly \$5.7 million revenue reduction since 2007. - See more at: <http://www.legion.org/dispatch/229454/dues-increase-price-cup-coffee#sthash.6faqiF15.dpuf>

To offset that, National Headquarters has worked to stimulate corporate relationships, improve its charitable giving program and reduce operational costs through digital technology. All these efforts have helped stave off earlier dues increase recommendations that would have been necessary given the economy and membership situation. - See more at: <http://www.legion.org/dispatch/229454/dues-increase-price-cup-coffee#sthash.6faqiF15.dpuf>

The Legion's non-member fundraising program has grown significantly and is now netting about \$1.4 million to the positive, but it took more than three years to get there. The national television advertising program is off to a similar start, and a number of technological initiatives like online joining, renewal and sustained giving help the bottom line. - See more at: <http://www.legion.org/dispatch/229454/dues-increase-price-cup-coffee#sthash.6faqiF15.dpuf>

All these efforts are trending toward reduced reliance on membership dues, but it will take some time to get there. The American Legion's ability to succeed over the next decade depends on positive cash flow and the ability to invest in the future. Without this dues increase, National Headquarters would be looking at entering its centennial celebration year staring at a estimated budget deficit of \$6.78 million. - See more at: <http://www.legion.org/dispatch/229454/dues-increase-price-cup-coffee#sthash.6faqiF15.dpuf>

Nearly a century has passed since The American Legion's founders made their commitment to serve veterans, troops and families in their communities, states and nation. American Legion members have never retreated from that commitment. At a time of war, a time of homecoming and a time of need among our nation's veterans, families and young people, there is no better place to invest an extra \$5 a year. - See more at: <http://www.legion.org/dispatch/229454/dues-increase-price-cup-coffee#sthash.6faqiF15.dpuf>



Arlington National Cemetery Update 53 = Expansion Scale Back

An expansion of Arlington National Cemetery could be scaled back because the county and state of Virginia want to build a bus facility, according to Sen. John McCain. McCain sent a letter to Army Secretary John McHugh on Wednesday calling the possibility "shameful" and urging the service to maximize the number of plots in the project. The national cemetery could reach capacity within a decade and is encouraging cremations and enforcing strict burial regulations to save space. But the Navy Annex facility that once overlooked the Pentagon has been demolished and offers an opportunity for an additional 7,600 interment sites. "It would be shameful to have to tell the family of a fallen American hero that there is no space available at Arlington National Cemetery, because rather than expand its grounds, Arlington County and the Virginia Department of Transportation decided to build a bus maintenance facility," McCain wrote in a copy of the letter to McHugh shared with media. The county and state want to realign Columbia Pike, a state highway, in a way that leaves space for the busing facility, he wrote. Arlington County and the Virginia Department of Transportation did not return calls for comment. "As you proceed with discussions on this matter ... I encourage you to pursue a solution that maximizes property for the cemetery and restricts incompatible use, and to use whatever tools available to you to ensure this outcome," McCain told McHugh.

(Source: Stars & Stripes | Travis J. Tritten | August 13, 2015)



Patriot Day in United States

Patriot Day is an annual observance on September 11 to remember those who were injured or died during the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001. Many Americans refer Patriot Day as 9/11 or September 11.

Observe Patriot Day

On the direction of the President, the flag of the United States of America should be displayed on the homes of Americans, the White House and all United States government buildings in the whole world. The flag should be flown at half-staff as a mark of respect to those who died on September 11, 2001. Many people observe a moment of silence at 8:46 AM (Eastern Daylight Time). This marks the time that the first plane flew into the World Trade Center. Some communities, particularly in the areas directly affected by the attacks, hold special church services or prayer meetings. People who personally experienced the events in 2001 or lost loved ones in them, may lay flowers or visit memorials.

About Patriot Day

On September 11, 2001, four planes were hijacked. The hijackers then deliberately flew three of the planes into two important buildings, the Pentagon in Washington DC and the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York. The fourth crashed into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The loss of life and damage that these hijackings caused form the biggest act of terrorism ever on United States soil. Nearly 3000 people died in the attacks and the economic impact was immense.

The attacks have greatly increased attention to national security in the United States. This has had huge implications for United States national and international politics. This is particularly true for the relationships between the United States and Islamic countries in the Middle East.



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