

DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE

July 2025 - Vol. 23 / Nr. 7



DEPARTMENT OFFICERS 2025 - 2026MY

COMMANDER

Dennis Owens NL01

ADJUTANT

John Fleming CH01

NECMAN

Hans Stockenberger CH01

ALT NECMAN

Lee Preston GR42

VCAL

Jim Brotherton NL01

VICE COMMANDER

Valerie Prehoda BE02

VICE COMMANDER

Ken Keckler GR20

VICE COMMANDER

Kerwin L. Hester GR05

VICE COMMANDER

Todd Johnson GR07

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Brad Bell NL01

FINANCE OFFICER

Larry Atkins CH01

SERVICE OFFICER

Frank Phillips GR1982

JUDGE ADVOCATE

James Settle GR42

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

James Dennis GR30

ADJUTANT EMERITUS

Robert Fuelling FR01

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER



Dennis Owens

Greetings Department of France,



This is my first Newsletter Article of the 2025/2026 Membership Year. I'm writing this beaming with pride knowing that we had one of the BEST Membership Years last year the 2024/2025. We finished #1 of all 55 Departments with 102.57% of our Department Membership Goal of 3000 members, with 77 members over our goal. We missed hitting 103% by just

13 members. The Department of Hawaii coming in at 101.47% and France were the only two Departments to hit 100%. I cannot describe how very proud I am of our Department! Taking into consideration that 148 members transferred into Post Everlasting this past year, then looking at our 2026 Membership Goal of 3020, it looks like we should be able to make that goal as well.

A year ago, when I became your Department Commander, I asked if we conduct business with two simple words in mind, Be Nice. Thank you all so much. Our DEC's and the Convention went so smooth with everyone actually being nice to each other and getting our business complete. Our Post to Department and Department to Post relationships improved greatly with our outstanding Vice Commanders, Jim Brotherton, John Gerdeman, James Settle and Todd Johnson. Our VCAL Quincy Foster grew so much as a Leader, I am touched and so very pleased with his results! We even got a chance to let our hair down on the 10th of May with a Department BBQ that the Department Officers threw for all of you. I am

hoping that one was only the first of many annual Department BBQs in the future.

I do apologize for the technical difficulties getting the AV working and delaying our 4th DEC running until we got it all working smoothly. Many thanks to my friend Mark Kaste from GR05 who stepped into the Assistant Sgt at Arms position like a champ, with no prewarning. I am thankful that he has a great understanding of Microsoft Windows as he was the key to getting our new audio system working. Speaking of the Audio equipment, we really have purchased a great system of microphones and one very clear 1000 Watt speaker. I have been on the

Virtual side of our Department meetings and was extremely upset with

the Low Tech we were using. Many thanks go to Frank Phillips and Jim Dennis as our IT Team in procuring this new equipment!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my great team of Margraten Post NL01 for hosting a

brilliant Department Convention. Our Texans Kyle Bayless and Aaron Vess delighted us with succulent BBQ along with your new Department Chaplain Brad Bell who contributed to the BBQ with his wonderful beans. The Boy Scouts that NL01 gladly sponsors made us so proud by bringing in the colors at the 1st DEC. Then our very own Kenyette Benson-Fowler opened up her pipes, raised her beautiful voice and gave us all goosebumps with her rendition of our Nation's anthem. If you recognized her last name, it is the same as her husband Patrick Fowler who I was so delighted to present him with the Legionnaire of the Year during our convention. Jim Brotherton was a great help as hotel liaison on some minor but very important details to ensuring it all ran well. And not to be left out, I simply asked both Daniel Friedman and John Pope to organize an ABMC Margraten tour and they did not disappoint. We spent 1.5 hours in our Post's namesake Margraten and it was not enough, it never is. I learn something each time I visit those hollowed grounds. Our Boys are really resting in peace in Margraten. Each of the 8103 graves have been adopted by Dutch families since 1946, even the 1722 names on the Wall of the Missing are adopted. The Dutch are so special that the waiting line to become a grave to adopt was 5 years long to wait, they finally closed the waiting line.

Look for more Post excellence from Margraten Post NL01 this year. We were revitalized starting from scratch in 2017 and today, we are the third largest Post in The Department of France and one of the most active Posts in just eight years.

Looking forward to the 25/26 MY, I still hold on to my two word motto, **Be Nice**. Proper communication is the key to success together. Therefore, I am going to continue with the communication strategy that my friend and Past Department Commander Joshua Steinlicht implemented with his Commander's Advisory Council and

his Commanders & Adjutant's bi-monthly meetings alternating each month with the other meeting.

For the Commander's Advisory Council, (CAC) we will meet on every other month, on the first Sunday at 14:00 starting 6 July, then 7 September, 2 November, 4 January, 1 March and 3 May, all on the first Sunday afternoon at 14:00. I am offering this time simply because that is how we have done it for the past three years. If the group wishes to change the day and time, then let's vote on it and move it to where it fits the participants. The participants I would like to see in these meetings are VCAL Brotherton, all four VCs, Adjutant Fleming, Membership Chairman Dennis, and all Past Department Commanders along with any special guest that makes sense to bring in.

On every other month, first Sunday of the month also at 14:00 will be the Post Commander's & Adjutant's Meeting (C&A). These start on the 3rd of August, then 5 October, 7 December, 1 February, 5 April and 7 June. I would really like to see all Post Commanders and Post Adjutants participate along with our VCAL, all four VCs, Membership Chairman, JA and any special guest that makes sense to bring in. The C&A is where Post Commanders and Adjutants can brag about their Posts accomplishments, they can ask questions where other Posts can benefit from hearing the answers. Commanders, please consider inviting your 1st and 2nd Vice Commanders to attend as well. I know they will get a lot of great information out of these meetings and contribute to them as well.

Our Second DEC will be on the 25th of October in the Mayor's Conference Room in our HQ town of St. Avold France. The address of the Hôtel de Ville (City Hall) in Saint-Avold, France is 36 Boulevard de Lorraine, 57500 Saint-Avold.



This is the first time we have arranged this. Just next door to his conference room is our history room for the Department of France. It is well worth taking a long look in there. We will also be improving the hotel we will be staying at. It will be the B&B Hotel at [45 Av. Général Patton, 57500 Saint-Avold, France](#). There is great service and food with nice rooms.

Since there is five months between our 2nd DEC in October and our 3rd DEC in March, our Department does a training opportunity called the Mid-Winter Conference (MWC). In the past five years, it has been a two day virtual training session designed for Post Officers. Unfortunately it was sparsely attended despite the many hours of preparation from a lot of Department Officers. There for I am changing it up to make it a one day in person 8 hour training day with specialized Commander and Adjutant and all other officer positions from several motivated Vice Commanders and training specialists. Look forward to this day. It will be also available online for those too far away to attend in person. But, I have always found I enjoy our company the nights before and after over a beer and a steak with a lot of laughter of brothers and sisters in arms. This is what we need more of... I see it as every officer's responsibility to improve on his or her leadership skills in their position. The MWC is one way to gain knowledge to better your Post. Don't forget on legion.org, there is a section called Training where you will find "Training in a Box" as well as "Training Tuesdays". Great lesson plans in there!!! Take advantage of it!

Very best wishes my friends,
Commander Dennis

American Legion Department of France 97th Convention

Heerlen, The Netherlands 12-15 June 2025



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DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT



John Fleming

Department Adjutant's Corner

Greetings Comrades,

As we start this new Membership Year with some new and old Officers, I would like to thank everyone for all your support. I will be traveling to the States on 26 July for some vacation and to attend the National Convention in Tampa Bay. We will return on 2 September, but have another activity in Paderborn, Germany, from 3-7 September. I will be answering emails; however, there might be some delay.

Consolidated Post Report / Consolidated Squadron Report (CPR/CSR) – We did a better job this year than last. Last year, the Department had 7 out of 31 Posts SUBMITTED. We currently stand at 22 of 30 Posts SUBMITTED. It seems that some of those Post lacks leadership. Our new Vice Commanders will need to stay on top of this with their Posts. The table below lists the status of each Post.

FR01	SUBMITTED	SP292	No Data	GR1982	SUBMITTED
HQ9999	SUBMITTED	BE02	SUBMITTED	CH01	SUBMITTED
DK01	No Data	EG01	SUBMITTED	EG02	SUBMITTED
GC01	SUBMITTED	GR01	SUBMITTED	GR03	SUBMITTED
GR05	SUBMITTED	GR06	No Data	GR07	SUBMITTED
GR09	SUBMITTED	GR14	SUBMITTED	GR20	SUBMITTED
GR30	SUBMITTED	GR42	SUBMITTED	GR45	No Data
GR79	SUBMITTED	IR01	No Data	IR02	No Data
IR03	SUBMITTED	IR63	No Data	IT01	No Data
NL01	SUBMITTED	TH01	SUBMITTED	TH02	SUBMITTED

Certification of Officers: Thank you to the Posts who have recently held elections and sent in the Notification forms. I can add all Post Officers to the Post Officers Roster on myLegion.org. Reminder, after Post elections or a change in Post Officers, it is required to send two forms to the Department Adjutant.

1. Notification of Post/Squadron Commanders & Adjutants: This form must be sent to the Department Adjutant immediately (within 24 hours) after Post elections. The form should be dated the date of the elections/appointment.

2. Post Officer Certification of Service Form: This form has been revised and sent to all Posts. It needs to be forwarded to the Department Adjutant as soon as possible after Post elections (within 15 days). The Effective Date of Election of Appointment is the date of the original election or appointment. For example, if an Officer was elected on 1 May 2023 and reelected on 1 May 2024, the Effective Date block will show 1 May 2023.

These forms are critical to keep the current Post Officer informed of Department news. If I do not have the correct information, your Post may not receive vital information.

Please contact me for any questions or if you need the forms.

Dates to Remember:

6 July 2025, 1400 CET – Commanders Advisory Council

3 August 2025, 1400-1500 CET – Commanders and Adjutants Meeting, via WebEx

7 September 2025, 1400 CET – Commanders Advisory Council

25 October 2025, 1300 CET – 2nd Department Executive Committee Meeting

I am excited to continue as the Department Adjutant again. I promise to be the best that I can be!

Thanks, and best wishes.

John Fleming

DEPARTMENT NECMAN



Hans Stockenberger

NEC Hans Stockenberger Accompanied American Legion National Commander James LaCoursiere on his Visit to Europe

The American Legion National Commander James LaCoursiere, accompanied by his Aide Harry Hansen, National Security Division Deputy Commander Ariel De Jesus and Department of France NEC Hans Stockenberger visited the Department of France area May 26 – June 4, 2025. His trip included stops at V Corps, Camp Kosciuszko Poland, NSA and US Naval Hospital in Naples Italy, several units as well as the Military and Family Readiness Center at Ramstein Air Base, as well as the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Fisher House, and Movement USO/Warrior Center. His trip concluded with a visit to the Ministry of Defense and the German Veterans Office in Berlin Germany. During his visit our

Commander received several operational briefings from Command staffs and met with soldiers, airmen, and sailors as well as veterans and Legionnaires. While in Ramstein, he had the opportunity to visit with American Legion Post GR01 to meet with its leadership and members of their Auxiliary. On Sunday, the Department of France hosted a luncheon at the Schloss Lichtenberg restaurant which was well attended by Department leadership.



DEPARTMENT VCAL



Jim Brotherton

Welcome ladies and gentlemen to the Department of France's new membership year 2025-2026. I believe we were able to end the Convention, filling all the elected Officers positions,

something we have not been able to do the last couple of years.

I would first like to thank the Departments Posts for all their support over the past three years while serving as a Department Vice Commander. It was a responsibility I enjoyed very much, but after three years I felt it was time to vacate that position and give another deserving individual the opportunity to serve our Department.

As the newly elected Vice Commander at Large, I feel privileged to have a great team of individuals supporting me, our Posts and our Department. I would like to welcome the four new Vice Commanders for the 2025-2026

membership season, Kerwin Hester, Todd Johnson, Ken Keckler and Valeria Prehoda. There is a new Post contact list that has been distributed to all Posts identifying who your assigned Vice Commander is. I know they will do an outstanding job in the coming months. I ask all Posts to give their full support and cooperation as we move forward. I also ask the Posts, if there are any problems, to please do not hesitate to reach out so any problems can be rectified quickly.

Again, the Officers of the Department of France for 2025-2026 stand ready to serve and support you.

**DEPARTMENT
VICE COMMANDER**



Valerie Prèhoda

Greetings from your new (again!) DFR Vice Commander Prehoda...proud to rejoin our hardworking DFR comrades, including my 3 fellow Vice Commanders, to serve you, For God and Country. This new year started out well, with an exceptional 4th

DEC/Convention/1st DEC in Heerlen, The Netherlands...NL01 knocked it out of the ballpark...best hotel room I've ever experienced, and best Texas BBQ brisket I've ever devoured, not to mention the excellent meeting venue, conduct of business, and camaraderie enjoyed by all. With that great start, I'm motivated to do right by the excellent posts to which I've been blessed to support - EG01, EG02, IR02, IR03, NL01, TH01 and TH02. Looking forward to a great year with you all!

I was honored to represent my own excellent post, BE02, and to accept, on behalf of our exceptional Commander Schram, several awards that showcased BE02's focus on the patriotic development of our youth. Commander

Schram himself was honored with a letter of recommendation from our TAL National Commander for his prowess in recruiting new members to DFR.

Finally, I am excited to report that I will be representing DFR at the National Membership Workshop in Indianapolis, Aug 7-9. I look forward to learning much and bringing back useful recommendations to put into practice with our membership pool...stand by for a solid report at the 2DEC and a "deep-dive" class at our Mid-Winter Conference.

For God and Country,
Vice Cmdr. Prehoda

Hello Comrades,

My name is Kerwin Hester, and I am excited to introduce myself to all of you. I serve as the commander of Rhein Main Post GR05, where I am proud to be part of our dedicated community. Recently, during our last Department Convention, I was honored to be elected as one of the four Department Vice Commanders. This role gives me the chance to work closely with our team and support our mission to make a positive impact in our community. I truly believe in teamwork and the strength we have when we come together. As a vice commander, my goal is to listen to your ideas and concerns and help us all work toward our common goals. I look forward to meeting each of you and sharing our experiences as we support one another in our efforts. Thank you for this opportunity, and let's make great things happen together!

Kerwin L Hester

**DEPARTMENT
VICE COMMANDER**



Kerwin L. Hester

INDEPENDENCE DAY

ALSO CALLED THE FOURTH OF JULY, INDEPENDENCE DAY MARKS THE HISTORIC DATE IN 1776 WHEN THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WAS APPROVED BY THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS. THE WRITTEN DECLARATION STATED THAT THE AMERICAN COLONIES WERE TIRED OF BEING RULED BY GREAT BRITAIN. THEY WANTED TO BECOME THEIR OWN COUNTRY.



**DEPARTMENT
AMERICAN LEGION
RIDERS DIRECTOR**



Jim Brotherton

Hello Riders, Comrades and Friends.
We just closed the books on the 2024-2025 Membership year and begin our 2025-2026 Membership season.

At the Department level for contributions to the American Legion Riders Legacy Ride, the ALR was able to raise and contribute \$1500.00 to the Veterans and Children's Foundation, VCF. Not a bad amount, but we have done better in the past.

A big thank you goes out to Astrid Kosterman, the Dutch artist, for her donation of a hand painted U.S. mailbox. She took this project on, without being asked, or accepting any compensation for her time and work. She is a true supporter and friend of our American Legion Department.



I would also like to thank Mark Kaste of GR05, for submitting the winning bid for this artwork. His contribution helped add €160 to the ALR contribution to the VCF. Thank you, Mark, and your wife Heidi for your generosity.



Again, I would like to ask our Posts to think of ways to raise funds that can be donated to the Veterans and Children's Foundation. This program supports Active Duty, as well as Veterans, and don't forget Children.

Again, thank you for all that contributed. Let's make it our goal to break this year's contribution amount next year. For you Riders out there, ride safe, watch out for the other guy. I look forward to working with you this coming year.

REMINDER...ALL NEWSLETTER ARTICLES SHOULD BE TURNED IN BY THE 28TH OF THE MONTH. I WOULD PREFER IF YOU SENT IT IN WORD FORMAT, PDF WOULD ALSO DO. GET THE WORD OUT!

Davidg1959@t-online.de

**DEPARTMENT
NEWSLETTER
EDITOR**



David N. Greaux



On July 27, 1953, military commanders from the United States (representing the United Nations Command), the Korean People's Army, and Chinese People's Volunteer Army signed the Korean Armistice Agreement, ending roughly three years of fighting of the 1950-1953 Korean War.

DEPARTMENT
SERVICE OFFICER



Frank Phillips

The American Legion Department of France Department Service Office

What we do

The Mission of the Department Service Office is to provide benefits information, assistance and advocacy to all who have served and their families. Many Veterans are unsure of their entitlement to VA benefits so we ask that anyone who identifies as having served to contact our office to be directed to an appropriate resource.

The Department Service Office provides services and help with the following benefits:

VA Services:

- Comprehensive VA benefits counseling
- BDD Transition VA Claims
- Assistance with Foreign Medical Program care enrollment
- VA Claims preparation, submission and follow-up on VA decisions
- Initiate and develop appeals on unfavorable VA decisions when appropriate to include representation at VA Hearings
- Survivors Death Benefits

**** We will not advise on Social Security or DoD matters. ONLY VA ISSUES!**

What do Department Service Officers do?

A DSO will ensure that Veterans and their families receive all federal VA benefits available to them. DSO's do this by providing effective and dedicated representation to veterans and their families, free of charge. *You will never receive a bill from us!*

DSO's are trained and accredited by the American Legion to represent veterans in their claims for VA benefits. DSO's are versed in applicable federal laws to provide the best representation possible.

The Department Service Office should be the first stop for all recently discharged service members and anyone who has served in any of our armed forces branches to receive a complete VA benefit explanation.

Department Service Office Staff

Office Visits by Appointment only:

Please call **Wednesday OR Friday**,
between 1300 and 1600 hours:
+49 964170587 1837 for an
appointment before visiting the office.

You can also send an e mail to:
VSO@fphillips.de

Location Main Office

USAG Ansbach, Katterbach Kaserne
Building 5818, Room 318
91522 Katterbach-Ansbach, Germany
Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/6XJQnGnTDu42>



To check the status of a Claim:

Download and Install the
VA.GOV app.
(android and IOS)

DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE



James Dennis

I want to thank the Department and Detachment Commander for allowing me to once again be your Membership Chairman. I have appointed a Committee that will be working with me this year. Their names will be ratified at the 2nd DEC. We have a few back issues and new issues, we are going to attempt to clear up this year. The first issue was the Membership Goals for 2026 MY (See below). We will keep the membership informed about our issues and progress throughout the year.

Membership:

Department membership goals for the 2026 year will be as follows.

Detachment membership goals for the 2026 year will be as follows.

Squadron Name	Location	GOAL
FR-0001 Paris	Paris, France	12
FR-9999 Sal Holding Sqdn	Kitzingen, Germany	0
FR-BE02 Flanders Field	West Flanders, Belgium	13
FR-CH01 Generals Ward & Chennault	Shanghai, China	35
FR-GR01 Kaiserslautern	Kaiserslautern, Germany	18
FR-GR05 Rhein-Main	Frankfurt, Germany	4
FR-GR06 Stuttgart	Stuttgart Germany	4
FR-GR07 Wiesbaden	Wiesbaden, Germany	16
FR-GR14 Thomas W Barnett	Buedingen Germany	2
FR-GR42 Omar Bradley	Oberwerrn Germany	31
FR-GR79 John Wayne	Heilbronn Germany	24
FR-NL01 Margraten	Brunssum, Netherlands	16
SUM:		175

Post	Name	Location	2026
FR-9999	France Headquarters	France, Germany	60
FR-0001	Paris	Paris, France	186
FR-0292	Isabel La Catolica	Madrid, Spain	15
FR-1982	David Chavez	Ansbach, Germany	154
FR-BE02	Flanders Field	West Flanders, Belgium	85
FR-CH01	Generals Ward & Chennault	Shanghai, China	1051
FR-EG01	London	London, England	34
FR-EG02	Liberty	Lakenheath, England	63
FR-GC01	Athens	Athens, Greece	18
FR-GR01	Kaiserslautern	Kaiserslautern, Germany	138
FR-GR03	Rhein-Neckar	Heidelberg Germany	39
FR-GR05	Rhein-Main	Frankfurt, Germany	72
FR-GR06	Stuttgart	Stuttgart, Germany	227
FR-GR07	Wiesbaden	Wiesbaden, Germany	89
FR-GR09	Sergeant William D Nelson	Neu-Ulm, Germany	53
FR-GR14	Thomas W Barnett	Buedingen Germany	31
FR-GR20	Eifel	Bitburg Germany	97
FR-GR30	Audie Murphy	Wurzburg Germany	20
FR-GR42	Omar Bradley	Oberwerrn Germany	25
FR-GR45	General George S Patton	Vilseck Germany	8
FR-GR79	John Wayne	Heilbronn Germany	57
FR-IR01	The Pride Of Erin	Dublin, Ireland	27
FR-IR02	Fr Francis P Duffy	County Kerry, Killarney, Ireland	23
FR-IR03	Commodore John Barry	Claremorris, County Mayo, Ireland	14
FR-IR63	John F Kennedy	Dublin, Ireland	7
FR-IT01	Rota	Rota, Italy	8
FR-NL01	Margraten	Brunssum, Netherlands	211
FR-TH01	Brig Gen Robin Olds Thailand	Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand	73
FR-TH02	Sgt. Thomas Oliver Ahlberg Memorial, Inc.	Pattaya, Thailand	135
SUM:			3020

Sergeant at Arms:

Well, you voted me in again as Sergeant at Arms. I will do my best to live up to the job. With everyone's help, our meeting should go without a hitch. I plan on having a class on "What a Sergeant at Arms should do to prepare and control meetings." YES! The Sergeant at Arms job is to control the meeting. The Commander runs it and we control it. I will let everyone know when I can get a date and time for this class. Thank you for allowing me to be your Sergeant at Arms again.

I.T.

We are going through alot of changes in this area. Be very patient with us. New equipment and possible new internet provider. I would like to thank Frank Phillips for his dedication and to all of you for your support through the tough meetings. Looking forward to the next meeting. 🙏🙏🙏

I would like to thank the Newsletter editor for his dedication to keep us informed on everything in this Department And Detachment. Plus a thanks to all our Officers from both

organizations, for their support and leadership that makes this a great Department and Detachment. Let us also not forget, we have a great Auxiliary and Legion Riders. They need our support as much as the Legion or SAL. We need to promote these two organizations in this Department more often.

The First Membership Standing will go out on the week of 1 July 2025.

James Dennis
Membership Chairman
Department of France

China Post 1 Member Jean Clark Participates in Historic Parachute Jump on the 81st Anniversary of the D-Day Invasion

SAINTE-MARTIN-DE-VARREVILLE, FRANCE — Leaders of the Night: Round Canopy Teams Recreates Historic Pathfinder Jump in Normandy. On June 5, 2025, just hours before the 81st anniversary of the D-Day invasion, a group of American veterans and international parachutists leapt into the skies over Normandy in tribute to the unsung heroes who paved the way for freedom in Europe: the volunteer Pathfinders of the 101st Airborne Division.

The commemorative static line parachute jump was held near Sainte-Martin-de-Varreville — one of the key drop zones used during Operation Overlord. It was here, on the night of June 5, 1944, that elite Pathfinder teams jumped ahead of the main airborne assault to mark landing zones for thousands of Allied paratroopers.

A Mission Revisited

The original Pathfinder jump occurred at 2215 hours on June 5, 1944 — hours before the main airborne assault. These elite volunteers navigated flak, poor visibility, and enemy patrols to mark landing zones with visual signals and Eureka beacons, enabling thousands of follow-on paratroopers to land with precision inland from Utah Beach.

To honor their sacrifice and daring mission, Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Allen West and Major (Ret.) Jean Clark completed a static line jump using MC1-1C round canopy parachutes, a modern version of the WWII-era equipment. The jump was executed from a combat veteran C-47 Skytrain, similar to the aircraft used in the original D-Day drops.

The event was organized by the Round Canopy Parachute Team USA & Europe (RCPTUSA.org & RCPT.eu), a nonprofit international organization dedicated to preserving

the airborne legacy of WWII. Veteran Jumpmasters Bill Markham and Frank Cashman supervised the operation and oversaw all safety measures.

"The courage of the Pathfinders laid the groundwork for the liberation of Europe," said LTC (Ret.) Allen West. "It's our duty to carry that legacy forward — not just in ceremony, but in principle."

"Jumping onto this soil, under a round canopy, wearing the same gear as those men — it's more than a tribute," said Maj. (Ret.) Jean Clark. "It's a living act of remembrance." Adding to the emotional weight of the event, a 97-year-old World War II veteran performed a tandem parachute jump with Jumpmaster Bill Markham — symbolizing a living connection between past and present generations of airborne warriors.

"For LTC West and MAJ Clark, this is a long-term goal and a heartfelt mission accomplished." — Round Canopy Parachute Team

While no formal wreath-laying ceremony took place, the reenactment served as a vivid living memorial to the precision, courage, and sacrifice of the 101st Airborne Pathfinders — the first Americans to set foot behind enemy lines in Nazi-occupied France.

The jumpers' descent through Normandy skies carried not just men and parachutes — but legacy, reverence, and a solemn promise: We remember.

About the Author

Major (Ret.) Jean Clark is a U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force veteran and an active member of the American Legion China Post 1, Department of France, as well as the Round Canopy Parachute Team USA.

Clark began his military career as an enlisted paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division, serving with C

Company, 2/325 Airborne Infantry Regiment and B Battery, 1/320 Field Artillery. He later commissioned as an Air Defense Artillery officer before transitioning to the Military Police Corps. After leaving the Army, he received a direct commission into the U.S. Air Force, where he served as a Security Forces Operations Officer.



Pathfinders of the 3rd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, prepare to board a C-47 for the Normandy jump, June 5, 1944.



Paratroopers from the 101st Airborne Division paint their faces and ready their gear in the hours before the jump.



Symbol of unity: war paint and war readiness among 101st troopers.



Ready for war: a Pathfinder moments before boarding the C-47.



“Brothers in Arms” LTC (Ret.) Allen West and MAJ (Ret.) Jean Clark stand in front of a historic stone farmhouse in Normandy, wearing WWII-style airborne uniforms after their commemorative jump.



“Getting Rigged Up into Parachute Harnesses at the Airport” Paratroopers prepare for the jump by getting rigged into their MC1-1C parachute harnesses at the airport — a crucial moment of focus and teamwork before boarding the aircraft.



“Forming Up at the Assembly Area” Paratroopers, clad in WWII-style uniforms, form up outside a stone farmhouse in

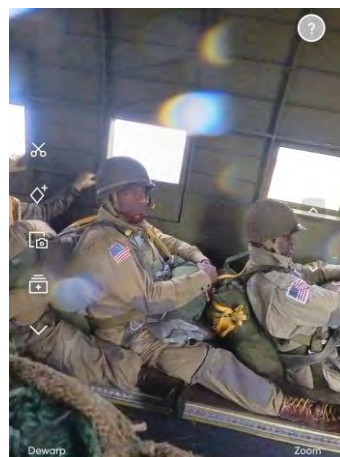
Normandy. This gathering echoes the moments of readiness experienced by the original Pathfinders before their historic jump.



“Legacy in Flesh and Spirit” LTC West shares a heartfelt moment with a 97-year-old WWII veteran and another airborne brother, symbolizing a living bridge between generations.



“Loading the C-47” Paratroopers ascend the steps of a vintage C-47 Skytrain, evoking the hauntingly familiar sight of D-Day’s airborne assault.



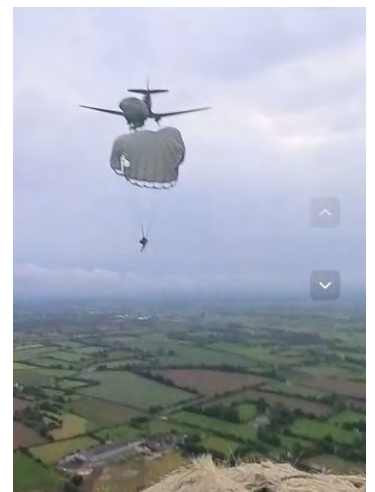
“Focused and Ready” Inside the C-47, LTC West and his fellow paratroopers await the green light, seated just as their forebears were 81 years ago.



“At the Door” Under red interior lighting, a paratrooper prepares to leap into the Normandy skies — the very moment of airborne history recreated.



“Over Normandy” A breathtaking perspective from under canopy as a jumper floats above the patchwork fields of Normandy, boots and legacy dangling in the wind.



“Descending Together” A round canopy parachute deploys behind a silhouette of the jump aircraft, showcasing the iconic image of airborne descent over France.



GR79 meeting for our 4th of July Fest 2025



GR 79 POST HEILBRONN

THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY






Am Samstag 05.07.2025 um 14.00 Unabhängigkeit Fest
Saturday July 5 2025 (Independence Day) 14.00

Gartenfreunde Klingenberg
Im Bruch
74081 Heilbronn -Klingenberg



Early Ticket 20 Euro if purchased by June 21- 2025 At the Door 25 Euro
Kids Age 1 to 10 Free

POC 2 Vice Commander Bernard Thomas H- 0179-5375066
POC Past Commander Charlie Brown H-0170-1888034



DAVID CHAVEZ POST GR1982

ANSBACH, GERMANY

ANSBACH COMMUNITY HONORS VIETNAM VETERANS IN HEARTFELT COMMEMORATION

Ansbach, Germany – March 22, 2025 — More than 250 community members gathered at USAG Ansbach to pay tribute to Vietnam Veterans in a deeply moving event hosted by American Legion Post 1982 and coordinated by the Vietnam War Commemorative Committee. This momentous occasion marked the culmination of the nationwide 10-year Vietnam War commemoration.

The ceremony featured powerful contributions from veterans, military families, local youth, and service organizations, exemplifying a true community effort. Emceed by Post Service Officer Michael Sherman, the program opened with a welcome address delivered by COL Aaron Southard, setting the tone for a day rich in honor and remembrance.

Highlights included stirring vocal performances by military spouse Nikki Alexis Rudman—who was joined by her daughter Nalani—and a poignant interpretation of the Missing Man Table by Post Chaplain Herb Hall. Vietnam Veteran Kenneth Aungst shared a personal POW/MIA story, leading into a solemn playing of Taps by Post Member Norbert Isaak.

The program was further enriched with music from Shelley Bjork Rank, Deborah Arbon Schmidt, and Scotty Riggins, as well as a vibrant performance by the U.S. Army Europe and Africa Soldiers' Chorus. Two local Vietnam Veterans, John Miller and Robert Quillen, were honored with Quilts of Valor presented by cadets from the 9th JROTC Battalion.

A touching symbolic gesture came as a Legion member recited "In Flanders Fields", passing the torch to a new generation of Veterans. Another Quilt of Valor was presented to War on Terror Veteran and Post Adjutant Mark Turner by members of the Scout Troop he leads.

Among the most powerful moments of the day was a reflection from one of the honored veterans, who shared:

"The last commemoration of the Vietnam War was for me a closure of the greatest chapter of my life... a last thank you for your service to a great generation that was called and sent to a war they were not equipped or trained for. Over 58,000 mostly very young men never had the chance to become husbands, fathers, or grandfathers as I have."

He continued by sharing how his three tours taught him the importance of service—"to be a giver of help to others," and to prepare the younger generation for the true cost of war. Though the event marked the end of a decade-long national tribute, he emphasized, "It is not my last event in helping our service members and their families in continuing the mission of honoring those who have gone before us."

Musical and drill performances by the 9th JROTC Battalion, Ansbach Elementary Choir, and the United States Army Europe and Africa Soldiers' Chorus added to the vibrant celebration. Army spouse Volka Choi performed "The Small River" in her

native language, representing generations of military families from across the globe.

The event closed on a heartfelt note with musical tributes by SGT Tony Rivera and a reflective message from co-chair Kenneth Aungst.

In addition to numerous Post 1982 volunteers, support for the event was provided by the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, Muna Museum, Service Credit Union, Ansbach USO, the Daughters of the American Revolution Palatinate Chapter, local commissary staff, VFW members, and numerous volunteers and donors.

Contact: American Legion Post 1982, Madonna Roberts, Finance Officer at libreeder1958@gmail.com



USAREUR-AF Soldiers' Chorus member Sings a Tune from the War Era to Vietnam Veteran. L to R: Chorus Member and John Miller, Member, Post 1982



Vietnam Veteran Poses in Front of Vietnam War Commemoration Flag, L to R: Vietnam Veteran and Madonna Roberts. Co-Chair of Post 1982's Vietnam War Commemoration Committee and Post 1982 Finance Officer



War on Terror Veteran Mark Turner receives a Quilt of Valor from Girl Scouts. L to R: Three Scouts; Post 1982 Service Officer Michael Sherman (in background); Girl Scouts Sadie Craig and Chloe Payne; Post 1982 Adjutant Mark Turner; USAREUR-AF Soldiers' Chorus members



USAREUR-AF Soldiers' Chorus member Sings a Tune from the Vietnam War Era to a Vietnam Veteran.



9th JROTC Commander Requests Permission to Perform from Post 1982 Commander. L to R: Christopher Buchanan, Post 1982 Commander and Cadet/Captain Jazlyn Symak



The Missing Man Table Reading. L to R: Herbert Hall, Post 1982 Chaplain and Kenneth Aungst, Post 1982 1st Vice Commander and Co-Chair of Post 1982's Vietnam War Commemoration Committee



Shelly and Debby Perform Music from the Vietnam War Era. L to R: Deborah Arbon Schmidt, daughter of a Vietnam Veteran, and Shelley Bjork Rank, Post 1982 member



*Veteran Kenneth Aungst Shares a
Personal Story from a Tour in Vietnam.
Kenneth Aungst, Post 1982 1st Vice
Commander and Co-Chair of Post 1982's
Vietnam War Commemoration Committee*



**DETACHMENT
COMMANDER**



John Fleming



DETACHMENT OF FRANCE

**DETACHMENT
ADJUTANT**



James Dennis

Detachment Commander

Hello Comrades,

I want to thank everyone who attended the annual Convention on 7 June and look forward to another momentous year serving as your Commander. It is my honor to continue to serve the Detachment. I would like to thank all of the outgoing officers. Your service to the Detachment helped ensure the continued operations of the Detachment of France. I also want to congratulate all of the newly elected and appointed officers. I look forward to working with everyone during the next year.

Your Detachment Officers for the 2025-2026 Membership Year are:

Commander	John Fleming, GR01
NECMan	Lee Preston, GR42 (Elect)
ALT NECMan	Maxwell Rice, GR79 (Elect)
Adjutant	James Dennis, GR42
1 st Vice Commander	David Greaux, GR42
2 nd Vice Commander	Robert Gray, GR01
Chaplain	James Fleming, GR01
Historian	Stephan Somers, GR79
Sergeant-at-Arms	Joe Brown, GR79
Finance Officer	Larry Atkins, CH01

Membership: We missed the 100% membership by 19 members.

I am asking all Squadrons and Posts to look at your membership rosters and contact every member who is marked as Expired. We should be able to find 19 Members who are just waiting for someone to ask them to renew. We can do this.

Also, let us get started now on our 2026 Goal! Get your members to renew early. Talk to your Post members to see if they are eligible. If your Post does not have a Squadron, contact the closest Squadron or the Squadron of your choice and sign up. Talk to family members and sign them up. I plan to do that during my travels to the States this summer. The Department has over 3000 Members. The Detachment should have at least that many.

Consolidated Squadron Report (CSR): We need to wrap these up this month. It is available on myLegion.org, so every time you have an event, you can start filling it in. The final date to submit is 1 July 2025. The table below shows our statistics.

FR01	SUBMITTED	BE02	No Data	CH01	No Data
GR01	SUBMITTED	GR05	No Data	GR06	No Data

GR07	SUBMITTED	GR14	No Data	GR42	SUBMITTED
GR79	No Data	NL01	SUBMITTED	HQ9999	SUBMITTED

I started my Squadrons CSR last year when it became available on myLegion.org.

The minimum you need to complete on the CSR to receive credit is the Paid-to-Date Membership Count, Current Year and Paid-Up Final Membership Count, Prior Year, and the contact information at the bottom of the form.

- Upcoming Events:
- 18 October 2025 – 2nd DEC, Wiesbaden, hosted by GR07.
 - 7 March 2026 – 3rd DEC, TBA
 - 6 June 2026 – 4th DEC/Conference/1st DEC, TBA

John Fleming - Detachment Commander

Here are the 2026 membership goals for the Squadrons. Number 1 is the 2025 end membership and Number 2 is the goals.

Detachment Of France 2025 Membership as of 6/27/25 Including Encumbered HQ Transfers			
2			
Squadron	Name	Location	GOAL
FR-0001	Paris	Paris, France	12
FR-9999	Sal Holding Sqdn	Kitzingen, Germany	0
FR-BE02	Flanders Field	West Flanders, Belgium	13
FR-CH01	Generals Ward & Chennault	Shanghai, China	35
FR-GR01	Kaiserslautern	Kaiserslautern, German	18
FR-GR05	Rhein-Main	Frankfurt, Germany	4
FR-GR06	Stuttgart	Stuttgart Germany	4
FR-GR07	Wiesbaden	Wiesbaden, Germany	16
FR-GR14	Thomas W Barnett	Büdingen Germany	2
FR-GR42	Omar Bradley	Obernern Germany	31
FR-GR79	John Wayne	Heilbronn Germany	24
FR-NL01	Margraten	Brunssum, Netherlands	16
SUM:			175

Detachment Of France 2025 Membership as of 6/27/25 Including Encumbered HQ Transfers									
1									
Squadron	Name	Location	New	PUFL	Renewal	HQ Tran	Totals	Goal	% of Goal
FR-0001	Paris	Paris, France	4	0	5	0	9	16	56,25
FR-9999	Sal Holding Sqdn	Kitzingen, Germany	0	0	0	0	0	0	#DIV/0
FR-BE02	Flanders Field	West Flanders, Belgium	3	0	9	0	12	17	70,59
FR-CH01	Generals Ward & Chennault	Shanghai, China	2	0	30	0	32	37	86,49
FR-GR01	Kaiserslautern	Kaiserslautern, Germany	6	0	11	0	17	12	141,67
FR-GR05	Rhein Main	Frankfurt, Germany	0	0	3	0	3	4	75,00
FR-GR06	Stuttgart	Stuttgart Germany	0	0	1	0	1	4	25,00
FR-GR07	Wiesbaden	Wiesbaden, Germany	8	0	8	0	16	13	123,08
FR-GR14	Thomas W Barnett	Büdingen Germany	0	0	2	0	2	2	100,00
FR-GR42	Omar Bradley	Obernern Germany	1	0	29	0	30	36	83,33
FR-GR79	John Wayne	Heilbronn Germany	2	0	21	0	23	23	100,00
FR-NL01	Margraten	Brunssum, Netherlands	1	0	14	0	15	15	100,00
SUM:			27	0	133	0	160	179	89,3856
Detachment of France Totals									
			New	PUFL	Renewal	HQ Transfers	Goal		% of Goal
Sum:			27	0	133	0	160	179	89,3856



SAL DEC held on 7 June 2025 at the GR01 Post Home

PCC President



Jim Brotherton

Department of France

Past Commanders Club 2026MY

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

PCC Secretary



Richard Simmons

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 the 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



GRAND CHEF DE GARE



DAVID GARCIA



GRAND CORRESPONDANT



DAVID GREAUX

LA SOCIÉTÉ DES QUARANTE HOMMES ET HUIT CHEVAUX (THE SOCIETY OF FORTY MEN AND EIGHT HORSES) IS AN INDEPENDENT, BY INVITATION, HONOR SOCIETY OF AMERICAN VETERANS, MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS "THE FORTY & EIGHT".

THE FORTY & EIGHT IS COMMITTED TO CHARITABLE AND PATRIOTIC AIMS. OUR PURPOSE IS TO UPHOLD AND DEFEND THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES, TO PROMOTE THE WELL-BEING OF VETERANS, THEIR WIDOWS, WIDOWERS, AND ORPHANS, AND TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN SELECTED CHARITABLE ENDEAVORS, WHICH INCLUDE AMONG OTHERS, PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE CHILD WELFARE AND NURSES TRAINING.

MEMBERSHIP IS BY INVITATION, AND OPEN ONLY TO HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERANS AND HONORABLY SERVING MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED

<http://www.fortyandeight.org/>

DATE TO REMEMBER: Saturday 19 July 2025 / Grand Wreck – Kaiserslautern, Germany

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