

The AMERICAN LEGION

Department of France



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February 2014

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DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

James Settle

My Fellow Legionaries

On 11 January 2014 The Department conducted a Membership Drive in Wiesbaden. Those present were myself, along with the VCAL/Membership Chairman Comrade Brown Vice Commander Logan, Department Historian Comrade Shepard, and Comrade Vaughan. We were able to recruit 17 new members in the Wiesbaden area for the Department of France.

On the 26th of January 2014 The David Chavez Post GR1982 conducted a Membership drive and recruited 35 new members for their post. Commander GR1982 Comrade Buchanan thanks Vice Commander Ward for the help and assistance provided, and who also recruited 20 of those new members. Great Job GR1982.

The Department Oratorical Finals will be held on Sunday February 16th at Patch Barracks. the venue is the Patch High School building 2388. The program kicks off at 1300 hours all contestants must be on station not later than 1200 hours. Judges, time keeps, ect. must be present not later than 1230 hours. all are welcomed to this event. If you are attending this event and need to be signed in on post please contact Comrade Gary Miller ASAÜ at gary.d.miller2.ctr@mail.mil I encourage all of you to attend this event, and watch these amazing young adults.

National Commander Daniel Dellinger and party will be arriving here in Germany on the 26th of May at 8:30 hours in Frankfurt. As it looks now we will have a busy schedule for the Commander. The Commander departs on or about 1 June 2014.

Department Officers

Continued from Page 1

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From the Editor...

Please send all input for the Department Newsletter to my e-mail address by the end of the month. Please use Word document format. 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

His plans also include visiting Normandy for the 70th anniversary. If you wish to help support this effort, or would like to have the National Commander visit your area, please contact me ASAP.

I am presently in contact with the Department of Maryland, in reference to our participation with them in their Boys State Program. All indications are, they are very happy with our participation in this program, and will continue to support us in the future. More information on dates times and places to follow.

Now is the time to start working on your Post Awards Packets. I am sure VCAL Brown is already working on the Awards Committee meeting which will be in the May time frame.

The Department 3rd DEC is the 15th of March 2014 hosted by GR1982 in Ansbach. The Call for this should be going out shortly.

The Department Convention will be conducted 19-21 June 2014 and is being hosted by GR09. For more information see information in this Newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERSHIP. I cannot stress membership enough. It is the bloodline of our organization. It enables us to perform our missions to the Veterans and their Families, and supports not only National Programs but ours also. While you are out there recruiting, new members do not forget your current members, get them to renew in a timely manner. If you have any questions on membership do not hesitate to contact the Membership Chairman Comrade Brown, at joedan.pascall@googlemail.com. He can answer your questions and resolve any problems you are having, with membership.

In closing, please keep those in harm's way and their families, in your thoughts and prayers also.

James M. Settle
Department Commander

Phone: 07138-67359
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The Department Web Page is: www.AmerLegionDeptFrance.org
The department has a Face Book page at the following www.Facebook.com/ALDeptFrance. Please visit and like this page. Thanks

A real American Legion Family

By Jeff Stoffer



He lives in a part of Germany where the U.S. military footprint is fading, but Josh Settle, who at age 15 was elected commander of the SAL Detachment of France last spring, is not even the only top-level American Legion Family officer in his home. His father, James, is commander of the Legion's Department of France. Josh's Germany-born mother, Isolde, is the Department of France Auxiliary president.

National records can neither confirm nor deny that this is the first time in history an American Legion department commander, Auxiliary department president and SAL detachment commander all from the same family served in those capacities at the same time. It is, at the very least, a rarity.

James Settle joined The American Legion in 1999 after a 21-year career in the U.S. Army. A former MP, James served as an American Legion post adjutant, department adjutant and vice commander at-large before his election as department commander last June.

As his dad was advancing in the Legion, young Josh was at his side, having joined the SAL in 2002. "He took me to the meetings since I was small," Josh said. "I didn't know anything different. I liked the patriotism. You don't find that in Germany."

By the time he was 11 years old, Josh was the SAL detachment chaplain, saying prayers at meetings and sending get-well and sympathy cards to Legion families. With dual citizenship, Josh said he was "taught to love my country — both of them. I was taught to be proud to be German *and* American."

The Settles work hard to keep American patriotism alive in western Europe. They participate in major U.S. holidays and ceremonies, and at least twice a year the family joins other Legion Family members in commemoration activities that honor nearly 11,000 Americans who are laid to rest, or remembered as missing, at the Lorraine Cemetery near St. Avold, France, an American Battle Monuments Commission site that has more U.S. graves than any other World War II cemetery in Europe.

The Settles agree that membership growth in Europe is a big challenge when a considerable portion of department and detachment members live in the United States. Those members who live in Europe are often asked to represent both the Legion and the SAL at ceremonies. "When we are at an event, we always say to bring both caps — your American Legion and SAL cap — to show that we support one another," James said.

"The key words are family and teamwork," Isolde said. "I believe here we are building a stronger American Legion Family. It's all of us working together."



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

Setting up at the Wiesbaden, Germany Membership Drive →



← Vice Commander Logan and VCAL Brown at Wiesbaden Membership Drive

Commander Settle and VCAL Brown recruit a married couple into the American Legion →



← GR42 General Membership Meeting

GR79 Members turn out for the Pizzeria Award in Heilbronn →





←GR97 Commander Brown with City officials
And Mayor from Heilbronn in the Kilianskirche



GR79 Commander Brown and Vice Commander
Martin supporting local Homeless Organization in
the town of Heilbronn →



DEPARTMENT
VICE COMMANDER
Stephen A. Ward

**Greetings, Commanders
& Legionnaires,**

As the Department of France Vice Commander, I have been assigned the following Posts: Riley Leroy Pitts Post GR07, Thomas W. Barnett GR14, John F. Kennedy Post IR63 Facebook site: www.facebook.com/AmericanLegionIRL George S. Patton Post GR45, Rotterdam Post NL01, and Portugal (Nunv Alvares Pereira) Post PO-01. The Portugal Post submits their Post Newsletters to the FODPAL site. Doug Haggan (FODPAL Secretary) is asking the Department and Posts to submit pictures and small articles to the FODPAL website: <http://www.legion.org> Click FODPAL site listed below the Legion Homepage. FODPAL (Foreign and Outlying Departments and Posts of The American Legion) is asking for special programs & events and Facebook sites. The Department of France Newsletters is posted on the FODPAL website. Click

Newsletters. Also, listed in the FODPAL Newsletter site is Post IR63 and Portugal Post PO01. Also, at the FODPAL site: Flanders Field Post BE02 in Belgium, the Post members participated in several ceremonies honoring the Veterans of World War I. The American Legion in Ireland September issue of An Cosantoir written by Sean T. Rickard (Post Adjutant of Father Francis P. Duffy Post IR-02. I was

on Kur (German Rehab. Klinik) Bad Urach four weeks. Feeling fit.

Post GR07 is moving to Mannheim-Kafertal, date to be determined. The next TWB Post 14 meeting (Post Elections) is: 12 Feb.14/7 P.M. (Buedingen) at the Gastatte Schroth (Buedingen Orleshausen). Please send your Post Americanism Reports, to Carl Hacksworth. I talk on Skype every Monday evening. You can reach me on Skype: stephenallenward Portugal Post Adjutant Wells provides me information on the internet. I appreciate the updates.

I stress the importance of membership in the Posts, Department, and the National

Organization. Membership is our Voice on Capitol Hill. Department Membership Chairman (Brown) has sent the 2014 December Membership Stats to the Posts. Please send your Post transmittal to the Department Membership Chairman as soon as possible. I encourage the Posts to transmit each month to the Department Membership Chairman (Joe Dan Brown).

Important dates to remember: 1 Feb. 14 National Freedom Day, 2 Feb. 14 Groundhog Day, 8 Feb. 14 Boy Scouts of

America Founded (1910), 12 Feb. 14 Lincoln's Birthday, 14 Feb. 14 St. Valentine's Day, and 16 Feb. 14 Department of France Oratorical (Stuttgart) 1 P.M. Patch High School.

Commanders & Fellow Legionnaires, many thanks for what you do for your Posts and the communities you serve.

STEPHEN A. WARD
VICE COMMANDER
DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE



DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER

Jerry Aman

GR09 UPDATE...

Just a short while ago I learned that one of GR 09's member, Norman Mitchell, was hospitalized. A blood clot was removed from the brain area but the operation was very successful and after a lengthy convalescence he will be able to participate in GR 09

events.

We are praying for his speedy recovery.

Jerry Aman

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER George Hall

I am now set up at my home for VA, DAFS, SSA, ACG, CA.
The address is AmKirchwald 3, 69251 Gaiberg

Phone H 06223 5475
Phone M 0176 7227 6350
Email hallgt@yahoo.com



DEPARTMENT ADVOCATE George W. Seeburger



After our Department Finance Officer successfully opened Membership with Pentagon Federal Credit Union, Post GR14 initiated action to do the same. Post GR14 has been accepted, in spite of the German address.

If any other Post is interested, keep in mind, that the major disadvantage is that the Checking Account requires a continuous balance of \$500,--. Otherwise there is a monthly service fee of \$10,--. I have on hand all 4 of the application forms (PDF Format) prepared for fill-in with Acrobat Reader

George W. Seeburger
Judge Advocate



DETACHMENT COMMANDER

Joshua J. Settle

My fellow Comrades

First of all I want to remind all of you about the Department Oratorical contest which is held at Patch Barracks High School in Stuttgart on the 16th of February. I encourage all squadrons to continue their Membership renewals program. Remember the Detachment has a Membership fund which will allow Squadrons to do a transmittal now and then reimburse the Detachment once the dues are collected from their members.

The Detachments fishing trip will be on the 5th of April in Ansbach, please let me or the Detachment Adjutant know, if you are planning to attend.

Our 3rd DEC will be held on the 8th of March at a place currently unknown, it will be hosted by GR07's squadron.

I still encourage SAL Members in the Detachment that are Dual Members to carry your SAL Cap to events, this will show SAL support to the Post, Detachment, and the Department.

Those posts desiring to start a squadron, please contact me or the detachment Adjutant and we will help you to get started. Attached to this Newsletter is FAQ sheet for SAL.

In closing I hope all of you had a good start into the New Year and please keep those in harm's way and their families in your prayers.

Joshua J. Settle
Detachment Commander
Phone: 07138-67359
E-Mail: josh.sal@hotmail.com

Dan Dellinger
National Commander
The American Legion



Dear Legion Family Members and Friends,

If you are like me, you are amazed by the seemingly nonstop changes in technology. It wasn't that long ago when the phone was mounted to the wall. The calculator was in a desk drawer, and the roadmap belonged in the glove box. Now, you can make a call, do calculations, find directions and innumerable other things all from your smartphone. The phone has become a shopping center, arcade, jukebox, video store and library.

Now you can find The American Legion on your smartphone. A searchable, mapped directory of local Legion posts is among many helpful features of the new [American Legion mobile app](#) , available for free through iTunes and the Google Play Store. The app, which can be used on smartphones or tablets, is available at www.legion.org/mobileapps.

The mobile app can be used as a recruiting tool, offering an easy portal to join, renew a membership or donate to one of the Legion's great programs. The new app joins our popular Claims Coach app that assists veterans filing VA benefits claims and one that provides information about the National Convention. More than 10,000 veterans have already downloaded the Claims Coach app, [available here](#).

Here are some features of the new Legion app:

- The "About Us" section is an easy way for those unfamiliar with the organization to learn about its role in advocating for veterans, assisting our troops, and spearheading programs that benefit America's youth and communities.
- A post locator feature allows the user to search either by ZIP code or by simply allowing your phone to find your current location. American Legion post addresses, maps and directions are presented, as well as phone numbers and websites.
- The app offers easy access to The American Legion Charities mobile giving page and the ability to make fast, secure, tax-deductible donations.

I hope you will join me in downloading this exciting new app. Share it with current members, potential members and anyone else who wants to support our mission.

For God and Country,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Dellinger". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dan Dellinger
National Commander

Legacy Scholarship Fund- Question To ALL Dept (FR) POSTS...

Where is your Legacy Scholarship Donation Can?

Feb – August 2014- Department of France is coordinating donations for the Legacy Scholarship Fund through the Department of France AL PE Messenger Service as follows:

We recruited several Post and messengers over the past years, but we are woefully short of the 100% department participation anticipated. The following is a reminder for Posts and perspective messengers:

- 1) Department of France Pony Express Messenger service is open for all Legion, Auxiliary and S.A.L. organizations, as well as their current members. Posts, Units and Squadrons serve as Way Stations on a best effort basis and collect donations from their members or their communities in their area of operation. This is on a best effort basis with no donation limits or set expectations.
- 2) The first two messengers from each Way Station (each Post Commander automatically becomes a Messenger for his Way Station) receive a Pony Express Badge at no cost from the Dept of France AL PE Coordinator. Department of France AL PE Way Stations and Messengers must register with the Department of France AL PE Coordinator.

Goal is to have all donations moved to any physical Department of France Post by July 31, 2014. The Post will either call me or send an email by evening of July 31st requesting pickup.

I will coordinate to have donations (Checks drawn on U.S. banks, USD money orders or pledges <keep a copy of your pledges please>) picked up to be moved to the Final Collection Point in Frankfurt Germany by August 4th. I will pick up the donations/pledges on August 5th for personal transport to the U.S.

I will ensure that the National Commander receives all envelopes that I receive from Department of France Posts and messengers.

Procedure for envelopes containing donations and pledges:

1) No cash will be moved. Only checks made out to The A.L. Legacy Fund and drawn on U.S. banks, USD money orders or pledges are to be sent in an open envelope with name of Post and total amount of donations/pledges written on the front of envelope. An envelope that is sent by mail because of time constraints may be sealed. The messenger will open it to check contents before transporting.

2) Again, no cash, packages, sealed letters or other items are to be transported by messengers. All envelopes containing donations/pledges are to be left open or opened by the messenger.

3) Messengers are to ensure that they do not move instruments totaling more than \$10,000 when crossing international borders.

4) Department of France Messengers are instructed to deliver any envelopes from Posts with donations/pledges to me personally, either before August 4th or at the National Convention at the beginning of the Convention First Session. These donations should be kept separate from the general Department of France donation. The department still receives credit for all amounts received from Department of France Posts. This however gives Posts the chance to receive recognition for their individual efforts. Donations of \$100 or more receive personal recognition from the National Commander.

I will be in Washington, DC from August 6th to 13th. I then plan to ride straight to Indianapolis and will be at the Legacy Run hotel specified until the Run and I plan to ride the full Run, God willing. This will be my 5th full Run.

Please remember, we do God's Work in caring for our fallen heroes and their children, so let's ride safe and all get where we have to be with no accidents. Ride safe and ride with God.

Also please remember your Messenger's oath that you took when you received your badge.

Ron "Gypsy" Moore
Department of France AL PE Coordinator

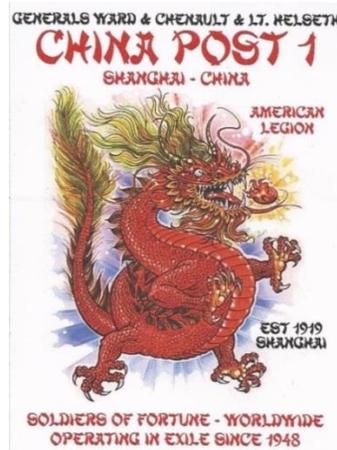
P.S. In case of late donations received after July 31, 2014, it is still possible to mail donations to me so that I receive the donations by August 12th in the U.S. for delivery to the Convention. My address there will be

Ronald Moore, ALPE Coordinator
4030 19th St. N.E.
Washington, DC 20018

Effective August 7th, my US cell phone number is 202-375-8769 and will be on 24 hours a day.

If you have any questions, please contact me under gypsy_moore@yahoo.de (underscore between gypsy and moore) or mobile telephone +49-172-741-7812.

China Post 1, The American Legion, Philippines Northern Luzon Association for the Blind (NLAB)



LISTEN UP LEGIONNAIRES!! I had the singular great pleasure to announce at our January 24 meeting here in Baguio City that our NLAB School for blind children will have the gift of JAWS Screen Reading Software added to the new computer center that China Post 1-Philippines and the MOC PUP Tent 7 of the VFW have set up at the NLAB Admin Area.

After many long months of negotiations that got kick started by a referral by Bruce Silverman of Allied Web Services to one Jeremiah Taylor in the USA. Jeremiah is a business man and consultant who was blinded by an automobile accident years ago. He tirelessly worked with me to secure an "in" with Freedom Scientific Software who are the developers of JAWS software for the blind. Jeremiah persistently sought out officers and "higher ups" at Freedom Scientific and finally got word that the multi user license needed for the NLAB was a WHOPPING \$3,030.00 for the license and another \$600.00 for the Software Maintenance package. With that very discouraging news, I put together a portfolio of documentation and photos and forwarded that with a personal plea for relief of such a huge amount required for the software. Another "saint" from America, Phyllis Bradbury contacted the local Lions clubs to assist us in getting donations for this software!! After more months of "begging" and presentations and letters, we finally prevailed and last week I ordered the full professional version multi user license and maintenance package to be presented and installed Feb. 14 at the NLAB School.

Thanks to those who worked so hard to get donations and gifts to achieve this IMPOSSIBLE goal that will give our kids a real opportunity to merge into the digital age of communication, education and socialization. God bless our Kids...our supporters and my brothers and sisters of the American Legion and the Military Order of the Cootie!!!! In Comradeship and Service J D Keller China Post 1, The American Legion- Philippines.



American Legion “Flanders Field” Post BE02

On Saturday, 25 January, members of “Flanders Field” Post BE02 conducted the post level High School Oratorical Scholarship Program, “A Constitutional Speech Contest” at the Brussels American High School. Lead by Vice Commander John DuBose and assisted by members from the local chapter of the American Legion Riders, the contest was the Post’s first large endeavor. Winning 1st place and a prize of \$250 was Ruth Alvarez a senior from the Brussels American High School. Miss Alvarez will now be moving on to the next round in the competition, hosted by the American Legion – Department of France in Stuttgart, Germany. We wish Ruth good luck as she moves closer toward an opportunity to win that \$18,000 scholarship at the national competition in Indianapolis, Indiana! Coming in 2nd place and receiving a prize of \$100 was Faith DuBose, a senior from the SHAPE American High School. Overall, the Oratorical Contest was a complete success with the Post members now looking forward to next year’s contest.



Earlier this month, Amy Pipher, from the La Grange, Indiana American Legion Auxiliary presented to Post BE02 a license plate. Ms. Pipher is a university student from Georgia, currently studying at the Brussels University. She has assisted the Post during the oratorical Contest is assisting us in establishing a chapter of the American legion Auxiliary. She has already made contact with many eligible ladies. Her assistant is greatly appreciated.

The post was also presented a Burial Flag and a Purple Heart Medal from Mrs. Ester Miller. She is the daughter of WWII veteran Henry Miller Jr. of New York. When Henry Miller passed away in New York, he left his flag and medal with his daughter. Mrs. Miller, now a resident of Belgium, wanted to keep the memory of her father alive so she reached out to the American Legion Post BE02. As a veterans organization, we gladly accepted the gift and will continue hold a special place for Henry Miller. Mrs. Miller also expressed a desire to become a member of the American Legion Auxiliary.



The Post is increasing in membership and we would like to welcome our newest members: Jessica Schramm, Bryan TenEyck and Nathan Rembacki.

PARIS POST FR01

Post Commander Carl Hale

Last December I received a message on the Paris Post 1 Facebook page from the granddaughter of our 1957 Paris Post 1 Commander asking if I could confirm his service and provide any examples.

Below is a copy of her request:

Good Afternoon,

My name is Laura Dufresne and I am writing to you because I hope that you will be able to help me. I never knew my grand father, Jean-Jacques Dufresne, who was a US citizen (born in Montréal) and a member of the American Legion in Paris. He died in 1957 when my father was nine years old and I know that it is still difficult, today, for my father to know so little of his father's life.

Apparently, my grand father has been Commander of the American Legion in Paris (probably around 1955-1957) and I was wondering if, by any chance, you would be able to find some archives or photos of him. That would be extraordinary for my family and a huge surprise for my father.

I hope you will be able to help me in my query. If you need any other information, do not hesitate to ask me. I really thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely, Laura Dufresne

I did locate the name of Commander Jean Jacques Dufresne on our Paris Post 1 plaque listing all past Post Commanders since 1921.

I made photos of the Commander's signature on the 1956 - 1957 Paris Post 1 meeting registration book and emailed the 18 images to Ms. Laura Dufresne.

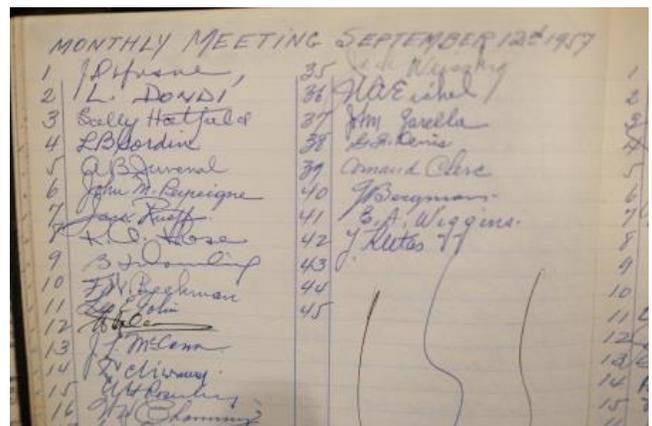
She provided the attached historical documents which I share with the Department of France.

We continue to serve as our 1919 Founding Fathers designed The American Legion - for the families and for the veterans. For God and Country.



← Paris Post 1 Commander Carl W. Hale indicates the confirmation that Comrade Jean Jacques Dufresne was the Paris Post 1 Commander in 1957

The last signature of 1957 Paris Post 1 Commander Jean Jacques Dufresne before his untimely death →



70th anniversary of D-Day and commemorations in Normandy

17 January 2014

Carl W. Hale, Deputy Director - Operations and Programs
USNATO, Brussels

Dear Mr. Hale,

Thank you for contacting the American Battle Monuments Commission about the 70th anniversary of D-Day and commemorations in Normandy.

In 2013, the French Government announced their basic intention regarding the 70th anniversary commemorations in 2014. In essence, this is what was announced:

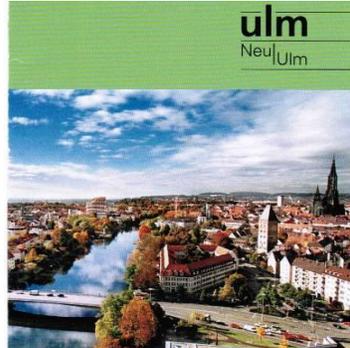
- The June 6th international ceremony will be held at Ouistreham on SWORD beach.
- Two bi-national ceremonies will be held at JUNO and OMAHA beaches, respectively.

The French government is lead for planning the international and bi-national D-Day commemorations. Unfortunately, no further information has been released by the French government.

Anyone seeking further information on D-Day ceremonies can find the most recent updates on some of the websites listed below. The official French Government website has a separate section, “espace dedié” or “dedicated area,” for those who are World War II Veterans, media outlets, or tour operators.

- <http://www.le70e-normandie.fr/en> -- The “official” French Government website in French. This is the best website to reference for the national-level ceremonies and other French Government supported events.
- <http://www.the70th-normandy.com> -- The “official” French Government website in English. This is the best website to reference for the national-level ceremonies and other French Government supported events.
- <http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries/cemeteries/no.php> -- The ABMC website in English. This is the best website for information on events happening in Normandy American Cemetery. The ABMC public affairs team plans on updating the website as new information is available.
- <http://www.normandie-tourisme.fr/articles/70eme-anniversaire-de-la-bataille-de-normandie-1502-1.html> -- The Normandy Tourist Bureau website in French.
- http://www.dday-overlord.com/eng/commemorations_normandy_2013_program.htm -- This is a private, non-government website with descriptions of some of the smaller ceremonies in the Normandy region.
- <http://france.usembassy.gov/> -- This is the official site for the U.S. Embassy in Paris. Any American citizen traveling in France is highly encouraged to visit this website for a variety of information and news that may pertain to your visit.

The William D. Nelson Post GR09 & two Danube cities



Invite you to the 90th Annual Convention
from 19 to 22 June 2014

*You read correctly. The 90th Annual Convention. This is the big
nine O. Mark these dates in your calendar*

The William D. Nelson Post GR 09, Neu-Ulm, Germany is honored to host this historic event and will make every effort to ensure that Department of France Legionnaires will enjoy their stay and participation in this important yearly event.

The site selected for this affair is Neumaier's Gasthof & Landhotel Hirsch, Römerstraße 31, 89264 Weißenhorn/Attenhofen, located 20 minutes from the historic city of Ulm. This modern country gasthof with a typical rustic restaurant is located in the idyllic center of the village Attenhofen and has 30 rooms available: 22 as single and 8 as double rooms. Attenhofen is easily accessible via Autobahns A-7 and A-8, train and the Memmingen airport (Stuttgart Airport an hour).

This Gasthof is ideally suited for conferences with several meeting and one banquet room. The restaurant is a popular local establishment well known for its regional menu and the modern hotel rooms all have an internet connection, TVs and modern bathrooms. The hotel also has an outdoor terrace and beer garden.

Further details such as directions, programs, pricing, registration information and events will be provided in future newsletters and at the DEC.

We are looking forward to seeing you on 19 to 22 June.

Still serving God and Country

Jerry Aman
Vice Commander Department of France
Post Commander, GR 09



Thomas W. Barnett Post GR14

From GR14 Adjutant Carl Hackworth...

The 2014-2015 Officer Post Elections will be held on Wednesday 12 February 2014 at the Post Home in Orleshausen by Büdingen.

All are welcome to attend.

From Department Americanism Chairman Carl Hackworth...

A reminder to all posts to send in their quarterly Americanism report to Carl Hackworth along with a copy to the Department Adjutant.

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Budget plan would slash Army by 100,000 soldiers



The Army would be slashed by more than 100,000 soldiers to a force of 420,000 by 2019 under budget plans set to be unveiled next month. It is a level far below what Army leaders have said they would need to ensure they can fight one major war.

The Army currently has 528,000 soldiers and had been scheduled to drop to 490,000 troops by 2019. The 420,000 level reflects Pentagon planning based on automatic budget cuts that will reduce military spending by about \$500 billion over the decade unless Congress restores the funding.

This fall, Army chief of staff Gen. Raymond Odierno warned top Pentagon officials in a briefing that a force of 450,000 soldiers would be "too small" and at "high risk to meet one major war," according to documents obtained by USA TODAY. The Army could not adequately protect the country and fight abroad at 420,000 soldiers, the documents stated.

Since then, the chiefs of the services have been told to list the missions they won't be able to accomplish with diminished budgets, a senior Pentagon official said on condition of anonymity because the budget will not be released for weeks.

For the Army, a force of 420,000 means that it could respond to a conflict, such as one on the Korean peninsula, but won't be able to keep up the fight for long without a significant call up of reserve forces, said another senior military officer who also spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the plans.

The other services will be reduced in size as well. The Navy will be able to continue to shift its focus to the Pacific but with far fewer ships, and its presence in the Persian Gulf will be lessened.

Even at the reduced numbers, the U.S. military is more than a match for any potential foe, said Gordon Adams, a professor at American University and a budget official in the Clinton Administration.

"Who else that we are going to fight in a ground war has 420,000 soldiers?" Adams said in an e-mail. "Silly, really. Of course, we can."

If long-term budget cuts are rolled back, the services won't have to cut so deeply into their troop levels. The Pentagon forecasts significant shortfall in its budgets for the next several years. In the current fiscal year, it sought \$526 billion for costs that did not include the war in Afghanistan. The budget cuts known as "sequestration" would have lowered that to \$475 billion. A budget deal in Congress restored some funds, giving the Pentagon \$496 billion.

The shrinking budget has resulted in jockeying by the services to secure the most funding. Last month, for example, a National Guard leader said the Army could be cut to 420,000 soldiers if the Guard was allowed to expand.

The Army grew to a force of about 570,000 soldiers at the height of fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq. It was strained greatly in 2007 when President Bush ordered the surge of troops in Iraq. Deployments that had been one year long were extended for some soldiers to 15 months.

The White House strategy assumes that the U.S. military will no longer be engaged in long-term operations that are troop intensive. Instead, it envisions smaller, nimbler forces that deploy for short periods.

Grandson of Enola Gay pilot nominated for first star

Col. Paul Tibbets IV, grandson of the pilot who flew the B-29 that dropped the first atomic bomb, has been nominated to get his first star, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel announced Thursday.



Currently deputy director of operations at Global Strike Command headquarters, Barksdale Air Force Base, La., Tibbets is one of the few Air Force pilots who has flown the three bombers — the B-1, B-2 and B-52. In January 2013, Global Strike Command wrote a story about how he was trained to fly all three bombers.

“This is not an accomplishment many achieve,” Lt. Col. James Morris, 93rd Bomb Squadron B-52 Formal Training Unit commander, said in the story. “The bomber pilot community is small, and most stay with one bomber platform.”

Tibbets’ grandfather, Brig. Gen. Paul Tibbets Jr., piloted the Enola Gay, which dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, on Aug. 6, 1945. The bomber was named after the elder Tibbets’ mother. Ironically, the bomb was named “Little Boy.”

When he qualified to fly the B-52 in January 2013, Tibbets’ bomber was decorated with the same nose art as his grandfather’s B-17 when it took part in the first Flying Fortress mission against Nazi-occupied Europe.

“My grandfather had a passion for aviation and, most specifically, bombers,” Tibbets said in the 2013 story. “It is a privilege to follow in the footsteps of my hero and to fly the nose art that my grandfather flew in 1942. I am honored to play a small part in keeping his legacy alive today.”



Pentagon Proposes Plan to Gut Commissary's Budget

The Defense Department is discussing a \$1 billion cut over the next three years to the commissary's budget in a move that could lead to a widespread closure of stores, Pentagon and industry officials said.

Word of the pending cut comes two months after news that the Pentagon's top financial advisor ordered the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) to produce a plan to close most stateside commissaries should the need arise.

The commissary agency currently operates 247 stores worldwide. Under the requested closure plan, all but 24 rural stores stateside and stores located outside the continental U.S. would close.

DeCA currently receives \$1.4 billion annually in tax payer funding. The potential Defense Department cut would reduce the agency's budget over three years until it stood at \$400 million fiscal 2017, sources confirmed to Military.com.

Starting with the 2015 budget, Congress would be forced to either find funding elsewhere and give the Defense Department more than its requested commissary budget, or allow officials to make sweeping changes to the commissary system, including potential closures.



"If DeCA's budget is cut to such a magnitude, it would ultimately require DeCA to close stores or change the way it delivers the commissary benefit," a source with knowledge of the proposed cuts told Military.com. "But those options would mean military families would have to pay more for their groceries, significantly reducing the non-pay compensation benefit provided through the commissaries. Once again, military families are being forced to sacrifice their hard-earned money to achieve deficit reductions by having their benefits reduced or eliminated."

Pentagon leaders are under pressure to find savings throughout military spending following the passage of sequestration and the association \$500 billion cut to the defense budget over the next decade. Military officials have said all DoD agencies will be reviewed in order to cut costs to include family programs.

DeCA's \$1.4 billion annual budget funds employee salaries, keeps the lights on in stores and pays for food to be shipped to overseas locations. A congressionally mandated five percent surcharge on all commissary sales pays for other operation costs such as construction and building maintenance.

A recent grocery store study by DeCA found that using the commissary saves shoppers an average of 30.5 percent annually when compared to other stores off base.

The cuts will be incremental and will appear first in the department's 2015 budget request, expected to be released next month. The full \$1 billion cut would not be included in the request until 2017, sources said.

Implementing the cuts incrementally may be a way for DoD officials to test Congress' acceptance of the cuts, sources said. Reducing the commissary's budget could be a strategy to force Congress to fund other Defense Department priorities, sources said.

"The strategy may be to cut DeCA's budget and basically force Congress' hand to offset the cuts. However, if Congress doesn't fill the hole in the first year it basically gives DoD permission to continue to cut DeCA's budget going forward," an industry source said.

It's unclear how the Obama administration will react to the proposed cuts as the White House must approve the defense budget before sending it to the Hill for approval. Last year, President Obama told Marines at Camp Pendleton, Calif. that closing commissaries is "not how a great nation should be treating its military and military families."

DoD personnel and readiness officials declined to confirm the cuts on the record – but did not deny that major commissary cuts may be on the table.

"We are in the process of finalizing our budget submission for Fiscal Year 2015, and we cannot provide any specifics at this time. I can tell you that no commissaries have closed, and no commissaries are about to close," said Joy Clabaugh, a spokesman for the personnel and readiness office of the assistant secretary of defense. "As the Department of Defense faces an increasingly constrained budget environment, we are reviewing all programs to identify cost-cutting and money-saving opportunities. We have a process in place to finalize and announce budget decisions, and right now, we are assessing all options.

By law, DoD cannot close or consolidate any commissary stores without giving Congress written, 90 day notice and justification.

If DoD's reduced commissary budget request is authorized, the department will need to find significant cost savings within the commissary system, which could include closing some stateside stores or changing the way food is shipped to commissaries overseas, sources said.

DeCA last year weighed several cost saving or revenue increasing options, including adding beer and wine to their inventory or requesting that Congress double the commissary product surcharge from 5 to 10 percent, said Tom Gordy, president of the Armed Forces Marketing Council, which lobbies for brokers doing business with military stores, at a November hearing of the House Armed Services Committee.

However, some within the DoD and commissary system do not look on either of those options favorably. Critics say adding alcohol to commissary shelves would cause competition with the Exchange systems, which operates for profit. And increasing either prices or the surcharge would lower patron savings.

The pending cut will be the most drastic way the commissary system has been impacted by DoD budget woes thus far. Commissaries were closed six extra days due to sequestration in 2013 when weekly furloughs were ordered for all DoD employees, including commissary workers. They were closed an additional five days over the government shutdown in October.

News of the pending government shutdown and corresponding commissary closures in October resulted in one of the largest sales days ever for the agency at \$30.6 million, more than double their normal daily sales volume. Shoppers flocked to the stores filling their carts with meat. Military family members nationwide reported verbal fights and bickering in stores as shoppers vied for items.

Candace Wheeler, a vice president for American Logistics Association & The Coalition to Save Our Military Shopping Benefits, said she expects servicemembers and their families to reach out to multiple lawmakers to ensure such a cut to the commissary does not pass.

"The military community will fight this devastating cut to their earned commissary benefit," said Candace Wheeler, spokesperson for The Coalition to Save Our Military Shopping Benefits. "Commissaries are vital to helping military families make ends meet and provide much needed employment for veterans and family members, cutting them would be another broken promise," added Wheeler.

VA allots \$600 million more to veterans program



Veterans Affairs officials will spend \$600 million to continue the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program, community grants they say are key in ending homelessness among veterans.

The new pledge commits \$300 million each in fiscal 2014 and fiscal 2015 for the grants, which are designed to provide a safety net for low-income v

eterans struggling with permanent housing.

VA awarded \$300 million in grants last summer as part of the program. Officials said the money helped more than 39,000 veterans and 23,000 of their family members.

Advocates have said the direct support to outside nonprofits and the program's "housing first" model have been key in helping homeless veterans. Many of the aid recipients are veterans who are not yet homeless, but could end up on the streets without intervention.

The department has set a public goal of ending veterans homelessness by the end of 2015.

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development annual point-in-time count released in November, the number of homeless veterans across the country dropped to 57,849 in January 2013, down about 20,000 from four years earlier.

Department officials said the success of the SSVF program made continuing it an obvious choice, but officials wanted to publicly commit the fiscal 2015 money as well to provide continuity and planning for the larger homeless effort.

In a statement, VA Secretary Eric Shinseki said partnerships with community groups are key in helping all veterans.

"We are making good progress towards our goal to end veterans' homelessness," he said, "but we still have work to do."

Vets Hit Retired Generals Supporting Pay Cuts



Veterans groups are taking aim at a group of retired generals and admirals who support the budget deal passed last month that cuts military retirement payments.

"Those who earn the most in military retirement shouldn't side against the masses who also served and who are now being asked to sacrifice again," said Veterans of Foreign Wars spokesman Joe Davis. "The COLA penalty needs to be eliminated for all."

Under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, military retirees under age 62 will have their annual cost of living adjustment lowered one percent below the increase determined by the consumer price index.

The provision has drawn fire from veterans groups and military associations across the board.

Last month three retired generals and a retired admiral with the Bipartisan Policy Center, a Washington D.C. think tank, issued a joint endorsement of the budget deal.

"Since 2000, military personnel costs have doubled, while the active duty force has shrunk by ten percent," stated the four -- Marine Gen. James Jones, Marine Maj. Gen. Arnold Punaro, Air Force Gen. Charles "Chuck" Ward, and Adm. Gregory Johnson. "Such cost growth is unsustainable, and the leadership of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines all agree that the costs of benefits for personnel are starting to crowd out other important investments that support training, readiness and modernization. This plan is an important first step in tackling those costs."

The four say the military will also have to deal with compensation at some point to ensure that benefits are both "fair and sustainable" for the future.

They point out that the budget deal on military retirement does not cut the initial retirement benefit, and also will not apply to anyone age 62 or older.

Louis Celli, legislative director for The American Legion, said it is "a shame that the very leaders who served with this group of heroes fails to support their troops and all other veterans who have and will earn the honorable title of military retiree."

Celli said military retirees earned their retirement benefits through honorable military service, and to

penalize them in an attempt to balance the budget is an injustice.

"The American Legion will not rest until there is a full repeal of this legislation," he said.

The surge of opposition to the retirement cut has so far resulted in a measure inserted in the Omnibus Budget that will exempt disabled military retirees and their survivors. But the VFW and other groups and advocates want the entire provision scrapped.

Davis said flag officers have a micro view of the budget and can only guess at the direct impact that the COLA reduction -- to begin in 2015 -- will have on the estimated 800,000 working age military retirees.

This group would be largely made up of retired enlisted members in the grade of E-7, according to the VFW.

An E-7 "retiring today would earn about \$25,000 annually in taxable retirement pay, which is borderline poverty for a family of four," Davis said.

The VFW on Wednesday issued a "legislative alert" directing its members to call and email their representatives in Congress to demand repeal of the entire provision.

In a statement Tuesday the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America called the planned cuts an "outrage," and said Congress drew "a line in the sand" by passing it.

Since it passed the budget deal, however, a number of lawmakers have introduced legislation -- mostly in the House -- to repeal the measure. But those bills, if they follow the usual path, would not get to the House floor for a vote until the spring; and if one passed, it would not be signed into law until close to the end of the year.

That's still plenty of time, since there are no plans to trim retirement in 2014, but lawmakers feeling the heat of an angry veteran constituency are anxious for a quick do-over.

Davis said flag officers have a micro view of the budget and can only guess at the direct impact that the COLA reduction -- to begin in 2015 -- will have on the estimated 800,000 working age military retirees.

National Security Division Week in Review

Week ending 1/24/2014

1. New Clinical Recommendations Released for TBI Injuries

The Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center has released new clinical recommendations to help service members who have sustained a mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI), otherwise known as concussion, to progressively return to their normal activities following their injury.

These clinical recommendations are available for military and civilian health care professionals. The recommendations can be downloaded from DVBiC's website: <http://dvbic.dcoe.mil/resources/progressive-return-to-activity>

These guidelines were developed with input from academic experts, sports concussion clinicians and military TBI experts and will assist health care providers as they monitor patients recovering from concussion.

Since 2000, more than 287,000 U.S. service members have sustained a traumatic brain injury. These injuries have occurred both in training and combat. Eighty-three percent of TBIs are mild TBIs, making it the most common form of brain injury for U.S. Armed Forces personnel.

The Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center is part of the U.S. Military Health System. It is the TBI operational component of the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury.

2. VSO/MSO Summit

On Friday, staff from the national security division participated in a summit held at the Pentagon for veterans service organizations and military service organizations. The summit is being held to provide representatives with discussions on the defense budget, the personnel drawdown and advancements in treatment regarding traumatic brain injuries.

The key speaker for the event is Chief of Staff General Raymond Odierno who will speak on the omnibus budget bill that President Obama signed earlier this month. It has been reported that the Army's Ground

Combat Vehicle program is all but dead. After Congress slashed \$492 million from the Army's \$592 million request, it appears that the next-generation infantry carrier is being relegated to little more than a technology development and study program.

Also attending the summit is, Colonel Adam Rocke who currently serves as the Director of the Soldier for Life Program to the Chief of Staff of the Army and Colonel Adam L. Rocke.

3. POW/MIA Update

Army Sgt. 1st Class Joseph E. Gantt, 26, of Los Angeles, was buried on Dec. 28, 2013, in Inglewood, Calif. In late 1950, Gantt was a member of the 503rd Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division. The Division was involved in heavy fighting with Chinese forces north and east of the town of Kunu-Ri, North Korea, and on November 30, began a fighting withdrawal to the south. Before they could disengage, the Division was forced to fight through a series of Chinese roadblocks and Sgt. 1st Class Gantt was among many men reported missing that day, in the vicinity of Somindong, North Korea.

In 1953, returning American soldiers who had been held as prisoners of war reported that Gantt had been captured by Chinese forces on Nov. 30, 1950, and died of malnutrition in March or April 1951, in prisoner of war Camp 5 in Pyokdong, North Korea. Gantt's remains were not among those repatriated by the Chinese or North Koreans in 1954.

In early 2006, a South Korean citizen turned over human remains, which appeared to represent U.S. service members, to U.S. authorities. The remains were taken to the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) for analysis.

In the identification of Gantt, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools, such as dental comparison and mitochondrial DNA analysis, which matched Gantt's cousins.

John Stovall
Director, National Security Division
202-263-2984



FOREIGN AND OUTLYING DEPARTMENTS AND POSTS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

ALASKA • CANADA • FRANCE • HAWAII • MEXICO • PHILIPPINES • PUERTO RICO • CHINA POST

Still Serving America's Veterans... Around the World



I NEED PICTURES...I NEED HISTORY

I have a BIG problem; I have run out of pictures to post on The Department of France Website. I know there are Legionnaires in the Department that have pictures that need to be posted on the Website. We NEED to preserve this part of our Department History. If you have pictures for me, send me an e-mail, I will send you a link to a photo sharing program called "DROP BOX", when you get it go to "get started" and it will tell you step by step on how to use it. It is a program that National uses and it works great when you want to send a large amount of pictures. It's easy to use, I have

setup a folder called The Department of France, just create a file drag it into the Department folder; send me an e-mail with a short story plus date, the function, and location. I will pull it out of Drop box and post it on the Website, it's that easy.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at dhaggan@sbcglobal.net

If you have a couple of minutes login into The Department Website and checkout the Photo Gallery.

LET'S PRESERVE OUR DEPARTMENT HISTORY FOR THE FUTURE

Share your post's legacy On Centennial Celebration page

In 2018, The American Legion will begin celebrating 100 years of service to veterans, military personnel, families and communities. To honor the Legion's centennial, many events at the national, department and post levels will occur starting at the 2018 National Convention in Minneapolis and continuing throughout the 2019 convention in Indianapolis. Planning for these celebratory events is currently underway by the Legion's 100th Anniversary Observance Committee, but help is needed at the post level to tell the larger story of The American Legion's first century.

All 13,000 Legion posts worldwide, whether chartered in 1919 or 2009, have histories and a legacies that have contributed to the overall identity of The American Legion. Each post can convey its legacy by sharing historical photos, videos and print material on the Legion's new Centennial Celebration web page: www.legion.org/centennial

How to get started

Posts are encouraged to form centennial committees now, made up of members who will collect historical artifacts and data on the post. For example, the centennial committee may identify:

- Who founded the post and when
- Who the post was named after
- Important dates in the history of the post
- Families involved with the post for multiple generations
- Notable members
- Notable alumni from youth programs such as Boys State, the Oratorical Contest or Legion Baseball
- What makes the post special or unique
- Great things the post has done for its community

If this information isn't accessible from post archives or members, speak with the local library or media outlets (newspapers, radio, TV) that have covered events about your post.

Share your story

Once your post's centennial committee has collected photos, videos and print material related to its history, share it on the Legion's new Centennial Celebration web page.

To create a post history page, follow these seven steps:

1. Go to the Centennial Celebration web page, www.legion.org/centennial
2. Register (in the upper-right hand of the page) to be an administrator. The administrator of a post's page allows him or her to monitor all content submitted to the page before it appears to the general viewing public.
3. Click "Share Your Post History" located under "History" on the left hand navigation column.
4. Enter your department and post number.
5. Click "Yes, create post x."
6. Complete the required fields needed to start; you only need your post number, city and charter date. If you don't know when your post was chartered, put in an estimated date until you find the answer; you can add/change information as you receive it.
7. Click "Save" when finished.

Once your post page is created, members — and those whose lives have been touched by the post — can add historical photos, timeline events (significant moments that helped build the chronology of your history) and upcoming events celebrating your history and the Legion's centennial.

And for step-by-step instructions on how to share your post's legacy and vision, download the Legion's [Centennial Celebration Workbook here](#).

If your post does not have access to the technical tools or expertise needed to create a Centennial Celebration history page, the workbook features paper forms of timeline events, photo galleries and upcoming events. The forms can be submitted to a third party who is willing to create the web page and act as the post's administrator.

For more information, please email: ledwards@legion.org



VFW Department of Europe Convention in Ludwigshafen Germany

BEST WESTERN Hotel Ludwigshafen
Reservation Department
Pasadena Alle 4
67059 Ludwigshafen
Tel: 0049 - 621 - 59 51 500
Fax: 0049 - 621 - 59 51 104
Email: fb@hotel-ludwigshafen.bestwestern.de

BOOKING – Department of Europe – VFW Convention 2014

Please reserve the following:

Guest Details:

Lastname:

Firstname:

Street:

ZIP / City:

State:

Telephone:

Telefax:

Email:

Room reservation:

Arrival Date:

Departure Date:

Room Type: 0 EUR 51.00 per Single room / night

 0 EUR 81.00 per Double room / night

Children (0-11 years) sharing parent's room free of charge without extra bed

Banquet - reservation:

- 13. June 2014:** 0 x EUR 16.00 per person for LUNCH-Buffer
 0 x EUR 21.00 per person for DINNER-Buffer
- 14. June 2014:** 0 x EUR 16.00 per person for LUNCH-Buffer
 0 x EUR 32.00 per person for BANQUET Dinner-Buffer
- 15. June 2014:** 0 x EUR 16.00 per person for LUNCH-Buffer
-

Conditions:

Cancellation deadline: A cancellation free of charge is till **10th May 2013** possible.

In case of cancellation **after 10th May 2013** we reserve the right to charge 90% of the expected revenue.

Child Policy: Childs until 03 years are free of charge
 Childs from 3-12 years will pay 50% of the price for the buffet Childs up to 12 years should pay 100% of the price for the buffet

Booking guarantee:

Credit card Details: **Credit Card:** _____
 Card Owner: _____
 Card Number: _____
 Valid: _____

For Hotel use only:

Herewith we re-confirm the above mentioned booking:

Reservation Number: