

# The AMERICAN LEGION

# Department of France



Volume 13 / Issue 8

August 2015



## DEPARTMENT COMMANDER *Keith Abernathy*

My first month as Commander has gone by without my accomplishing much of anything.

I celebrated my birthday and visited GR14 this month. And went with the wife to Amsterdam and we had a wonderful time together. We went to a Concert as a birthday present. For those who are interested We saw Lionel Richie and got soaked but stayed to the end.

As it stands at the present, I have every intention of attending the 97th National Convention in Baltimore MD in August and September this year. This will be my first and I'm sure to have a super time there. Not to mention that my niece lives in Brandywine by Baltimore. So I'm to kill two birds with one stone. As soon As I know when the dates are I'll book a flight.

We all need to sit back and take a good look at what transpired at the Convention in respect to the Oratorical. We will be going to Flanders Field in February 2016 for the oratorical. We have to come up with funds to transport the competitors as well as other personnel. What will have to happen is this must be discussed at the 2nd DEC on 17 October in Heilbronn. I will be part of the agenda.

**Membership, Membership, Membership.** Not enough can be said on this subject. We are still in place 55 of 55 and that is still a thorn in our sides. We have to do something to get out of the basement. National Vice Commander Doug Haggan made a pretty good suggestion at the Banquet when he stated that we might look to Bitburg Air Base as a new post. The membership Chairman and I will travel to Bitburg to see what we can arrange. Again I offer our help to any Post that wants it.

I urge posts that are not active in the American Legion Family to try and get involved. To be active in the Family your post has to not only Post membership but Sons Of The American Legion (SAL) and the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA). This is the female side of the Legion Family. I intend to sign my Son and Daughters and all my Grandchildren.

Keith Abernathy / Department Commander  
Keithabernathy1942@yahoo.de



## DEPARTMENT OFFICERS - 2016 MEMBERSHIP YEAR

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

Thank You.

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



**From the Editor**



**Mike Helm**  
National Commander  
The American Legion

Dear Legion Family Members and Friends,

Quite often the first connection people make with The American Legion relates to our strong collection of youth programs.

During the summer, American Legion Baseball teams participate in our nation's pastime on ballfields from coast to coast. The next generation of America's leaders learn about government, leadership and teamwork at Boys State and Boys Nation. And elite youth marksmen show off their skills during the annual Junior Shooting Sports championship in Colorado Springs, Colo.

For these young people, summer does not mean goofing off with friends, hanging around at the mall or vacationing at the beach.

Through all of these popular American Legion activities, the youths learn the skills necessary to excel as adults. Boys Nation, for example, counts former President Bill Clinton and Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker among its alumni.

Scott Scarborough, president of the University of Akron, attended Boys State in his home state of Texas in 1980 before serving as a delegate at Boys Nation. Scarborough credits Boys Nation with helping him develop leadership abilities, public-speaking skills and confidence.

"I hadn't thought about (Boys Nation experiences) in years," he said recently. "I think the one thing that I would like to do is to speak directly to The American Legion and say thank you for this program because this program made a big difference in my life and I appreciate what they've done."

Just as Boys Nation has developed leaders in government, education and business, American Legion Baseball has groomed participants into major-league stars.

Alex Gordon, the 2015 American Legion Baseball Graduate of the Year, played four years of Legion Baseball with J.C. Brager Post 3 in Nebraska. Gordon has been on quite a roll lately. Last fall, his Kansas City Royals played in the World Series. And next week, he will be a starting outfielder in the MLB All-Star Game.

"Getting to play with the older guys, you get to develop some of the characteristics of some of the leaders," Gordon says of his time as a Legion Baseball player. "As a young kid, you may not know how to do everything right and they show you the way. And later when you're the older guy, you try to pass those along to the younger players that come along. There's give and take. It was a great experience overall."

Jamie (Beyerle) Corkish, the 2002 American Legion Junior 3-Position Air Rifle National Champion, won Olympic gold in 2012. Corkish encourages young people in her sport and others to follow their passions

"One thing I always tell young people when they are involved in the shooting sports, and any sport in that matter, is to enjoy what they are doing," she says. "Remember that one reason you are participating in this sport is because you enjoy the sport and have a passion for it. It is very difficult to be great at something that you do not enjoy doing."

These talented and passionate young people can only go so far. They require mentors, coaches and others to help groom them into the leaders of tomorrow.

If you already participate in the Legion's programs that benefit America's youths, thank you for what you do. If you don't already, please consider volunteering. We've all benefitted from mentors who had a tremendous impact on our lives. Now is an excellent time to pay it forward to youths who need our help.



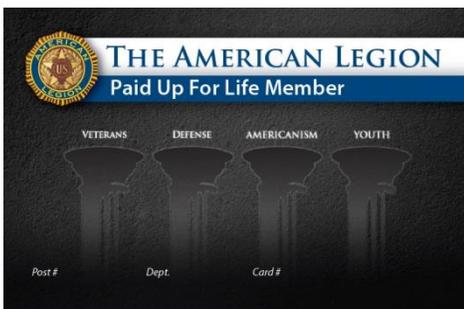
**Doug Haggan...** *National Vice Commander/ FODPAL Secretary/ Past Department of France Commander*

All of the Departments in the Northeast have completed your convention and have elected new officers for 2015 - 2016. So what I need now is for all of you Department Adjutants to e-mail me your new Department Directories so I can start putting it together for next year's National Vice Commander. The only one I have received to this date is from the Department of France.

You many think that it is too late to turn in 2015 membership, that the 2015 membership year is over, will that couldn't be further from the truth. You have until 31 July to turn that membership into National to have it count for your Delegate Strength to the 97th National Convention in Baltimore. Please transmit every possible 2015 member into National, PLEASE don't sand bag them for the 2016 membership year, we can still finish the year in a decent position.



## ***THE GREAT NORTHEAST***



# **Paid Up For Life**

The Paid Up For Life (PUFL) membership campaign has been a resounding success. At one day short of its anniversary, 19,605 American Legion members elected to become Paid Up For Life. In just the last three months, 3,270 members converted their annual dues paying memberships into a PUFL membership.

Plans for this year will focus on signing up the newest members along with a good mix of emails and direct mail solicitations. Various discounts for payment in full at time of application and extra giveaways will continue to be used.

For more information regarding the program please visit [www.legion.org/pufl](http://www.legion.org/pufl) or call customer service at (800) 433-3318.



## DEPARTMENT ALT NECMAN *Ronald Moore*

Answer to last month's question: Theodore Roosevelt, Jr is considered to be the Father of The American Legion. I'm sure everybody knew that since it is part of our Legion history

and mentioned in the American Legion Extension Institute course. Have you graduated yet?

I'm looking forward to my first National Convention as alternate National Executive Committeeman. NECMAN John Miller will be indoctrinating me in the procedures and protocol of the august body of the National Executive Committee.

In the last newsletter, I mentioned social network security and how we handle our personal data including pictures. The American Legion has the MyLegion platform available to members of the Legion, where Posts can produce newsletters and keep in touch with their members. All the Posts and members have to do is register online at Legion.org and then start using the site. Posts should remind their members to register online and insure that the data in MyLegion is up to date.

Speaking of Legion data bases and up to date information, all Posts should ensure that their info on the Legion website is up to date. There is a Post locator button located in the right upper corner of legion.org homepage. Posts should check to see if they can be "located", if a new member looked for a Post to affiliate with. If you have corrections, please send to our department adjutant Max Rice.

Hope to see you at the National Conventions in Baltimore, MD this month. The Sons of The American Legion National Convention is from August 28 to 30<sup>th</sup> and The American Legion National Convention is from August 28<sup>th</sup> to September 3<sup>rd</sup>. I'm delegation secretary for both National Conventions, so please inform me if you plan to attend.

100<sup>th</sup> American Legion Anniversary is coming up soon (time is relative). Do you know who the first National Commander of The American Legion was?

For God and Country!

**SAL Detachment of France NEC-elect  
(Aug. 30 2015-2017)**

**Mobile: +49-(0)172-7417812**

**U.S. trips: +1-202-375-8769**

**Email: gypsy\_moore@yahoo.de**

---

### **Department of France American Legion Riders (ALR) and ALPE Messenger Service**

Just as a reminder, The Department of France has eight Posts with American Legion Riders Chapters. Posts BE02, CH01, GR01, GR05, GR07, GR14, GR79 and GR1982 now have Riders Chapters. Congratulations to our Posts with Chapters and their Riders. Please be sure to have your directors/presidents contact me with their details so that I update the Department of France Rider directory.

With the National Convention and Legacy Run taking place this month, I have received checks/money orders from GR01, GR05, GR09, GR14 and GR79. NECMAN John Miller is bringing GR1982 donations to the National Convention. Unfortunately I forgot to sign up our Department Finance Officer as a Messenger, so he gave the department check to National Vice Commander Haggan. I'll pick that up at the National Convention for the Department of France Legacy Fund presentation during the ceremony.

If you still have donations for the Legacy Scholarship Fund, please make out the check or U.S. Postal money order (in U.S. dollars and drawn on a U.S. financial institution) to American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund and send it to my following U.S. address by August 5th: Ronald Moore, 4030 19<sup>th</sup> St. NE, Washington DC 20018

I'll be back in Germany on August 4<sup>th</sup>, but leaving for the Legacy Run preparation on August 10<sup>th</sup>. Please give me a call if you need a pick up.

I had asked all Department of France members and Riders to at least sign up as supporters of the 2015 Legacy Run if they couldn't ride with me this year. If you did sign up as a supporter, please drop me a line so that I can brag about our active supporters from the Department of France.

So, Way Stations and Messengers, please continue your efforts in collecting donations for this worthy cause.

Thank you for your service and support. Ride safe and ride with God as your copilot.

**Ron "Gypsy" Moore**

**AL Rider Director and Chief Messenger Department of France**

## Legion praises Mt. Soledad Memorial Association for saving cross

The American Legion - July 21, 2015



Calling for an end to a lengthy court battle, The American Legion is praising the Mt. Soledad Memorial Association for its recent purchase of land from the Department of Defense in order to preserve a 43-foot cross that was erected in 1954. "I hope this ends it," National Commander Michael D. Helm said of the legal case that started in the late 1980s. "Frankly, it shouldn't have been necessary for the government to sell the land to a private group in order to preserve a memorial that is deeply significant to so many people. The American Legion believes in 'God and Country.' Unfortunately, some courts don't always see it that way."

Helm commended Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., and Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., for writing and passing legislation that made the \$1.4 million purchase possible.

"The Liberty Institute has also been a fierce advocate for the memorial, which the Legion has supported through numerous national resolutions," Helm said.

The ACLU and Jewish War Veterans have sued to have the cross removed because they believe it infringes on their constitutional rights. A 2012 court ruling permitted a cross owned by the National Park Service in the Mojave Desert to be transferred in a private sale to the VFW.

The Mount Soledad cross in La Jolla, Calif., is part of a larger memorial, which includes more than 3,700 plaques honoring veterans of various wars. The land purchase is for the one-half acre plot of land surrounding the memorial.

## Department Vice Commander John Shanahan

It's been a busy month following the Department convention, with initial visits to Irish Posts IR-02 and IR-03, plus participation in Ireland's National Day of Remembrance – the national salute to Irish veterans of all conflicts, conducted with the leadership of the government, members of the clergy and representatives of all of the armed forces and veterans organizations. The American Legion is privileged to have a place of honour at this event.



The visit to Post IR-02 was a terrific afternoon in Adare, County Limerick with Post Commander Pat Mulcahy and Post Adjutant Ed Scannell. We've handed over the 2016 cards and manuals and made plans for the Post's membership drive and annual general meeting in November. This Post serves the southwest of Ireland. Here's a photo from our recent meeting in County Limerick, Ireland.



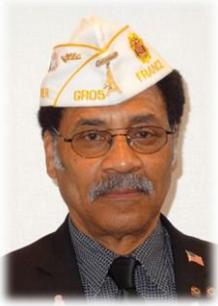
Post IR-03 based in County Mayo has a fine history of honouring and remembering our fallen veterans, both American and Irish. I had the pleasure of meeting recently with Post Commander Ron Howko and Post Adjutant Michael Noone to hand off the 2016 membership cards and manuals and to visit the Mayo Peace Park in Castlebar, County Mayo. Post IR-03 has done an amazing job of working with the local Council, private organizations and family members to create a beautiful garden of remembrance for Mayo veterans. Located in the west of Ireland, this lovely spot is worth a special trip. Here's a photo of the Memorial.



For God and Country,

*John*





DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER Quincy Foster

I was privilege to have been invited to a few 4th of July celebration's and ended up celebrating the 4th with Thomas W. Barnett GR14 American Legion Family. What a great time we had. There was plenty of food, prizes and drinks for everyone also great conversations. In the process of having a great celebration the post also had a few vets who joined the post on the spot. My thanks go out to everyone that made this event possible and a special thanks to the new Commander Girordano and his wife for hosting it. They were presented a Certificate of appreciation by Adjutant Carl Hackworth. I am sorry that I was not able to attend the other post celebration's but I know they were great also.

The American Legion Paris Post FR01 attended the flag ceremony at Place Charles de Gaulle on the 4th of July and Philip Wizenick was given the honored by being asked to sign the book as a representative of the American Legion. Take some time and check out Post FR01 on Facebook.

Kaiserslautern GR01 will have their Membership meeting August 5th and they will be hosting a BBQ at the Landstuhl Warrior Center on August 8th all are welcomed Grill masters and Servers needed so come on out and join the fun. Contact the any post officer for more information. Don't forget to visit them on their website.

I am looking forward to visiting all the areas I have been assigned.

God Bless You!!

Mobile: 049-(0)1783989509 / Email: Achange@qcfooster.com

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER Lyndon Hudson



Comrades,  
I'd like to report that on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July I was fortunate enough to meet with American Legion Riders - Flanders Field Chapter President, Paul Dunn in Brussels. We discussed the upcoming Department of France Oratorical Contest to be held in Brussels, Belgium and he'd like to convey that the actual site for the contest is located at the Brussels American High School in Sterrebeek, Belgium. He also graciously provided a photo of the auditorium where it will be held:



*Statement of Permission: used with permission from Paul Dunn, circa 2015.*

The GPS address to this facility is: JF Kennedylaan 1, 1933 Sterrebeek, BE

Also, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July I attended William D. Nelson Post GR09's stated meeting in Ulm, Germany and I'm pleased to report I was received very well. When I first arrived Post Commander Jerry Aman was holding an Executive Committee meeting and their SGT of Arms promptly inspected my credentials for compliance. GR09's attention to detail and professionalism is greatly appreciated.

Still on tap and I'm very much looking forward to the Adopter Appreciation Ceremony at Flanders Field American Cemetery hosted by BE02 on 22 August.

Lyndon Hudson, VC / Department of France / +49(0)16097072097 / [lyndonandmargaret@yahoo.com](mailto:lyndonandmargaret@yahoo.com)



## DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN *Jimmie Dale*

Chaplin corner from Jimmie Dale

AS the Department Chaplin I'm supposed to keep everyone informed about other Legion members that may be sick, have passed are just need prayers to deal with whatever issue they may be dealing with in life. I can only do this if I receive the word from the members that may need help. So I need every one to pass along the information, if you have someone in need of prayer or have had a member that has passed away please share that information with me so I can get it into the new letter.

Currently I'm only tracking one member that has been sick Mr. John Odem from GR07, who is in the states and is recovering from a short stay in the hospital. Our prayers are with him that he continue to recover and travel back to Germany safely.

Bible quote: Psalms 41

1. God blesses those who are kind to the poor. Helps them out of their troubles. 2. He protects them and keeps them alive; he publicly honors them and destroys the power of their enemies. 3. He nurses them when they are sick, and soothes their pains and worries.

I hope this message find everyone in good spirits and doing well.

Sincerely,  
Comrade Jimmie Dale

## Legion survey to measure effectiveness of PTSD/TBI treatment

*The American Legion - July 29, 2015*

The American Legion is conducting a national online survey of veterans and their families through Aug. 16 to assess quality, timeliness, access and type of care the Department of Veterans Affairs is providing for those coping with post-traumatic stress disorder and/or traumatic brain injury.

The 59-question survey – [www.surveymonkey.com/s/9JJKVQ9](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9JJKVQ9) – will be used to guide The American Legion's PTSD/TBI Committee and provide an understanding of veteran satisfaction about VA mental health care for a national American Legion PTSD/TBI Symposium in Washington Sept. 26-27. Questions are mostly multiple-choice and can be answered with a single click from a dropdown menu.

All information obtained through the survey will be kept confidential and will be used for no other purpose than to better understand VA performance in this area of care.

The survey focuses on veteran satisfaction and levels of perceived benefits with VA's PTSD/TBI programs, including alternative and complementary treatments.

Survey questions include veteran status; gender; era of service; number of times deployed; diagnosis of TBI, PTSD and/or TBI and PTSD; availability of appointments; time and distance to care facilities; treatment type (therapy, medication and complementary and alternative medicine); reported symptoms; efficacy of treatment; and side effects.

Personal information will not be used or made available to identify any individual who has completed the survey.



## 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](mailto:GARY.D.MILLER2.CTR@MAIL.MIL) or [billsfan\\_gary@hotmail.com](mailto: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 1<sup>ST</sup> AND THE 16<sup>TH</sup> 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 Sons of the American Legion, Detachment of France,

It looks like another month has gone by and the new membership year is in full swing. As in every year, the goal is to reach 100% before the end of December. I am positive that all of the Squadrons will make this goal. The next DEC will be held on 10 October 2015 at the GR30 post home in Kitzingen. We will get more details out to you as soon as they are available. We are looking for a host Squadron for the next DEC which should be held in March. We also need someone to host the convention in June next year. I hope to see all of you at the DEC in October so that we can start setting dates and times for the March DEC and June convention. Thank you all for supporting your Squadrons, the Detachment, and the American Legion.

Lee Preston

[Lpreston1957@gmail.com](mailto:Lpreston1957@gmail.com)



## POW/MIA Update

Army Pvt. Arthur H. Kelder, 26, of McHenry, Ill., will be buried July 18, in Chicago. On Dec. 8, 1941, Kelder was assigned to the Philippine Department, U.S. Army Forces in the Far East, when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands. Kelder and his unit cared for those wounded in intense fighting until May 6, 1942, when the U.S. fortress of Corregidor fell, and the Philippines fell under control of Japanese forces. Thousands of U.S. and Filipino service members were taken prisoner; including many who were forced to endure the Bataan Death March, en route to Japanese prisoner of war (POW) camps, including the POW camp at Cabanatuan on the island of Luzon, Philippines. Kelder was among those reported captured after the surrender of Corregidor and who were eventually moved to the Cabanatuan POW camp. More than 2,500 POWs perished in this camp during the remaining years of the war. On Nov. 19, 1942, 14 Americans, including Kelder, were reported to have died and been buried by their fellow prisoners in a common grave in a local camp cemetery in Cabanatuan.

Following the war, American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) personnel exhumed those buried at the Cabanatuan cemetery and relocated the remains to a temporary U.S. military cemetery near Manila. In late 1947, the AGRS again exhumed the remains at the Manila cemetery in an attempt to identify them. Due to the circumstances of the POW deaths and burials, the extensive commingling, and the limited identification technologies of the time, all of the remains could not be individually identified. The unidentified remains were reburied as unknowns in the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial, a permanent American Battle Monuments Commission cemetery in the Philippines.

In 2014, after the Kelder family had requested the disinterment of remains they believed to be Kelder, the Department of Defense determined that in order to apply its modern identification technologies to the Kelder case and enhance the possibility of identification, 10 graves in the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial associated with Kelder's loss would have to be exhumed. Kelder's DNA was identified in 3 of the 10 sets of remains disinterred.

To identify Kelder's remains, scientists from DPAA and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used the available evidence and forensic identification tools, including mitochondrial DNA and Y-chromosome Short Tandem Repeat DNA (Y-STR), which matched the DNA samples provided by his cousins.



### **Independence Day Celebration in Brussels**

On the 4th of July, the Flanders Field Legion Riders and Auxiliary chapter provided served traditional American fare in Brussels, bringing a taste of home to U.S. military families and civilians living there. The effort was led by Legion Rider President Paul Dunn and Auxiliary President Ruth Alvarez.

### **American Legion Auxiliary**

Saturday, 11 July, the Auxiliary held a social gathering of its members to promote the chapter to potential members. The event was a great success with four new members joining. The ladies are planning on another social to be held in September after everyone gets back from their summer holiday.

### **Donation from SHAPE Harley Club**

The members of Flanders Field Post BE02 would like to thank Philip Thornton and the SHAPE Harley Club for their monetary donation to the Orphanage Christmas event scheduled for 16 December at Chièvres Airbase

### **Ceremony Dergneau**

Saturday, July 25, 2015 at the farm Beauvolers in Dergneau, Belgium, a ceremony was conducted in honor of Lieutenant Ferdinand M. Kjar and his crew of the B-24 Liberator "Pale Ale" who were shot down in Dergneau on February 20, 1945. In attendance at the ceremony were his daughter Joanne and his granddaughters. Flanders Field Post BE02 was represented at a ceremony by Commander Schram.

### **Adopter Appreciation Day**

The American Legion Post BE02 would like to invite all Legionaries and their families to our 1st Adopter Appreciation Day Event. The ceremony at the Flanders Field American Cemetery will be followed by an American style BBQ. For more information contact us at: [flanders.fields.post.be02@gmail.com](mailto:flanders.fields.post.be02@gmail.com)

Last year, our American Legion Post implemented an Adopt-a-Grave program for the World War I Soldiers buried at the Flanders Field American Cemetery in Waregem. Within two months of announcing the program, every grave and name on the Wall of Missing were adopted with the vast majority of the graves being adopted by Belgian citizens. To strengthen the ties between our American and Belgian counterparts, it is our intention to honor our adopters with an appreciation day.

The event will begin at 11:00 with a small ceremony at the Flanders Field American Cemetery to commemorate our fallen heroes and adopters. After the completion of the ceremony, we will move to Park Stadion (vijvers), Zuiderlaan, Waregem to enjoy an American Style BBQ, view exhibits in the 'Adopter Village' and participate in a number of other activities





## **Adopter Appreciation Day** **Saturday, 22 August 2015**

**Adopters, Family and Friends**  
**Everyone Welcome**  
**From 11:00 to 17:00**  
**Park Stadionvijvers -**  
**Zuiderlaan, Waregem**

### **Program**

- 11:00** Adopter Appreciation Ceremony at Flanders Field American Cemetery
- 12:00** American BBQ at Park Stadionvijvers - Waregem
  - 15€ - Chicken or Ribs, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw
- 12:00** Activities in the Park Stadionvijvers, Zuiderlaan, Waregem
  - Exhibitions—Adopter Village
  - Demonstration by Venture Crew 511

### **Information:**

RSVP American BBQ: [adopt.a.grave.flandersfield@gmail.com](mailto:adopt.a.grave.flandersfield@gmail.com)

Exhibition 'Adopters Village': [friends.of.ffwaregem@gmail.com](mailto:friends.of.ffwaregem@gmail.com)



# 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"*

---

## Legion to Congress, White House: 'Army Cuts are lunacy'

WASHINGTON (July 9, 2015) – “Absolute lunacy,” is how the leader of the nation’s largest veterans service organization characterized plans to reduce the U.S. Army by another 40,000 troops.

“After the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, politicians often accused one another of having a ‘pre-9/11 mentality,’” American Legion National Commander Michael D. Helm said today. “Yet now we are cutting our military to pre-World War II levels. This is not just absolute lunacy, it’s a complete disregard of the constitutionally-mandated responsibilities that our elected leaders in both parties have sworn to uphold. Just last month, ISIS inspired terrorist attacks on three different continents on a single day. Many in Congress and the Obama administration have routinely condemned the meat cleaver approach to cutting our defense, yet sequestration has been in effect since 2013. Will some of our elected officials please show some leadership here?”

Helm’s concern is echoed by veterans across the United States. During its national convention last August, American Legion delegates unanimously passed Resolution No. 225, which urges Congress “to oppose the pending budget cuts in military spending by the Department of Defense,” and to “not allow our military forces to reach a weakened state in these uncertain and perilous times.”

Helm pointed out that in addition to ISIS, nations such as Russia, China, North Korea and Iran have all engaged in provocative and threatening actions. “As national commander, I have been visiting U.S. military bases around the world. Just last month a three-star general asked me, ‘what is it going to take for people to wake-up, Paris burning?’ Election season is starting to pick up steam, both at the presidential and local levels. I call on all Americans and members of the media to demand plans and answers from those running for office. Every time we had military drawdowns, this nation later regretted it. Let’s do the responsible thing and field a military worthy of our great country before it is too late.”

With a current membership of 2.3-million wartime veterans, The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through nearly 14,000 posts across the nation.

*Media Contact: John Raughter (317) 630-1350/ (317) 441-8847, [jraughter@legion.org](mailto:jraughter@legion.org)*

# SGT William D. Nelson Post GR09

## GR09 has guest speaker and awards presentation...

For its bi-monthly meeting on 25 July, the William D. Nelson post GR 09 invited US Army Lieutenant Colonel Ian Tudlong, Training Exercises and Evaluation Division, Multinational Joint Headquarters Ulm (MJHU), Ulm, Germany to give a presentation on the functions and roles of the MJHU in the defense of Europe.

Ltc Tudlong briefed that the MJHU is a Joint Headquarters whose main focus is to plan and exercise command and control of global crisis and

management of operations as tasked by the UN, NATO or the EU. Ltc Tudlong also stated that in September a “Reforger” (but larger) exercise involving 25,000 army, air force and navy soldiers from a total of 42 nations will be conducted in the countries of Spain, Portugal and Italy.

Another guest was Lyndon Hudson, the Department Vice Commander responsible for GR 09. VC Hudson was able to present the Membership Chairman of the Year award to GR 09’s chairman, Morgan Anthony. Appreciated the visit Lyndon.



Ltc Ian Tudlong briefing GR 09 members



Morgan Anthony receiving Membership Chairman of the year Award.

## Report of deaths while waiting for VA Care ‘mind-boggling’ says American Legion National Commander

WASHINGTON (July 14, 2015) – Calling an internal Veterans Affairs report that states that 238,647 veterans died while waiting for VA health care “extremely disturbing,” the leader of the nation’s largest veterans organization said Congress and the White House need to decrease wait times and improve record keeping.

“I don’t know how accurate that number is,” American Legion National Commander Michael D. Helm said of the report, which was first obtained by the Huffington Post. “I do know that if it’s even close to that, it is mind-boggling. Of course, dying while on a waiting list doesn’t mean the same as dying *because* of a waiting list. We do know that by virtue of their service to this country, veterans deserve high quality medical care in a timely manner. The American Legion had members of our national staff meet with VA’s Health Eligibility Center in Atlanta last year to investigate this very issue. We need to see the official report from the Inspector General and, more importantly, we want to see VA’s plan to speed up the process and ensure that patients are not dying because of needless delays. As we have said all along, this isn’t about any single VA facility. It is a systemic problem.”

With a current membership of 2.2 million wartime veterans, The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through nearly 14,000 posts across the nation.

## House Panel Approves Bill To Ease Firing Of VA Employees

Employees at the Department of Veterans Affairs could be fired much more easily under a bill approved by the House Veterans' Affairs Committee on July 15 over Democratic objections that the measure would erode the rights of federal workers.

The bill (**HR 1994**) would permit the VA secretary to dismiss or demote employees based on misconduct or poor performance. The legislation also would provide for an expedited appeals process with the Merit Systems Protection Board, with an administrative judge required to issue a final ruling on an appeal within 45 days. The legislation also would extend the probationary period to 18 months before being appointed to a permanent position within the competitive civil service.

In a rare partisan split, the panel adopted a substitute amendment to the bill — offered by the panel's chairman, Florida Republican **Jeff Miller** — in a 14-10 partly-line vote. The amendment would incorporate standalone legislation (**HR 571**) adding whistleblower protection provisions. The amendment also would prohibit the removal of an employee who has an open whistleblower file with the Office of Special Counsel and would include provisions that would limit the pensions of senior executives who are convicted of a felony related to their service at the VA.

Emergency legislation (PL 113-146) passed by Congress roughly a year ago to decrease wait times for medical appointments at the VA included provisions allowing the secretary to fire senior executives with an expedited appeals process. But lawmakers, particularly Republicans, have complained that little accountability has failed to materialize at the VA.

In rare emotional remarks, the Florida Republican promised his Democratic colleagues that he "tried not to be partisan" and was not trying to roll back workers' rights. The choice, Miller said, was

between shielding employees who helped bring on the scandals that have plagued the department over the past year or helping clean up the VA. "Are you going to stand with the veterans or the bureaucrats?" Miller asked. "I know where your hearts are. It's with the veterans and of course it's with the employees and the people," he said. "But there's [sic] some rotten people that work in the department that need to be fired, not protected."

But Democrats contended that, while more needed to be done to remove problem employees, the legislation would essentially make VA workers "at-will" employees. The panel's top Democrat, **Corrine Brown** of Florida, said the bill would usher in "fake accountability" at the VA. "It would place them at the mercy of the VA managers, good managers and bad managers," Brown said. "The threat of being fired would hang over every employee's head, especially those employees who are whistleblowers and trying to do the right thing."

Prior to approving the legislation, the committee rejected 10-14 a substitute amendment offered by California Democrat **Mark Takano**, which contained the text of a standalone accountability measure (**HR 2999**) that would allow the VA secretary to immediately suspend without pay employees who pose a "clear and direct threat to public health or safety." The substitute would have provided a 30 day appeal period for appeal before being fired and require back pay for whistleblowers found to have been wrongly fired. Takano's amendment also would have capped paid administrative leave at 14 days. Miller fired back that the standard in Takano's amendment would have set a "nearly unobtainable, if not immeasurable bar" for firing employees.

The panel also adopted, by voice vote, an amendment offered by Kansas Republican **Tim Huelskamp** that would require the VA to provide for travel expenses for employees who testify before Congress.

# Army Announces Fiscal Year 2016 Personnel Cuts

Recently the Army released more details to the number of cuts of soldiers over the next few years. The plan cuts slots for active-duty soldiers by 40,000 --- from 490,000 soldiers today to 450,000 soldiers by Fiscal Year 2018. In addition, 17,000 civilian employee slots will be cut. The reductions are estimated to generate \$7 billion in savings and will begin in October.

At least six bases are slated to lose more than 1,000 soldiers apiece over the next two years. Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska will lose 2,631 soldiers, or 59 percent, of its active-duty personnel --- the largest percentage drop of any base in the US or overseas. The other installations include:

Fort Benning, Georgia, will lose 3,402 soldiers, or 29 percent;  
Fort Hood, Texas, 3,350 soldiers, or 9 percent;  
Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, 1,214 soldiers or 8 percent;

Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, 1,251 soldiers, or 5 percent; and  
Fort Bliss, Texas, 1,219 soldiers, or 5 percent.

Bases in Germany, Italy, and South Korea will also be impacted. The Army will shed two brigade combat teams (BCT) between now and 2017, leaving a total of 30 BCTs -- down from 45 in 2013. The brigade combat teams will be turned to battalion task forces.

In addition, the Army plans to work with the Army National Guard to move Stryker combat vehicles in Hawaii and convert the 81st Armored Brigade Combat Team, located in Washington, Oregon, and California, into a Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

The Army will seek to achieve some of the personnel cuts through the attrition of retiring soldiers and civilians. The Army did not release what ranks or military occupational specialties will be affected.

## Agent Orange Act was supposed to help Vietnam veterans — but many still don't qualify

By Charles Ornstein and Mike Hixenbaugh  
ProPublica and The Virginian-Pilot  
Published: July 20, 2015



A U.S. military helicopter sprays Agent Orange over Vietnam in this undated photo from the war

### List of diseases linked to Agent Orange has grown over the years

At his office in the Jefferson County Office Building, Peter J. Fazio, director of the county's Veterans Service Agency, spread out on his desk data reflecting the growing list of diseases the government has attributed to Agent Orange exposure, a lingering issue for Vietnam War veterans.

- [VA: No date set for Agent Orange C-123 decision](#)
- [Agent Orange debate renewed by bill, VA decision](#)
- [Reservists may get help for Agent Orange exposure effects](#)
- [Weapons of war: US military tries to adapt to unconventional warfare](#)

Five decades after the Vietnam War began—and four decades after it ended— veterans exposed to the chemical brew dubbed Agent Orange are still fighting for compensation and benefits for themselves and their children.

And it turns out, not all veterans exposed to Agent Orange are being treated the same.

The fight is playing out in the halls of Congress, in courtrooms and at veterans meetings across the country.

Agent Orange is the name given to a mixture of toxins used during the Vietnam War to remove leaves from trees and bushes, leaving the enemy more exposed. (It got its name from the orange stripes on barrels containing it.)

All told, about 9 million military personnel served on active duty during the Vietnam era, but most were not stationed in the country. Of those, some 2.6 million were potentially exposed to Agent Orange, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs estimates.

The VA began receiving claims related to Agent Orange exposure in 1977, according to a November 2014 report from the Congressional Research Service. In 1991, Congress passed the Agent Orange Act, which said that certain diseases tied to chemical exposure would be presumed to be related to a vet's military service and would make the vet eligible for benefits. The list has grown over time and now includes various cancers, diabetes, Parkinson's Disease, peripheral neuropathy and heart disease, among others.

To get these benefits, though, veterans "must have actually set foot on Vietnamese soil or served on a craft in its rivers (also known as 'brown water veterans')," the Congressional Research Service wrote. Those who instead spent time on deep-water Navy ships (called "Blue Water Navy" veterans) do not qualify unless they can show that they spent time on Vietnam land or rivers, the report said.

Below are various groups who receive Agent Orange benefits or are seeking them.

### **Those Who Served in Vietnam**

Since 2002, more than 650,000 veterans have been granted benefits because of their Agent Orange exposure, the VA estimates. (The department did not keep data prior to then.)

According to the VA's annual benefits report, it spent nearly \$1.3 billion on compensation for Vietnam era veterans in fiscal year 2013, the most recent year for which data is available. That is about one-third of the \$3.7 billion in compensation provided that year for all veterans. That figure includes monthly cash compensation payments, but not health care services.

The VA's website says that: "For the purposes of VA compensation benefits, Veterans who served anywhere in Vietnam between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975 are presumed to have been exposed to herbicides, as specified in the Agent Orange Act of 1991. These Veterans do not need to show that they were exposed to Agent Orange or other herbicides in order to get disability compensation for diseases related to Agent Orange exposure."

Veterans can obtain information on the VA's website, where they can also file claims for benefits.

### **Air Force Personnel Exposed to Contaminated C-123 Aircraft**

In June, the VA expanded benefits to Air Force and Air Force Reserve personnel who served as flight, medical and ground maintenance crew members on C-123 aircraft that were used to spray Agent Orange. These troops, estimated to number between 1,500 and 2,100, will be eligible for benefits if they have a health condition from the same list that applies to on-the-ground troops.

This followed a report earlier this year from the national Institute of Medicine, which found that "some reservists quite likely experienced non-trivial increases in their risks of adverse health outcomes."

"Opening up eligibility for this deserving group of Air Force veterans and reservists is the right thing to do," VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald said in a statement in June.

Two other senators, Richard Burr, R-N.C., and Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., had long pushed the VA to provide benefits to C-123 veterans.

"The effort of these veterans to secure overdue VA care and benefits for harmful exposure to Agent Orange has not been one of the agency's finest hours," Burr said in a statement. "This frustrating, four year process has laid bare the lengths that the VA will go to disregard science and the facts of the historical record. I am pleased Secretary McDonald has chosen to finally do the right thing for these ailing veterans, but it shouldn't have been this hard or taken so long."

### **Blue Water Veterans**

The VA does not currently provide Agent Orange benefits to an estimated 90,000 "blue water" veterans who say they were exposed to the chemical in their drinking water while working on Navy ships off the coast of Vietnam.

In 2002, a VA report found there was insufficient evidence to connect health problems of blue water sailors with chemical exposure aboard ships, establishing the basis for denying benefits to vets who didn't set foot in Vietnam. That decision was upheld by a federal appeals court in 2008. A 2011 report by the Institute of Medicine, however, identified several "plausible routes" for Agent Orange exposure through the water distillation process aboard Navy ships, as well as through the air. Such vets can only receive Agent Orange-related benefits if they show "on a factual basis" that they were exposed to the chemicals during their military service.

Following the decision last month to grant Agent Orange benefits to C-123 crews, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., said the VA should do the same for blue water Navy vets. Bills introduced in the Senate and House this year would extend presumptive Agent Orange health coverage to sailors who served in territorial waters as far as 12 miles from the Vietnam coast. "We owe it to the veterans who bravely served our country and have fallen victim to Agent Orange-related disease to enact this legislation that will provide the disability compensation and healthcare benefits they have earned," Gillibrand said in a statement. In April, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims struck down VA rules that denied presumptive Agent Orange compensation for sailors whose ships docked at the harbors of Da Nang, Cam Ranh Bay and Vung Tau. Those ports, the court determined, were in the Agent Orange spraying area. The VA is not appealing the ruling.

### **Those Who Served Elsewhere**

Veterans who served in or near the Korean demilitarized zone between April 1968 and August 1971 and who have a disease associated with Agent Orange are entitled to benefits under VA rules that took effect in 2011.

The VA acknowledges that vets stationed at Air Force bases in Thailand between 1961 and 1975 may have been exposed to Agent Orange, which was sprayed along the perimeters of the installations. But those who served at bases in Thailand must prove they performed duties that may have led to exposure.

Lawyers who routinely argue on behalf of Vietnam-era veterans seeking benefits say it can be difficult to satisfy the VA's requirement for proving exposure in Thailand. For example, Army veterans must produce documentation showing their duties sent them to the outskirts of a base, either through written orders, statements from fellow veterans, or through photographic evidence, lawyers said.

### **Children of Veterans**

For decades, Vietnam veterans have voiced concern that their Agent Orange exposure has led to health issues for their children and grandchildren. Over the past three years, Vietnam Veterans of America has recorded hundreds of testimonials from offspring of Vietnam veterans who believe their health has been affected by a parent's exposure. The VA, though, says there's insufficient research to make a scientific connection.

Despite that, the VA provides benefits for a limited number of birth defects in children of Vietnam veterans, including spina bifida for children of all vets (male and female) and 18 other health conditions solely for children of female vets. To date, about 1,200 children with spina bifida have received those benefits, along with 14 children of female veterans with other covered birth defects, according to the VA.

In its most recent report to the agency, published in 2013, the Institute of Medicine concluded that "a connection between toxin exposure and effects on offspring, including developmental disruption and disease onset in later life, is biologically plausible." The report recommended further study.

Bills pending in the Senate and House would create a national research center to study medical conditions that arise in the descendants of those exposed to toxic substances during military service, not only in Vietnam, but also in the Gulf War, Afghanistan and Iraq.

"When an individual serves their country in the military, I would assume that they recognize the challenges and the sacrifices that they may make," said Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., during a Committee of Veterans Affairs hearing last month. "When something happens to them, it's a terrible thing. But I cannot imagine the pain or concern that comes to a father or a mother who now sees the consequence of their military service now affecting their children or their grandchildren."

The legislation has the backing of many veterans organizations, but the VA opposes the bill. Rajiv Jain, a VA assistant deputy undersecretary for health, told lawmakers last month that other federal agencies are better suited to research the effects of toxic exposure. Further, Jain testified, "a proposed center focusing solely on military toxic exposures would likely not have the statistical basis to support conclusive findings."

*Are you a Vietnam veteran? ProPublica and the Virginian-Pilot are interested in hearing from veterans and family members for our ongoing investigation into the effects of Agent Orange on veterans and their children. You can help inform our reporting [by completing this short, confidential questionnaire](#). ProPublica is a Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative newsroom.*



**Mailing Address**  
The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor  
PO Box 207  
Vails Gate, New York 12584-0207

**Street Address/GPS Address**  
The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor  
374 Temple Hill Road  
New Windsor NY 12553

## History



The Badge of Military Merit circa 1783 Image copyright: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

The award known as the Purple Heart has a history that reaches back to the waning days of the American Revolution. The Continental Congress had forbidden General George Washington from granting commissions and promotions in rank to recognize merit. Yet Washington wanted to honor merit, particularly among the enlisted soldiers. On August 7, 1782, his general orders established the Badge of Military Merit:

"... The General ever desirous to cherish virtuous ambition in his soldiers, as well as to foster and encourage every species of Military merit directs whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear on his facings, over his left breast, the figure of a heart in purple cloth or silk edged with narrow lace or binding."

This award was open only to enlisted men and granted them the distinction of being permitted to pass all guards and sentinels as could commissioned-officers. The names of the recipients were to have been kept in a "Book of Merit" (which has never been recovered). At the present time there are three known recipients of the Badge of Military Merit: Sergeant Elijah Churchill, 2nd Continental Dragoons; Sergeant William Brown, 5th and Sergeant Daniel Bissel, 2nd Connecticut Continental Line Infantry.

Washington stated that the award was to be a permanent one, but once the Revolution ended, the Badge of Merit was all but forgotten until the 20th century.

General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing suggested a need for an award for merit in 1918, but it was not until 1932 that the Purple Heart was created in recognition of Washington's ideals and for the bicentennial of his birth. General Order No.3 announced the establishment of the award:

"...By order of the President of the United States, the Purple Heart, established by General George Washington at Newburgh, August 7, 1782, during the War of the Revolution is hereby revived out of respect to his memory and military achievements.

By order of the Secretary of War: Douglas MacArthur General, Chief of Staff

On May 28, 1932, 137 World War I veterans were conferred their Purple Hearts at Temple Hill, in New Windsor, NY. Temple Hill was the site of the New Windsor Cantonment, which was the final encampment of the Continental Army in the winter of 1782-1783. Today, the National Purple Heart continues the tradition begun here in 1932, of honoring those who have earned the Purple Heart.

The Purple Heart has undergone many changes with respect to the criteria for being awarded. At first, the Purple Heart was exclusively awarded to Army and Army Air Corps personnel and could not be awarded posthumously to the next of kin. In 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt signed an executive order allowing the Navy to award the Purple Heart to Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guard personnel. Also in that year, the Purple Heart was made available for posthumous award to any member of the military killed on or after December 7, 1941.

Originally the Purple Heart was awarded for meritorious service. Being wounded was one portion of consideration for merit. With the creation of the Legion of Merit in 1942, the award of the Purple Heart for meritorious service became unnecessary and was therefore discontinued. The Purple Heart, per regulation is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who, while serving under competent authority in any capacity with one of the U.S. Armed Services after April 5, 1917 has been wounded, killed, or has died after being wounded.

# BALTIMORE MARYLAND

## Site of the 97<sup>th</sup> American Legion National Convention

### August 28<sup>th</sup> to September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015



**The Baltimore Hilton**



**The Inner Harbor**

If you are planning on attending the National

Convention in Baltimore (and I hope to see some new faces in Baltimore) please e-mail me at [dhaggan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dhaggan@sbcglobal.net) with the following information, **THE DATE YOU WILL ARRIVE AND DEPART, THE PERSON YOU ARE SHARING A ROOM WITH IF ANY, AND ANY SPECIAL ROOM REQUIREMENTS.**

The room cost per night is \$159.00 plus tax. Cutoff for the reservation is 12 July 2015.  
Hope to see you in Baltimore, a good time will be had by all.

---

#### **Update on what we are working on for our attendees' enjoyment at the 2015 National Convention...**

Friday, August 28, 2015 – Color Guard Competition at 5:00 PM at the Baltimore Convention Center. Applications are due by July 24 to the Convention & Meetings Office.

On Friday, August 28 OR Saturday, August 29, the Baltimore Ravens will host the Washington Redskins in a Pre-Season Game. We are working with the Ravens and more information on tickets will be forthcoming.

Saturday, August 29, 2015 – Competitive Concert Band Contests will return along with the new Exhibition Concert Band class. Contests will start at 1:00 PM at the Baltimore Convention Center. Applications are due by June 1 to the Convention & Meetings Office.

Sunday, August 30, 2015 – Patriotic Memorial Service featuring The Texas Tenors. Service starts at 11:00 AM in the Baltimore Convention Center.

Monday, August 31, 2015 – American Legion Family Night at Camden Yards Ballpark with the Baltimore Orioles vs. Tampa Bay Rays. Game time is 7:05PM. See the American Legion Baseball Player of the Year throw the ceremonial first pitch. Please see attached document for ticket information.

Tuesday, September 1, 2015 – National Commander's Banquet. The Swing Dolls have been selected by National Commander Helm as the entertainment. The Swing Dolls perform a Musical USO Tribute and music made popular by The Andrews Sisters, The McGuire Sisters, female groups of the 1960's and Mamma Mia. Tickets are \$45.00 per person and each table is a round for eight (8) people this year. Departments may send their checks to the Convention & Meetings Office, payable to National Treasurer of The American Legion. Tickets at this time are still available.

Tour Opportunities are available during the National Convention. These are listed on our website at [www.legion.org/convention](http://www.legion.org/convention).



# AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY NIGHT

Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup> at 7:05 p.m. vs. Tampa Bay Rays

**Terrace Box** (Sections 1-17 & 55-65): **\$19\***

**Left Field Lower Box** (Sections 66-86): **\$19\***

**Lower Reserve** (Sections 67-87): **\$12\***

**Upper Reserve** (Sections 316-356, rows 13-25): **\$10\***

\*There is an additional 10% service charge per ticket.

For any questions or accessible seating, please call 888.848.BIRD (2473) and ask for the Ticket Services team.

## FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW TO PURCHASE TICKETS:



1. Click on the link below
2. Select a quantity of tickets
3. Create a Baltimore Orioles ticket account
4. Purchase and print your tickets

<http://www.orioles.com/tix/americanlegion>



*Tickets posted for re-sale are subject to cancellation. Offer is NOT valid at the Box Office.*

# National Commander Helm's **BLOOD DRIVE**

97<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL CONVENTION OF  
THE AMERICAN LEGION



**Baltimore Convention Center**  
**Halls D & E, Level 100**

**TWO DAYS ONLY**

**Friday, August 28, 2015**

**Monday, August 31, 2015**

**9:00AM – 2:30PM**



## **NOTICE.....FODPAL NATIONAL CONVENTION BREAKFAST**

FODPAL President James Grosset has called for the 2015 National Convention Breakfast to be held on Monday August 31, 2015 at 0700hrs.

**The breakfast will be held at Hilton Baltimore, Holiday Ballroom, Sections 1 & 2, Second Floor**

All FODPAL members and guests are welcome to attend.

As a reminder please don't forget to bring your Department giveaways for the breakfast raffle, we had some very good prize's last year.

*Doug Huggan*

Past Department of France Commander  
FODPAL Secretary

*James Grosset*

FODPAL President

“Still Serving America’s Veterans...Around the World”

# Serving Legionnaires and Veterans!



**Computer Clinic24®**  
Inh. Jerry Shoemaker

Neutorstrasse 25  
97421 Schweinfurt

Tel: 09721-3709124  
Fax: 09721-3709012

www.computerclinic24.com  
email: info@computerclinic24.com



**Special For Members  
of the American Legion  
€20 Discount on any  
Bus Tour**

When Booking give your membership number

**United European Airlines Tours**  
**0173-3132075**

Email: ueairlines@aol.com or ueairlines@gmail.com

**www.united-european-airlines.com**

## MY PLACE

YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME

**CHUCK VAUGHAN**  
VETERAN'S CLUB

OTTO HAHN STR. 21  
97318 KITZINGEN

09321 31644

gabiplace@hotmail.com



*If you offer services to our Legionnaires and/or veterans and would like to let it be known...place it in the Department Newsletter. Contact the Newsletter Editor David Greaux with the information. The input will be reviewed and decided by Department if the article will/can be posted.*