

DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE

December 2025 - Vol. 23 / Nr. 12



BELGIUM-CHINA 01-DENMARK-ENGLAND-FRANCE-GREECE-GERMANY-IRELAND-ITALY-NETHERLANDS-SPAIN-THAILAND

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DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE COMMANDER DENNIS OWENS VISITS OUR TWO POSTS IN THAILAND!

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER



Dennis Owens

Greetings Department of France,

As I write this article, I am closing out a two week trip to Thailand to visit a couple of our Rock Star Posts, TH01 and TH02. I had the distinct honor to present TH02 with the 2025 Honor Ribbon for their Colors for achieving their 100% membership Goal prior to 31 December last year, and both Posts the recognition 100% Cap Pins for both Posts 100% membership goal for Commander, Adjutant and Membership Chairman they so deserve. I also passed on to both Posts the Thumb Drive from James Dennis with a ton of great files for membership chairmen to use and their PUFL Checks. I presented both Posts a



License Plate from my Post NL01 in the Netherlands to proudly decorate their Post Home with it, and I gave out a hard copy of the 2025 Officers Guide as well as our National Commander's Priority cards and some Be The One card with the six questions to help prevent suicide.

During these two short weeks, I've met some really true "Veterans for Veterans" in both Posts. Their desire to help out with American Veterans over here in Thailand is extremely evident and also highly effective. Both Post have members who work closely

with the American Embassy to help Americans who either get ill, or find themselves in a bad situation where they are in need of American Support. Both of these Post have demonstrated that they are really out there in the Community already helping with kids with cleft lips TH01 and Orphan programs TH02. They are always standing ready for any emergency and have previously provided thousands of hot meals for the public in times of need.

I've had the honor of visiting a Vietnam Army Veteran named Joe a

couple of times in one Senior home in Pattaya. Photos of our visit were sent to his daughter Tina in the Arizona by the senior home staff and his daughter was so overwhelmed that the local American Legion here cared so much to pay her veteran father a visit in his Senior Nursing Home that she posted it on Facebook in Arizona. This photo and her posting on FB came back to us just one day later through other networks. The second time we visited Joe, TH02 Skip Storno and Roger Knorr arranged real New York hot dogs to be cooked and served to the Americans in that senior home. This particular visit really warmed my heart and everyone there as they got the taste of America back in their mouths. One American lady in the home named Sandy had tears of joy while eating this hot dog. Turns out both Sandy and Skip frequented the same hot dog stand on a corner in New York. What a small world.

With Mike Brewer, TH02 Embassy Liaison, I have had the privilege to visit an American in the local Thai Hospital after his unfortunate fall from the 2nd floor balcony. With multiple broken bones, both arms and one leg and a very near future hip surgery, through Mike's volunteer assistance, this American has been placed in a nursing home now until he recovers enough to be cleared healthy enough to be transported back to the States. I've had the pleasure of eating out with Mike and his lovely family a few times. If anyone ever finds themselves in trouble here in Thailand, Mike is the one to contact!

TH01 has an active American Legion Rider's group in Ubon and TH02 is eager to start up one in Pattaya Thailand. What a great way to bring in new recruits to our Legion.

Both Posts are extremely active and also work closely with the local VFW Posts to assist veterans to become their VA Benefits. So much is the need for VSO support here that I asked our Department Service Officer Frank Phillips to work with one of the members in TH01 to get him Post Service Officer trained and Accredited as a Veteran Service Officer here in Thailand. Thank you Frank for leaning forward in this extremely valuable and needed (boots on the ground) VSO assistance over here.

With both Posts I was able to meet with their Executive members and Officers to go over all of the questions they had about their working relationship with the Department of France (DFR), with an obvious geographical separation and it's challenges and their expressed desire to move out of DFR and into the Department of the Philippines. Two main issues came to the table in this specific topic of discussion... The Geographical distance between Thailand and DFR and the reality that they feel that they cannot participate in programs like Boys State and the Oratorical Contest. I assured them that yes, indeed they can. I have worked out with our Department JA James Settle that the Posts in Thailand should hold either individual Oratorical Contest or jointly between these two Posts. Then when it comes for the Department contest that the TH01 and TH02 winning students can attend our Department Competition via virtual means. JA Settle is inquiring the possibility of Thai Posts attending National also via virtual, this request seems like a really long shot, but if not asked then we already know the answer. I appreciate JA Settle giving it a try. I have also shared with both Posts the importance of American Legion Basic Training. I am hoping to hear from both Adjutants that they have presented many members with the graduation certificate from Basic Training during the next few GMM meetings.

The Overseas Flower Graves Decoration Trust Fund was also brought up and both Post will be using this program to honor the veterans buried here.

A topic of great interest to these two Posts is the European General Data Protection Regulation or GDPR, privacy act on steroids. This greatly turned off members of Post TH01 and TH02 because of all of the restrictions with threats of actual punishment by law. They took great offence to the term used "Third World Country" and I really heard about it here. Both times AJA Richard Simmons briefed the GDPR in our past two recent DEC's, I was not prebriefed, nor do I approve of us going that deep into the 1000 page law, not for this small of a Non-profit organization. Although I appreciate the great effort AJA Simmons placed into all of the research in the GDPR.

However, after speaking with JA Settle, I have determined that we will not be using the term GDPR any longer, just like we do not use the term Privacy Act of 1974. Instead, we will all be using the term common sense and sound data exchange procedures. It does not make any sense to leave your medical records open on a table where others can view them. Likewise it doesn't make sense for one to send the digital copy of said medical records over the email in the clear. Encrypt them first, send them encrypted and pass on the encryption key in a separate email, or send it through WhatsApp. WhatsApp is encrypted end to end. We will not be publishing our Contact data rosters, Posts or Department online for others in the world to see it and take advantage of us via unscrupulous Phishing tactics. When we send an article for our Newsletter, the sender, normally the Post Adjutant will place a statement in the email stating that everyone in this article has provided their permission for this to be published.

Once that was explained to both Posts TH01 and TH02, I could feel the tension leave the room. I was also able to explain what the DFR does for both of these Posts and what we will be doing better in the future. Folks, after visiting these two Posts, meeting the members and Officers, going to visit veterans and Americans here needing assistance, sitting through each Posts meetings and having an opportunity to provide a briefing to each Post as well as to field a lot of questions from everyone, I feel that Thailand is already in a great Department. I have encouraged each Post to support Boys State and the Oratorical Contest programs from here in Thailand.

I also personally apologized profusely to the Commander of TH01 John Skabry Jr. for the comment made by one of our DEC officers during our recent 2nd DEC near an open microphone that "He must be the stupidest person in the room". We all need to remember my two-word motto since I have become the Department Commander, **"Be Nice"**. If not, we veterans with mostly Type A personalities will run off good people by hateful and heartless comments like this. I am sure all of you would agree, this is not the direction we wish our department to be headed.

TH01 Jeff Ludwig picked me up from the airport, drove me to the hotel and showed me around. Joe picked me up from the hotel and took me to the Post home at Peppers Restaurant, serving wonderful American Style food and owned and run by John Skabry Jr, Commander TH01. We met for a meet and greet working dinner conversation, which I thought went very well. Ted and William took me to the morning to

the Exec meeting with more members and officers present including Commander Skabry. We also got to meet Past Commander John Skabry Sr. virtually as John was in Florida on a family emergency. It was a very interesting meeting. After the meeting, Dang drove me to his home in the country about one hour out of the town where I saw firsthand how truly quiet and peaceful rural living can be in this country, then back to the airport. The Thai people are the most kind and polite people I have ever met in my life. I am truly grateful for TH01 for taking care of me in my stay in Ubon.

During the November TH02 GMM Meeting I was given the honor of being presented with the American Flag that was Posted in the meeting. It was folded in front of me and with superb

military honors presented to me. I must admit, it was very hard for me to not lose it with my emotions. To Bill, Skip, Mike, Richard, Gary and so many others in TH02, I will never forget the way you have hosted me and honored

my visit to your Post. I was really made to feel like a VIP and I thank you!

At both Posts, I was able to present my Department Commander's Certificate of Appreciation to five outstanding Post members.

I was personally in the best hands by your Commander and different officers each day. You've picked me up from the hotel and shown me what you and your Post does. I'm blown away with the hospitality and honor I've received while here in Pattaya Thailand this week. I was also given a tour of the facilities and procedures of how TH02 helps with Veteran cremation, and burial at sea with the Veterans family and full military honors.

Gary Mellor drove me to the local VFW Post where I met the Post Commander and Post JA Officer. We had a very productive conversation

about both VSOs as Posts working closer together.

As the Department of France Commander when I travel to Posts in

our Department, I always ask the Post Commander, "If your Post would disappear tomorrow, would your community miss you?" CLEARLY, this Community would miss both of your Posts and your outreach.

From the orphan programs, the veterans in hospitals and senior homes, the monumental help provided to widows of veterans, the repatriation of deceased veterans back to their families in the States and even providing burial services at sea here, if you disappeared today, YOU WOULD BE MISSED by your Community.

In the Department of France, I can think of not one Post I would say is bettering you.

What an eye opener and a great privilege to have been able to spend quality time with your Post, your officers and your families.

I know one thing, I'll be back to Thailand, not as a Commander, but as a friend.

Thank you Post TH01 and TH02 from the bottom of my heart.

The following photos were at Ubon with TH01...





The following photos were shot in Pattaya with the good folks in TH02....





**DEPARTMENT
ADJUTANT**



John Fleming

Greetings Comrades,

I hope that everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

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:

24 January 2026 0900-1700 CET – Mid-Winter Conference, Hotel Rosenhof, Am Koehlwäldchen 16, 66877 Ramstein-Miesenbach and video

21 March 2026, 1300 CET – 3rd DEC, Location TBA

18-21 June 2026 – 4th DEC/Convention/1st DEC, Location TBA

Thanks, and best wishes.

John Fleming

Good day everyone. Hope this finds everyone doing well. We are in the middle of our holiday season, but more about that later.

Had the privilege of attending the 75th Anniversary of the Transatlantic Council Scouting Leadership Conference program in Heidelberg Germany. I did not really know what to expect, but must say it was not what I was expecting. It was a truly amazing and well attended event, and a real eye opener. The adult volunteers who perform the duties of Scoutmaster and so many other positions and functions is admirable. The lessons and guidance these volunteers provide for our youth as they grow into adulthood is invaluable. I would like to single out two individuals, Joseph Schram and Trey Jaeger, members of our American Legion for the work they do with this program.

I came away from this with the feeling that we, the Department and Post, need to be doing more to support our Scouts and the valuable training they provide. I strongly encourage every Post who may have a Scouting program in their area to reach out, if not already involved, and support their program in any way possible. They are the

teachers of our future generation. They have helped so many youths on the path to becoming valuable members of the community and they truly deserve our support.

The Transatlantic Council is active in 55 different countries, covering Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. They have a lot on their plate and need our 100% support and backing.

As mentioned earlier, we are in the middle of our biggest and busiest holiday season, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year. It should be a time when everyone should be in the holiday spirit, sadly that is not the case for everyone. We need to be vigilant to others around us, the active-duty individual, who may be away from family and friends for the first time. Our retirees and Veterans, these people face so many obstacles that most of us probably don't even think about, being away from family in the US, maybe having a partner or loved one pass away, or some other traumatic experience. These people need not be members of our Post or other organization but should have our attention and help.

**DEPARTMENT
VCAL**



Jim Brotherton

We always hear the American Legion encourage 'Buddy Checks', to the point of a mandate in our programs, sounds good on paper, but so many times I have seen that program fall through the cracks. I want each of you to ask the question, "When was the last time I was contacted and asked how it is going? Is everything ok? Do you need anything, help, conversation, a visit?" I think we all would be a little shocked at the responses. I ask all Commanders to make the effort, not to just our American Legion community, but to all active duty, retirees and Veterans in your area, to reach out in some way or form to see that no one is left behind, all the time, not just only during the holiday season.

Last Item. I'm happy to see so many of our members involved in remembering our veterans who have passed away. I see several pictures being posted of our Legion members attending to the

graves of individuals laid to rest, outside American Cemeteries, located throughout Europe. I would like to point out that there are several Americans who are interned in what is referred to as Commonwealth Cemeteries, cemeteries maintained by Great Britain, Canada and other Commonwealth countries, located throughout Europe. I know several public cemeteries here in the Netherlands that have special, dedicated areas tucked away

somewhere just for this purpose. What is probably not realized is that several of these locations have Americans, by birth and nationality, are also interned there. These are American born, in most cases, individuals who decided that before the US even entered the War in Europe, that they would fight for Europe's freedom, and made the ultimate sacrifice. These individuals in most cases are only identified by three (3) simple letters 'USA', on their Commonwealth headstone or grave

marker. I feel these individuals deserve just as much recognition as the brave men who died wearing the American uniform. Remember, 'All gave some, some gave all', regardless what uniform they were wearing.

I wish each and everyone, and their families a safe and happy holiday season. Please remember those less fortunate in your prayers.

Greetings, Comrades, as the holiday season approaches, let us remember the importance of our buddy checks. It's a simple yet meaningful way to connect with fellow veterans and their families, especially those who have lost loved ones this year. While we honor their memories, a friendly voice can make all the difference. As we gather with our own families, let's ensure that veterans know they aren't alone during this time. Wishing you all a safe and joyful holiday season. For God and Country.

**DEPARTMENT
VICE
COMMANDER**



Kerwin L. Hester

**DEPARTMENT
VICE
COMMANDER**



Kerwin L. Hester

Well, it's about time I finally wrote something for the newsletter. Every month I tell myself, "This is the month!"—and then poof, the time disappears. So before that happens again... here we go.

Most of you remember me as the Department Chaplain from back in the

day. Since then, life has decided to shake things up. I'm still proudly serving as the Post Adjutant for GR20, but I also somehow ended up as the Department Vice Commander. When I volunteered, I had absolutely no idea what I was signing up for—honestly, I just nodded and smiled. But don't worry, I'm starting to figure it out. (I think.)

Right now, I'm responsible for seven Posts: China Post CH01, Athens Post GC01, SGT Williams D. Nelson Post GR09, Omar Bradley Post GR45, The Pride of Erin Post IR01, John F. Kennedy Post IR63, and of course, the legendary Rome Post IT01.

Someday I hope to visit each of these awesome Posts—mainly to see you all, but also because I'll never pass up an

excuse to travel, eat good food, or get lost in a new city.

As Vice Commander, I'm basically the middleman between the Department and the Posts. Think of me as the guy you call when you need something, have a question, or just want to make sure someone is still awake at the Department level. Most of you are wonderfully self-sufficient, but on the rare occasion you need help—I've got your back.

Also, don't forget: the Oratorical Contest is on the horizon. More details are coming soon, so stay tuned.

For GOD and Country,

"Greetings from Cognac (my parents' home) to all our DFR comrades, and especially to "my" outstanding Posts... My heart is heavy as I write these lines because of the senseless murder of our comrade-in-arms, the young NG gunned down in DC on Thanksgiving Day, along with her peer who is fighting for his life. I was enjoying a great November until that horrific situation, and just don't have the heart to share the highlights as I had

planned. Suffice to say, that as I do each Thanksgiving, I think back on the year's blessings, which are bountiful as always, and add my humble thanks to the young patriots who are even now patrolling the streets of our cities, and throughout the world, in harm's way, for our sake.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as practical at our Mid-Winter Conference, to share in our collective

**DEPARTMENT
VICE
COMMANDER**



Valerie Prehoda

knowledge and camaraderie. Keep up the amazing work on our membership drive, with the conviction that each comrade we welcome, or welcome

back, is another veteran for whom we are saying "you are with family now - we've got your back brother/sister!"

Semper Fi"

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
JUDGE
ADVOCATE



James Settle

I trust that everyone enjoyed a safe and meaningful Thanksgiving in the company of family and friends.

On **23 November 2025**, I had the distinct honor of representing **The American Legion Department of France** at **two commemorative ceremonies** held in **Saint-Avoid, France**. These events were conducted with great respect and solemnity and served as important reminders of the enduring bonds between our communities.

The first ceremony paid tribute to **twenty-two United States soldiers** who lost their lives in an explosion on **4 December 1944**. It was a privilege to deliver remarks on behalf of the Department (speech attached below).

The memorial honoring these soldiers is located on **Avenue General Patton**, opposite the **B&B Hotel Nord**. The structure, a dignified red-brick wall, bears a plaque inscribed with the names of the fallen. Photographs of the site are included below.

The second ceremony took place at **Saint-Avoid City Hall**, centered on a marble monument is a cross and it is inscribed with the words "**A NOS MORTS**" ("To Our Dead"). The monument features a lower platform designed for wreath placement.

During this ceremony, I was honored to participate in the laying of a wreath alongside a member of the Saint-Avoid

community. Images from this portion of the commemoration are also provided below.

Following the ceremonies, District of France President **Isolde Settle** and I met with:

The Honorable Mayor René Steiner
The Honorable Deputy Mayor
Ramonde Schwarze
Chief of Staff Maurice Selvais

They expressed their appreciation for the Department's participation and conveyed their intention to maintain regular contact. We were assured that future invitations to commemorative events would be extended.

In recognition of their continued efforts to honor the twenty-two fallen soldiers, the Department of France presented the **City of Saint-Avoid** with a **Certificate of Appreciation** for their ongoing remembrance of the twenty-two fallen soldiers. Our participation strengthened the relationship between the Department and the city, ensuring these sacrifices are never forgotten.

Our participation in these ceremonies not only honored the memory of the fallen but also strengthened the longstanding friendship and shared commitment between the American Legion Department of France and the City of Saint-Avoid. It was a profound privilege to contribute to the preservation of this important history.

SPEECH

Good Morning

Mayor Steiner, distinguished guests, honored officials, veterans, ladies and gentlemen—

Today, we gather on this hallowed ground in Saint-Avoid to honor twenty-

two American soldiers who gave their lives in the liberation of this community.

These men came from different homes, different families, and different paths in life. Yet on this soil, on that December day in 1944, they were united in a final act of courage and devotion. They fought not for glory, not for recognition, but for the enduring principles of freedom and human dignity.

We stand here eighty-one years later, not only to remember their sacrifice, but to reaffirm that their service will never be forgotten. Their legacy lives not just in history books, but in the peace we enjoy today—and in the friendship forged between our nations.

The American Legion Department of France, along with veterans across the United States and the world, expresses its sincere appreciation to the people of Saint-Avoid for your steadfast commitment to remembering these heroes. Your care ensures that their story endures for future generations.

To the 8 soldiers who rest here at Lorrain American Cemetery and Memorial, and the fourteen soldiers that rest on home soil we offer our eternal gratitude. To their families—we extend our deepest respect. And to all who serve today—we pledge to honor the legacy of those who came before you.

May these twenty-two souls rest in everlasting peace. And may we, the living, remain forever worthy of the sacrifice they made.

Thank you.

James M. Settle
James M. Settle
Judge Advocate



Ici le 4 décembre 1944, l'explosion d'une bombe à retardement allemande dans une caserne du Quartier De Back a coûté la vie à vingt-deux soldats américains. Ils appartenaient au 832nd Anti-Aircraft Artillery (Automatic Weapons) Battalion attaché à la 8th Infantry Division qui a libéré Saint-Avoud le 27 novembre 1944, ainsi qu'à la 28th Ordnance Maintenance Company.

Here, on December 4, 1944, the explosion of a German time bomb in the De Back barracks cost the lives of twenty-two American soldiers. These men were part of the 832nd Anti-Aircraft Artillery (Automatic Weapons) Battalion attached to the 8th Infantry Division, which liberated Saint-Avoud on November 27, 1944, as well as to the 28th Ordnance Maintenance Company.

EN LEUR MÉMOIRE	IN MEMORY
2 LT Herbert K. HAMLIN	TEC 6 Russell M. LINDNER
CPL David L. GOLDBERG	TEC 5 Leonard H. WHITE
PFC Nick CHONOPIS	PFC Thomas J. HANEHARAN
PFC Mario E. S. RUSSO	PFC Hiram P. WATTS
PVT James LA PLACA	PVT Don F. NEWMAN
CAPT Maxwell F. PARROTT	1 LT James H. BANTA
CAPT Hugo W. WIKSTROM	TEC 5 Hubert T. WRIGHT
T SGT Woodrow W. WALKER	TEC 4 Thomas W. MULLIGAN
S SGT Joseph C. CACCISE	TEC 6 Joseph M. O'CALLAGHAN
TEC 4 George DOMUTZ	TEC 5 Renato A. CIAMMA
TEC 5 Walter J. LAING	PFC Paul S. MARSOULHAN

Cette plaque a été offerte à la ville de Saint-Avoud par la 8th Division Veterans Association, l'association France-Etats-Unis Lorraine Sacré-Avoud et la FSLA du Paysanville, NC.



Basic Training

Learn about The American Legion in this self-paced online course

The American Legion's official training program for officers, members, Legion College applicants and those who simply want to expand their knowledge of the nation's largest veterans service organization is now available online.

Already taken the old course? The American Legion Extension Institute has been rewritten, updated, streamlined and enhanced with videos, digital photos, clickable links, a historical timeline and additional features. The program should take less than two hours to complete. It is divided into six sections, with a quiz at the end of each one, followed by a final exam.

DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE



James Dennis

Last week we fell into 2nd place! How did that happen? Well, it looks like we are heading back to the top. We are only a few members away from the top. Many of our Posts only have a few members to get 100%. Let's keep up the renewals and recruiting. We are creeping up on the 80% mark. Let's see if we can hit it before any other Department.

2026 DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE MEMBERSHIP STANDINGS 29-Nov-25	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	% of	Next Cutoff Date	Plus	Members Needed
	New	PUFL	Renewals	HQ	Actual	Post	2026	07-Dec-25	or	To Reach
	Members			Transfer	Mbsp.	Goal	Goal	Needed To Meet	Minus	2026 Goal
								75%	to Cutoff	AHEAD/BEHIND
1 Paris FR01	2	95	79	0	176	200	88,00%	150	-26	-24
2 Rota SP292	0	6	11	1	18	16	112,50%	12	-6	2
3 David Chavez GR1982	8	40	42	2	92	160	57,50%	120	28	-68
4 HQ9999	0	30	22	0	52	60	86,67%	45	-7	-8
5 Flanders Field BE02	9	17	49	0	75	90	83,33%	68	-7	-15
6 China CP01	18	346	459	3	826	1062	77,78%	797	-29	-236
8 London EG01	0	19	11	1	31	34	91,18%	23	-8	-3
9 Liberty EG02	7	12	27	1	47	65	72,31%	49	2	-18
11 Athens GC01	0	0	17	1	18	18	100,00%	14	-4	0
12 Kaiserslautern GR01	5	54	45	0	104	145	71,72%	109	5	-41
13 Rhein Neckar GR03	1	17	26	0	44	40	110,00%	30	-14	4
14 Rhein Main GR05	0	25	35	0	60	80	75,00%	60	0	-20
15 Stuttgart GR06	1	118	43	0	162	235	68,94%	176	14	-73
16 Wiesbaden GR07	2	31	34	0	67	90	74,44%	68	1	-23
17 Sgt. William D. Nelson GR09	0	29	17	0	46	56	82,14%	42	-4	-10
18 Thomas W. Barnett GR14	0	19	10	0	29	34	85,29%	22	-7	-5
19 Eifel GR20	17	16	4	0	37	100	37,00%	75	38	-63
20 Audie Murphy GR30	0	12	5	0	17	20	85,00%	15	-2	-3
21 Omar Bradley GR42	0	17	8	0	25	25	100,00%	19	-6	0
22 George S. Patton GR45	0	7	3	0	10	10	100,00%	8	-2	0
23 John Wayne GR79	0	11	7	0	18	58	31,03%	44	26	-40
24 Pride of Erin IR01	0	8	13	0	21	27	77,78%	20	-1	-6
25 Father Francis Duffy IR02	0	3	22	0	25	23	108,70%	17	-8	2
26 Commodore John Barry IR03	0	2	12	0	14	14	100,00%	11	-3	0
27 John F. Kennedy IR63	0	3	4	0	7	7	100,00%	5	-2	0
28 Rome IT01	0	3	5	0	8	8	100,00%	6	-2	0
29 Margraten NL01	31	30	102	1	164	225	72,89%	169	5	-61
30 Brig Gen. Robin Olds TH01	6	15	55	0	76	80	95,00%	60	-16	-4
31 Sgt Thomas Oliver Ahlberg TH02	14	11	127	0	152	140	108,57%	105	-47	12
GRAND TOTALS	121	996	1294	10	2421	3.122	77,55%	2339	-82	-701

Membership Chairman James Dennis/Doug Haggan	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	% of	Next Cutoff Date	Plus	Members Needed
	New	PUFL	Renewals	HQ	Actual	Goal	2026	07-Dec-25	or	To Reach
	Members			Transfer	Mbsp.	Goal	Goal	Needed To Meet	Minus	2026 Goal
								50%	to Cutoff	AHEAD/BEHIND
1 HQ9999	0	30	22	0	52	60	86,67%	45	-7	-8
GRAND TOTALS	0	30	22	0	52	60	86,67%	45	-7	-8

Vice Commander Ken Keckler	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	% of	Next Cutoff Date	Plus	Members Needed
	New	PUFL	Renewals	HQ	Actual	Goal	2026	07-Dec-25	or	To Reach
	Members			Transfer	Mbsp.	Post	Goal	Needed To Meet	Minus	2026 Goal
								75%	to Cutoff	AHEAD/BEHIND
1 China CH01	18	346	459	3	826	1062	77,78%	797	-29	-236
2 Athens GC01	0	0	17	0	18	18	100,00%	14	-4	0
3 Sgt. William D. Nelson GR09	0	29	17	0	46	56	82,14%	42	-4	-10
4 Omar Bradley GR42	0	17	8	0	25	25	100,00%	19	-6	0
5 Pride of Erin IR01	0	8	13	0	21	27	77,78%	20	-1	-6
6 John F. Kennedy IR63	0	3	4	0	7	7	100,00%	5	-2	0
7 Rome IT01	0	3	5	0	8	8	100,00%	6	-2	0
GRAND TOTALS	18	406	523	3	951	1203	79,05%	903	-48	-252

Vice Commander Valeria Prehoda	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	% of	Next Cutoff Date	Plus	Members Needed
	New	PUFL	Renewals	HQ	Actual	Goal	2026	07-Dec-25	or	To Reach
	Members			Transfer	Mbsp.	Post	Goal	Needed To Meet	Minus	2026 Goal
								75%	to Cutoff	AHEAD/BEHIND
1 London EG01	0	19	11	1	31	34	91,18%	23	-8	-3
2 Liberty EG02	7	12	27	1	47	65	72,31%	49	2	-18
3 Father Francis P. Duffy IR02	0	3	22	0	25	23	108,70%	17	-8	2
4 Commodore John Barry IR03	0	2	12	0	14	14	100,00%	11	-3	0
5 Margraten NL01	31	30	102	1	164	225	72,89%	169	5	-61
6 Brig Gen. Robin Olds TH01	6	15	55	0	76	80	95,00%	60	-16	-4
7 Sgt Thomas Oliver Ahlberg TH02	3	11	127	0	152	140	108,57%	105	-47	12
GRAND TOTALS	47	92	356	3	509	581	87,61%	434	-75	-72

Vice Commander Kerwin Hester	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	% of	Next Cutoff Date	Plus	Members Needed
	New	PUFL	Renewals	HQ	Actual	Goal	2026	07-Dec-25	or	To Reach
	Members			Transfer	Mbsp.	Post	Goal	Needed To Meet	Minus	2026 Goal
								75%	to Cutoff	AHEAD/BEHIND
1 Rhein Neckar GR03	1	17	26	0	44	40	110,00%	30	-14	4
2 Stuttgart GR06	1	118	43	0	162	235	68,94%	176	14	-73
3 Wiesbaden GR07	2	31	34	0	67	90	74,44%	68	1	-23
4 Audie Murphy GR30	0	12	5	0	17	20	85,00%	15	-2	-3
5 George S. Patton GR45	0	7	3	0	10	10	100,00%	8	-2	0
6 John Wayne GR79	0	11	7	0	18	58	31,03%	44	26	-40
7 David Chavez GR1982	8	40	42	2	92	160	57,50%	120	28	-68
GRAND TOTALS	12	236	160	2	410	613	66,88%	461	51	-203

Vice Commander Todd Johnson	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	2026	% of	Next Cutoff Date	Plus	Members Needed
	New	PUFL	Renewals	HQ	Actual	Post	2026	07-Dec-25	or	To Reach
	Members			Transfer	Mbsp.	Goal	Goal	Needed To Meet	Minus	2026 Goal
								50%	to Cutoff	AHEAD/BEHIND
1 Flanders Field BE02	9	17	49	0	75	90	83,33%	68	-7	-15
2 Kaiserslautern GR01	5	54	45	0	104	145	71,72%	109	5	-41
3 Rhein Main GR05	0	25	35	0	60	80	75,00%	60	0	-20
4 Thomas W. Barnett GR14	0	19	10	0	29	34	85,29%	22	-7	-5
5 Eifel GR20	17	16	4	0	37	100	37,00%	75	38	-63
6 Paris FR01	2	95	79	0	176	200	88,00%	150	-26	-24
7 Rota SP292	0	6	11	1	18	16	112,50%	8	-6	2
GRAND TOTALS	33	232	233	1	499	665	75,04%	492	-3	-166

SGT THOMAS OLIVER AHLBERG MEMORIAL POST TH02 PATTAYA, THAILAND

The Sgt. Thomas Oliver Ahlberg Post TH02 here in Pattaya, Thailand had the pleasure of hosting of the Commander of the Department of France for his first ever visit to the Land of Smiles. TH02 has had the privilege to introduce Commander Owens to a taste of Thai culture and see what TH02 is all about.



The Commander, Roger and Skip visited one of our local Veterans at his nursing home



A tradition at TH-02 is the placing a US Flag pin, presenting a post chip and welcome new members



Commander Owens had the opportunity to address the membership at our monthly meeting



Commander Owens presented several of our members with Certificates of Appreciation

RHEIN NECKAR POST GR03

HEIDELBERG, GERMANY



Newest member to GR03, Henry Johnson (R) and Post Commander Gerdeman



Post members left to right, Ed Sherman, Henry Johnson, John Gerdeman, Carl Arnold & Don Kienlen

GR09 Observes German Memorial Day

On 16 November, Germany's Volkstrauertag (Memorial Day), members of the William D. Nelson Post GR09, Neu-Ulm, Germany participated in a wreath laying ceremony at the Ulmer Artillery Monument honoring fallen soldiers and persons who have suffered at the hands of oppressors. Joining the legion were members of Germany's Traditionsverein Ulmer Artilleristen (Traditional Association of Ulm Artillery) and three Bundeswehr reservists from the German Army, Navy and Air Force.

The Traditional Association of Ulm Artillery was formed in 1909, and GR09 has participated in this somber affair since 1998. With this comradeship the American Legion also promotes the understanding of the Legion's principles to our German hosts. In his speech explaining the importance of remembering this date president Tilman Roehrich also thanked GR 09 for its presence and gratitude for their support.



JOHN WAYNE POST GR79

HEILBRONN, GERMANY

GR 79 POST GR 30 POST CHRISTMAS FEST



December 13 2025 at 14.00

**John Wayne GR 79 New Post Home
Sportheim Kirchhausen
Steinbrünnleswiesen 1
74078 Heilbronn – Kirchhausen**

Cost 25 Euro Buffedinner the menu

Rinderbraten—Schweibebraten—Bratensoße-- Pizrahmsoße

Spätzle—Pommes—Kroketten-- Gemüse

Gemischer Salat—Kartoffelsalat—Blattsalat-- Dressings

Schokoladencreme mit—Beerensoße

POC John Wayne GR 79 Heilbronn Charlie Brown 01701888034

POC Audie Murphy GR30 Sonja Dennis



**DETACHMENT
COMMANDER**



John Fleming

DETACHMENT OF FRANCE



**DETACHMENT
ADJUTANT**



James Dennis

Hello Comrades,

I hope that everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Membership: We are in the 2026 Membership Year.

According to my stats, we are at 69.46% of our 2026 Goal! Get your members to renew. 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. The Department

has over 3000 Members. The Detachment should have at least that many.

Upcoming Events:

7 March 2026 – 3rd DEC, hosted by Kaiserslautern Squadron GR01

6 June 2026 – 4th DEC/Conference/1st DEC, hosted by Kaiserslautern Squadron GR01

John Fleming
Detachment Commander

Detachment of France 2026 Membership Standings as of 23 November 2025	2026 NEW MEMBERS	2026 PUFL	2026 RENEWAL	2026 Actual Mbsp.	2026 Post Goal	% of 2026 Goal	Next Cutoff Date 07-Dec-25 Needed To Meet 45%	Plus or Minus to Cutoff	Members Needed To Reach 2026 Goal AHEAD/BEHIND
1 Paris FR01	2	0	3	5	12	41,67%	5	0	-7
2 HQ9999	0	0	0	0	0	100,00%	0	0	0
3 Flanders Field BE02	1	0	8	9	13	69,23%	6	-3	-4
4 China CP01	4	0	31	35	35	100,00%	16	-19	0
5 Kaiserslautern GR01	5	0	10	15	18	83,33%	8	-7	-3
6 Rhein Main GR05	0	0	3	3	4	75,00%	2	-1	-1
7 Stuttgart GR06	0	0	0	0	4	0,00%	2	2	-4
8 Wiesbaden GR07	1	0	13	14	16	87,50%	7	-7	-2
9 Thomas W. Barnett GR14	0	0	0	0	2	0,00%	14	14	-2
10 Omar Bradley GR42	0	0	29	29	31	93,55%	11	-18	-2
11 John Wayne GR79	0	0	1	1	24	4,17%	11	10	-23
12 Margraten NL01	1	0	2	3	16	18,75%	7	4	-13
GRAND TOTALS	14	0	100	114	175	65,14%	89	-25	-61

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

NOTICE: NAMES AND INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE NEWSLETTER ARE STRICTLY FOR THE USE OF MEMBERS ONLY. ANY OTHER USE, SOLICITATION, COMMERCIAL OR OTHERWISE, OR COPYING OR REPRODUCING BY ANY MEANS IS PROHIBITED WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN APPROVAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE.



DAVID GARCIA



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/>



Grand Chef de Gare David Garcia (R) and Department Commander Dennis Owen at the Veterans Day Ceremony at the Lorraine Military Cemetery, Saint Avold France

DATE TO REMEMBER:

17 January 2026: Grand Wreck hosted by V1546 to be held in the Nederland.

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

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**DEPARTMENT
NEWSLETTER
EDITOR**



David N. Greaux



American Legion Family members remember and honor the 2,403 Americans who were killed in the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1941.

On Dec. 20, 2019, the U.S. Space Force – the newest branch of the U.S. Armed Forces – was officially instituted.

