



# The American Legion Flanders Field Post BE02



## COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

The past 3 months have been very exciting for Post BE02. We started with the Post Level Oratorical Contest in January followed by the Department Contest in February. The Post also sponsored for the first time a candidate for the 'Eagle Scout of the Year' scholarship. This candidate was the only application received by the Department of France. Our next endeavour was the sponsorship of candidates for both the Boys State and Girls State programs. I would like to thank the selection committee for their difficult task of selecting a candidate from the several very qualified applicants.

Post BE02 would like to welcome a new addition to the American Legion family. In February, the charter application for the American Legion Auxiliary "Flanders Field" Chapter was approved by Department and sent to National for final approval. I would like to welcome President Ruth Alvarez and her members to the American Legion Family.

Our last meeting was held at the bowling center on SHAPE. We had an excellent turnout to the meeting and the games of bowling. Pictures of the event can be seen on our Flickr account.

Our next meeting will be held on Saturday, 25 April at the USAG Brussels compound starting at 10:00. This is the meeting that we select our Post officers for the next year.

## MEMBERSHIP

At this time the Post BE02 membership has reached a high of 70 members. Unfortunately we have 14 members that still need to renew. Several of these members have PCSed back to the USA but I would like to ask them to renew and transfer to a Post located near them.

Membership is our strength. Without members we cannot continue with the myriad of programs and activities that we currently perform. As our membership grows, we can pursue more events that help our veterans, their families and the community.

If you know a veteran, ask them if they want to join the American Legion. We are all recruiters.

*Together, we make difference*

*The American Legion was chartered and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness. It is the nation's largest wartime veterans service organization, committed to mentoring youth and sponsorship of wholesome programs in our communities, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting strong national security, and continued devotion to our fellow servicemembers and veterans.*

*The American Legion's success depends entirely on active membership, participation and volunteerism. The organization belongs to the people it serves and the communities in which it thrives.*



## AMERICAN LEGION "FLANDERS FIELD" POST BE02

### POST BE02 OFFICERS

Commander: Joseph Schram  
[flanders.fields.post.be02@gmail.com](mailto:flanders.fields.post.be02@gmail.com)

1st Vice Commander: Paul Dunn

2nd Vice Commander: Mike Metelko

Judge Advocate: John Jackson

Historian: Joseph Gross

Finance Officer: Greg Wilcox

Chaplain: Gavin Wainwright

Post Service Officer: Vacant

Sergeant-at-Arms: James Scott

### LEGION RIDERS

President: Paul Dunn

### LEGION AUXILIARY

President: Ruth Alvarez

### SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Commander: Paul Vande Walle

### FLANDERS FIELD AMERICAN CEMETERY

Superintendent: Christopher Arseneault



## ORATORICAL CONTEST



On Saturday Afternoon, 24 January at the Brussels American High School, Austin Muraille, from the International Scholl of Brussels competed and won the Flanders Field Post BEO2's 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Oratorical Scholarship Contest. Because of his outstanding performance, Austin followed this achievement by competing in the Department of France's Oratorical Contest on 16 February, at Stuttgart High School.

His performance landed him a 1<sup>st</sup> place and an opportunity to compete in the 2015 National Finals on April 10-12 in Indianapolis, at the Wyndham Indianapolis West Hotel. Quarterfinal and semifinal contests are scheduled for Saturday, April 11, with

the finals scheduled for Sunday, April 12.

The overall national contest winner gets an \$18,000 scholarship. Second place takes home \$16,000, and third gets \$14,000.

**Austin will be interviewed by AFN radio on Friday, 27 April at 17:00.**

The Post BEO2 next Oratorical Scholarship contest is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, 23 January 2016. We welcome contestants from the 3 American Schools, the 3 international schools and any homed-schooled to compete in this event.

## Boys State / Girls State



Flanders Field Post BEO2 and Auxiliary would like to announce their 2015 candidates for Boys State and Girls State:

**Austin Muraille & Anna Sweet**



## National Commander' to Visit Belgium, 03-05 June

National Command Mike Helm and his party will be visiting Belgium from Wednesday, 03 June to Friday, 05 June.

Michael D. Helm of Norcatur, Kansas, was elected national commander of the 2.4 million member American Legion on Aug. 28, 2014. A U.S. Army veteran during the Vietnam War, he served with the 82nd Airborne Division in Fort Bragg, N.C., and earned his Ranger tab in 1972. He has been a member of Jack Helt American Legion Post 313 at Lebanon, Neb., since 1972

### Tentative Schedule of Events:

**Wednesday:** Visit the Luxembourg American Cemetery & Bastogne

### Thursday:

- 1) Meeting with NATO Representatives
- 2) Lunch with retirees near SHAPE
- 3) AFN interview
- 4) Townhall meeting with USAG Benelux Commander & Soldiers at Chievres
- 5) Dinner : Meeting & Greet at the 3-Star Lounge: Scheduled for 18:00

**Friday:** Visit the Flanders Field American Cemetery





## VETERAN SERVICE ORGANIZATION (VSO)

Accredited American Legion service officers are specially trained to provide expert assistance, free of charge, to veterans and their families. While the majority of a service officer's work involves application for VA disability benefits, these compassionate professionals also provide information, referrals and resources on education, employment and business, death benefits and other important topics.

You served your country, and in the process you were injured. It could be a bad back. It could be loss of limb. Or maybe you're not sure if you're entitled to any government benefits. American Legion service officers file thousands of VA claims each year on behalf of America's veterans. And the Legion's Benefits Calculator can help you prepare to file a claim.

Check out the how the American Legion can help by visiting:

<http://www.legion.org/services>

## ADOPTER APPRECIATION DAY, 22 AUGUST

The Adopt-a-Grave program is now 1 year old. On 09 April 2014, Post BEO2 initiated the program and within 2 months every grave was adopted. We held an adoption ceremony on 16 August 2014 with speeches from the American Ambassador and the Mayor of Waregem. After the speeches, Certificates of Adoption were given to about 300 adopters. The Adopt-a-Grave program has been televised on 3 different Belgian networks, as well as AFN. There have been about 10 newspaper articles written about the program from newspapers from around the USA.

On Saturday, 22 August, the post will be conducting Adopter Appreciation Day event. The event will begin about 11:00 with a small ceremony at the Flanders Field American Cemetery. We are hoping for a representative of the US Embassy and the Mayor of Waregem officer to attend. Following the ceremony, the activities will move to a park in Waregem. We are planning to have a American style BBQ, music, exhibitions and static displays. These exhibitions will be provided by the individual adopters to show what has been learned about the soldier. The Venture Crew 511 will have demonstrations and other activities planned.

For more information regarding the Adopt-a-Grave program, please visit the website at: <http://www.sitemn.gr/adoptagraveflandersfield/HOMECONTACT.php>



## AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY & LEGION RIDERS

The American Legion Riders along with the American Legion Auxiliary will be participating in the Relay for Life this May. Our team is the "Friends of Flanders Fields". If you would like to join our team or donate in support of our team please use the link below! If you would like more information please contact me via private message. Thanks in advanced for any and all help you can provide!

[www.relayforlife.be/teams/friends-flanders-fields](http://www.relayforlife.be/teams/friends-flanders-fields)

Relay For Life is a festive event for all ages that focuses on solidarity and fund-raising for the fight against cancer. During 24 hours, the community players of a city, town or locality mobilise themselves in order to:

- Celebrate and pay tribute to the people who have conquered cancer, and support those who are

still fighting the disease;

- Remember the people who have lost their fight against cancer and to support those who are still fighting the disease;
- Stand united in the fight against cancer.

The 24 hours is a symbolic gesture of the constant battle patients and their families must endure in the fight against the disease. Relay For Life is not a competition! But a gathering of communities united in the fight against cancer



## NOMINATIONS FOR POST OFFICERS

During the next general meeting at USAG Brussels on 25 April, Post BE02 we hold its annual post officer elections. Only those members who are present at the meeting may vote.

Commander	<input type="checkbox"/> Joseph Schram	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
1st Vice Commander	<input type="checkbox"/> Paul Dunn	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
2nd Vice Commander	<input type="checkbox"/> Mike Metelko	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Judge Advocate	<input type="checkbox"/> Jeremy Clark	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Chaplain	<input type="checkbox"/> Gavin Wainwright	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Sgt-at-Arms	<input type="checkbox"/> Jeff Andrews	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Finance Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Post Service Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____



## UNIFORM CAP

To order your American Legion Official Cap, please follow the directions below.

[http://emblem.legion.org/uniform\\_caps/legion.asp](http://emblem.legion.org/uniform_caps/legion.asp)

Step 1: Please select your Department: **France**

Step 2: Please select your style: **State**

Please select your lining: **unlined**

Step 3: Please select your crown: **Regular** or **Fort Knox** (your choice)

Step 4: Please select your cap size: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 5: Left-side lettering: **FRANCE**

Step 6: Please enter your post number: **BE02**

Step 7: Check here if you want to add right-side lettering: **FLANDERS FIELD** (*this is optional and your choice*)

**SUBMIT**

## COMMITTEES

### Americanism Committee

Purpose: To inspire patriotism and good citizenship through patriotic observances, patriotic and civic instruction in schools, Americanization of aliens, information on anti-American propaganda, youth activities such as Boys State, Scouts, Oratorical Contest, School Award Medals, baseball, flag etiquette, and other similar community services, as well as provide a listing of available scholarships.

### Programs & Activities

- **High Oratorical Scholarship Contest**  
Conducted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of January, the post competition has competitors from the 3 High Schools in Belgium & Holland and the 3 international schools in Belgium. The winner advances to the Department of France's contest in February.
- **Boys State / Girls State**  
Application Deadline is 31 March. The committee members will select 1 young man and 1 young lady to participate in the program in Maryland during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in June.

- **AFJROTC Junior Shooting Program**  
The American Legion Shooting Sports Program is a gun safety education and marksmanship program that encompasses the basic elements of safety, education, enjoyment and competition.
- **Venture Crew 511**  
Venturing is a youth development program of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women who are 13 and have completed the eighth grade, or age 14 through 20 years of age.
- **JROTC recognition awards: SHAPE HS and AFNORTH HS**  
The American Legion is a strong supporter of Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) Legion posts are urged to present medals available through American Legion Emblem Sales to the top JROTC in their area
- **Get Out The Vote**  
The Legion's "Get Out the Vote" program encourages all Americans to register and vote in all elections. In addition, Legionnaires, posts, districts and departments are encouraged to fully involve themselves in the electoral process by serving as poll volunteers, poll workers and by encouraging and assisting others to register and vote.

## DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE CONVENTION

18–22 JUNE

The Department of France is conducting its annual convention at the Best Western Hotel in Ludwigshafen, Germany from 18–22 June. All members are welcome join in the event.

### Paid Up For Life

Current members may now enroll in the Paid Up For Life program online or can print a personalized application and mail in their payment. Pay in full or choose 12 monthly instalments.

## LINKS

### American Legion Post BE02 Website:

<https://sites.google.com/site/americanlegionpostbe02/home>

### Flanders Field Post BE02 Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/pages/American-Legion-Flanders-Fields-Post-BE02/152286224925159](http://www.facebook.com/pages/American-Legion-Flanders-Fields-Post-BE02/152286224925159)

### Flickr account: (Pictures of Post BE02 event)

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/130086797@No8/sets/>

### Friends of Flanders Field Relay for Life donation page:

<http://www.relayforlife.be/teams/friends-flanders-fields>

### Adopt-a-Grave program's website:

<http://www.sitemn.gr/adoptagraveflandersfield/HOMECONTACT.php>

## Event Calendar: April 2015

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 National Oratorical Contest	12 National Oratorical Contest
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 VA Benefits Briefing at USAG Brussels	22	23	24	25 General Meeting USAG Brussels 10:00	26
27	28	29	30			



### Important Dates to Remember

Thursday, 04 June: Legion Dinner with the National Commander at the 3-Star Lounge at USAG Brussels, 18:00

Saturday, 22 August: Adopter Appreciation Day at the Flanders Field American Cemetery, 11:00