

DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE



DEPARTMENT OFFICERS 2026 - 2027MY

NECMAN <i>Hans Stockenberger CH01</i>	ALT NECMAN <i>Lee Preston GR42</i>	COMMANDER <i>John Fleming CH01</i>	VCAL <i>Jim Brotherton NL01</i>	VICE COMMANDER <i>Valerie Prehoda BE02</i>
VICE COMMANDER <i>Quincy Foster GR05</i>	VICE COMMANDER <i>Kerwin L. Hester GR05</i>	VICE COMMANDER <i>Mark Kaste GR05</i>	HISTORIAN <i>David Greaux GR42</i>	CHAPLAIN <i>Bob Davis NL01</i>
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS <i>Larry Helmick GR1982</i>	ADJUTANT <i>James Dennis GR30</i>	JUDGE ADVOCATE <i>James Settle GR42</i>	FINANCE OFFICER <i>Larry Atkins CH01</i>	SERVICE OFFICER <i>Frank Phillips GR1982</i>

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER



John Fleming

Hello, Department of France!

I hope everyone had a fantastic and safe 4th of July weekend.

We held our first Commander's Advisory Council meeting on 13 July and had some good discussions about upcoming events. One of those items discussed was the need for a Department GDPR Coordinator. If anyone would like to volunteer, please contact me. We will continue the CAC meeting in September, November, January, March, and May.

The first Commanders and Adjutants meeting will be 2 August, at 1400 CET. Adjutant Dennis has already sent the invitation to all attendees. Please plan to attend if possible; I would really like to talk to everyone. We will continue

the Commanders and Adjutants meetings in October, December, February, and April.

We attended the Kaiserslautern Post GR01 Picnic on 25 July, and a wonderful time and fabulous food were enjoyed by all. I was able to present Carlos Gonzalez his Past Department Historian Pin during the gathering. Thanks for the invite, GR01.

Again, I would like to visit as many Posts as possible during the next year, so if you have an event, please let me know as far in advance as possible so that I may try to attend. As it stands now, we will be traveling in the States from 17 August, returning on 7 September, when we will be attending the National Conventions. We will be in Zeulenroda-Triebes, Thüringen from 9-13 September. We plan to fly back to the States on 14 September to attend part of the China Post 1 Annual Reunion in Fairborn, Ohio, the 40 & 8 Promenade Nationale, in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and the National Fall Meetings in Indianapolis, returning to Germany on 10 October.

I am going to continue to bang on a few items that we need to keep in front of the Department Membership:

We need to keep working on plans for our future events, including our 2nd DEC, 24 October 2026, our Mid-Winter Conference in January 2027, our 3rd DEC, 20 March 2027, and our High School Oratorical Scholarship Program in March. We also need to keep our Department Awards Manual in front of us so that we ensure that individuals and Posts receive the awards that they deserve. Part of that means that we need to keep track of the different Goals that need to be met. You can continue to use the 2025-2026 Manual, as there will not be significant changes in the 2026-2027 version.

We can start on our membership renewals as the online renewal portal is accepting renewals for the 2027 Membership Year. We should also encourage Legion members and family members to join the Sons of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary if they are eligible.

And, back to that subject that no one likes – GDPR/PDPA. General Data

Protection Regulation/Personal Data Protection Act:

Most everyone has completed the Member Voluntary Consent Form: GDPR & PDPA. Adjutant Dennis has sent the form to everyone who needed to complete the form. I want to thank everyone for your cooperation in this. If you have not completed the form or are not sure if we received it, please

contact Adjutant Dennis for verification.

We had a little snafu last month with email addresses as we were trying to get everyone set up in their new positions. An email address was published that did not work out. The correct email addresses for the Department Commander and Adjutant are:

CDR.Commander@outlook.com
DFR.Adjutant@gmail.com

Thank you for your understanding.

Very Best Wishes,

John Fleming
Department Commander



Good day fellow Legionaries.

We have now started our new membership year, 2026-2027. Every Post should have received the new membership cards. If you have not, please reach out to your assigned Department Vice Commander and me, so I can track down where your cards are. Wishing everyone a successful new membership year. Please make every effort to work on membership

renewals. Wouldn't it be crazy if we could make 100% across the board? The next topic I wish to address is the Department Mid Winter Conference. Even though it is still a ways off, at the end January 2027, experience dictates to get as early a jump on this as possible. What I need from all the Posts is a list of what topics your members would like to see covered or explained. I feel the MWC should cover not only what the Department feels should be covered but also what a Post feels is necessary to be discussed or explained. So please poll your Post membership and forward those topics to me so I can start building an agenda. I'll share more information as we move forward but I need your help. I would like to have these inputs before the 2nd DEC so I can start identifying the best speakers/presenters to make this a successful MWC for everyone.

To wrap this up, I encourage each Post to share in our Newsletter the various

events and ceremonies you may perform or participate in. It provides the Department a look at what your Post is doing, but more importantly it provides ideas and inspiration for other Posts, that they may step up and plan more activities.

If your Post needs help or information, please work it up the chain of command. Get your assigned Department Vice Commander involved. Extend invitations for them to attend in person or online meetings, if that is an option. If you don't know who your Vice Commander is, definitely get with me and we'll get that problem solved.

I wish everyone a great Legion day and remember our Veterans.

Jim Brotherton
Vice Commander at Large

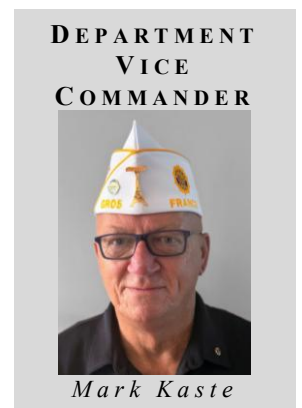
I hope that everyone had a great 4th of July, in helping celebrate the United States of America's 250th birthday on July 4, 2026, marking the semi quincentennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

I would like to take this time to thank all my Posts that are continuing to work on achieving their 100 % for the 2027 membership year. I believe that I already have a Post or 2, that has surpassed their goals.



I am helping Vice Commander Valerie Prehoda who is the organizer for a POW/MIA monument in Monchy-Cayeux France, honoring the heroic death of Lt George Frankie Wilson, WWII B-17 pilot, on 8 July 1944. His remains were recovered in a farmer's field and he was buried next to his mother in Utah, on July 8, 2025, 80 years after he saved his crew and the inhabitants of the little french town of Monchy-Cayeux, by allowing his crew to eject safely (albeit captured by German soldiers) before he crashed into a field just before the first row of houses. The ceremony will be taken place on the 19th of September 2026.

There is still time to donate for the cause at - https://www.gofundme.com/f/donate-in-the-memory-of-lt-wilson-wwii-mia-b17-pilot?attribution_id=sl:7078cf54-838b-4b96-a4c7-





I would like to take this opportunity to say Farewell to our beloved Post GR05 Adjutant Bruce Lewis. He transferred to Post Everlasting on the 1st of July 2026. His warmth, generosity, and tireless dedication to helping others will forever remain in our hearts.

Mark Kaste
Vice Commander
Department of France

**DEPARTMENT
VICE
COMMANDER**



Kerwin Hester

Brothers, sisters, comrades, let me take this time to mention 2 posts. First, post GR79 with Commander Brown and Adjutant Rice and their members. Their 4th of July celebration was

spectacular. Thank you for the invite. Second, post GR03, your summer party was fantastic. Kudos to Commander Gerdeman and Adjutant Sherman and their members. I have to say being a department vice commander is one of the most intriguing and informative things since joining the Legion. I get to see the other side of the coin. Sitting with other post members and listening to their concerns and thoughts is enlightening. I am here to help you. As a vice commander, I may not know the answer to your question, but I will make it my mission to find the correct answer. I am here to assist, not to

assign blame. Blue cap, white cap, or red cap—we are all the same, and that's why veterans help veterans. If I may, I would like to discuss a topic that is essential to me: voting. Midterm elections are 101 days away. It doesn't matter who your party is. What is important is that you vote. Let your voice be heard. Remember FVAP.gov. Please request your absentee ballot now to ensure timely processing. There are easy-to-follow instructions. For God and Country.

Kerwin Hester

Greetings Comrades,

My deepest Condolence go out to all of you who may have Family or Friends that has gone on to our home Everlasting. GR05, my post, lost a member's sister, a member's father-in-Law and our Post Adjutant Bruce Lewis. I'd like to thank the members of GR03, GR05, GR07, also VFW their support by attending funeral.

This brings me to the point ask of you to review the Survivor Benefits. I am attaching a Retire and Survivor Book that the Retire Club sent. The book

covers Finance, Personal Assets, Online Accounts, Medical Information, Eligibility and Survivor Benefits. This book will give your spouse every they may need to assist in case of your death.

I'd like to thank GR03's Post for inviting myself and my wife to attend their summer time Post Party. We had a great time fellowshiping with their families.

I wish you all a safe and joyful summer! Be sure to drink plenty of water due to the heat.

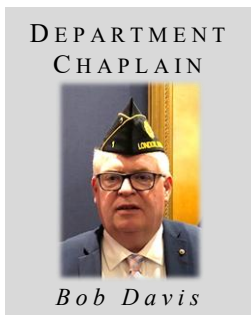
**DEPARTMENT
VICE
COMMANDER**



Quincy Foster

God Bless you and your family!

Quincy Foster



Dear Comrades

I hope this finds you and your families safe and well.

I am a proud US Air Force veteran and your new Chaplain for the Department of France, and it is my delight to serve you and our broad communities. I have been the Chaplain for London Post EG01 for a number of years, and I have learned a few things:

1. The power of love and prayer are powerful things. Just think about how good it feels when you make or receive

that buddy check for yourself or a family member!

2. As veterans, we are a part of something more powerful than ourselves - being active in the Legion is vital, we make a difference, for ourselves and our communities!

3. Never stop saying thank you to your family, they too serve our believed nation and that contribution is beyond words! Embrace it!

In my role as Chaplain, I have been privileged to be the one who a family turns to when one of our Comrades passes. No one is ever prepared for death, but it is something we need to talk about, especially with loved ones! Does your family know your wishes after you pass? Have you made sure your technology can be handed over? Do you have a will that is current? Does someone know where your insurance policies and vital paperwork, like your DD-214 is - it will be needed fast! I have written a guide / checklist

for a family to use when a veteran passes and will look to getting it published on the Department site - believe me, this checklist works, and sadly, has been tried and tested!

I would encourage every Post to have at least one burial flag available. When an overseas veteran passes, Casualty Assistance at the US Embassy is supposed to provide a US burial flag to the family! Sadly, that flag never arrives in time for a funeral! Even better, go to Emblem Sales of the American Legion and order your own US burial flag, provided you want one!

I look forward to being your Chaplain over the next year!

At your service

Bob Davis
Chaplain
London Post EG01

MARGRATEN POST NL01

MARGRATEN, THE NETHERLANDS

The ALR Post NL01 along with help from the Auxiliary GR05 paid homage to 8 American Airmen laid to rest in Opijnen Netherlands. On July 30 1943, a B17 was shot down over this village, of the 10 man crew, 8 died and two were captured. The townspeople, under the direction of the occupying German forces, collected the 8 Airmen and buried them in the village cemetery. Here they have remained, cared for by the village population. Every year since the liberation of the Netherlands they hold a remembrance ceremony to honor these men.

I wish to thank the American Legion National Flower Trust Fund for their donations. I would also like to thank American Legion member and ALR member John Pope for his continuous help and support for this event. Last but not least, Laura Brotherton, American

Legion Auxiliary member GR05 for her help and contributions.

Jim Brotherton
Vice Commander at Large



July 25, 2026: A picnic is a fantastic way to relax outdoors or indoors during the summer months. Post GR01 hosted their annual BBQ Picnic on 25 July at the Post Home. The picnic was a great way to relax and communicate on a personal level. Members brought shared meal contributions and good conversations. The recently elected Department Commander, John Fleming, his wife Karen, Auxiliary Sergeant-at-Arms, and their son Jim Fleming, Sons of the American Legion (SAL) attended the festivities. Department Commander John Fleming presented to Carlos Gonzalez, Past Department Historian with a Historian Pin for the period of June 2025 to June 2026.



SGT WILLIAM D. NELSON POST GR09

NEU ULM, GERMANY

A 4th of July party even without fireworks.

As they have for 15 years, GR09 together with the Donau Americans & Friends and Ulmer Artillerist have celebrated the 4th of July with a grill party and this year was extra special as it was also the 250-year anniversary of the founding of America. Except for the prohibition of fireworks this annual event was probably on a par with anything celebrated in the US.

Eighty-one individuals showed up on a perfect weather day and enjoyed good fellowship and various forms of entertainment. That this was an American event was immediately obvious upon entering the grounds of the Kuhberg Vereine when visitors were greeted with a large American flag hoisted on a flagpole and numerous flags guiding everyone to the

event. Each participant brought their favorite side dish and again the selection was overwhelming.

Several special invited guests joined in the celebration and later commented that they were impressed at the quality of the food and how everything was organized.



A cake appropriate for the day



A small sampling of the food brought by the members



No 4th of July celebration without a tug-of-war contest.

On 10 July the monthly meeting of GR 09 a special event as it was also attended by Albsteiger. Mayor Albsteiger has long community and finally made time well into the crowd the Americans were English language capability.



with the Donau Americans and Friends was the Lord Mayor of Neu-Ulm, Katrin wanted to meet the Americans in her available. As a good politician she mingled impressed with her congeniality and

Recipients of certificates for volunteer work at 4th of July picnic Lord Mayor Albsteiger, 4th from left.

JOHN WAYNE POST GR79

HEILBRONN, GERMANY

Fourth of July Fest at GR79



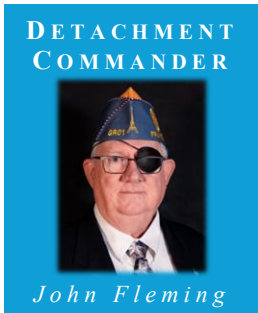
Legionnaire Sheppard (L) and Legionnaire Brown (R) visited Legionnaire Portale who was admitted to the hospital for a check up because of his sugar problems.

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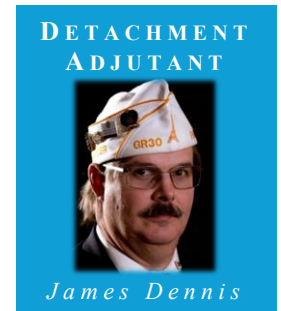


2026 National Convention

Louisville, Kentucky, August 28 –
September 3, 2026



DETACHMENT OF FRANCE



Hello Comrades,

Membership: According to the latest SAL Membership report I received, we are at 104.19% of our 2026 Goal of 167! **CONGRATULATIONS** on reaching the 100% goal!

Also, let us get started now on our 2027 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.

Upcoming Events:

17 October 2026 – 2nd DEC, Wiesbaden, hosted by GR07.
6 March 2027 – 3rd DEC, Kaiserslautern, hosted by GR01.
5 June 2027 – 4th DEC/Conference/1st DEC, Wiesbaden, hosted by GR07.

John Fleming
Detachment Commander

ABOUT THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

The Sons of The American Legion was created in 1932 as an organization within The American Legion.

The Sons of The American Legion is divided into detachments at the state level and squadrons at the local level. A squadron pairs with a local American Legion post; a squadron's charter is contingent upon its parent post's charter. However, squadrons can determine the extent of their services to the community, state and nation. They are permitted flexibility in planning programs and activities to meet their needs, but must remember SAL's mission: to strengthen the four pillars of The American Legion. Therefore, squadrons' campaigns place an emphasis on preserving American traditions and values, improving the quality of life for our nation's children,

caring for veterans and their families, and teaching the fundamentals of good citizenship.

Since 1988, SAL has raised more than \$9 million for The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. SAL members have volunteered over 500,000 hours at veterans hospitals and raised over \$1,000,000 for VA hospitals and VA homes. The SAL also supports the Citizens Flag Alliance, a coalition dedicated to protecting the U.S. flag from desecration through a constitutional amendment.

SAL Membership Eligibility Requirements

All male descendants adopted sons, and stepsons of members of The American Legion, and such male descendants of veterans who died in service during the period of April 6, 1917, through November 11, 1918, or any time from December 7, 1941, to date, who served honorably, as set forth in Article IV of the National Constitution of The American Legion, or who died subsequent to their honorable discharge from such service, shall be eligible for membership in the Sons of The American Legion..

There shall be no forms or class of membership except an active membership.

No person may be a member at any one time of more than one squadron.

History

The Sons of The American Legion was created in 1932 as an organization within The American Legion. The SAL is made up of boys and men of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the United States military and became eligible for membership in The American Legion. Together, members of The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion make up what is known as the Legion Family. All three organizations place high importance on preserving our American traditions and values, improving the quality of life for our

nation's children, caring for veterans and their families, and perhaps most importantly, teaching the fundamentals of good citizenship.

The SAL has study programs recommended for younger members. One such program, called "The Ten Ideals," teaches the elements of patriotism, health, knowledge, training, honor, faith, helpfulness, courtesy, reverence and comradeship. If a member completes the Ten Ideals program, he is eligible to continue with another program called the "Five-Point Program of Service." This program covers patriotism, citizenship, discipline, leadership and legionism.

Preamble

Proud possessors of a priceless heritage, we male descendants of veterans of all Wars, associate ourselves together as "Sons of The

American Legion" for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a true spirit of Americanism; to preserve the memories of our former members and the association of our members and our forefathers in all wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the Community, State and Nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy, to consecrate and sanctify our friendship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness; to adopt in letter and spirit all of the great principles for which The American Legion stands; and to assist in carrying on for God and Country.

PCC President



Jim Brotherton

Department of France Past Commanders Club 2027MY

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

PCC Secretary



Trey Jaeger

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

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



PURPLE HEART DAY AUGUST 07, 2026

ON THIS DAY, AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY MEMBERS AND AMERICANS REMEMBER AND HONOR THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO WERE WOUNDED WHILE SERVING IN THE U.S. ARMED FORCES.

REMINDER...ALL NEWSLETTER ARTICLES SHOULD BE TURNED IN BY THE END 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

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**DEPARTMENT
NEWSLETTER
EDITOR**



David N. Greaux

GRAND CHEF DE GARE



DAVID GARCIA

GRAND DU GERMANY



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.

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

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

DATE TO REMEMBER: 10 October 2026 – Grande Promenade – Kaiserslautern, Germany

This Newsletter approved by the American Legion, Department of France, Department Commander

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