

DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE 6

June 2026 - Vol. 24 / Nr. 6



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

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS 2025 - 2026MY

COMMANDER <i>Dennis Owens NL01</i>	ADJUTANT <i>John Fleming CH01</i>	NECMAN <i>Hans Stockenberger CH01</i>	ALT NECMAN <i>Lee Preston GR42</i>	VCAL <i>Jim Brotherton NL01</i>
VICE COMMANDER <i>Valerie Prehoda BE02</i>	VICE COMMANDER <i>Ken Keckler GR20</i>	VICE COMMANDER <i>Kerwin L. Hester GR05</i>	VICE COMMANDER <i>Todd Johnson GR07</i>	CHAPLAIN <i>Brad Bell NL01</i>
FINANCE OFFICER <i>Larry Atkins CH01</i>	SERVICE OFFICER <i>Frank Phillips GR1982</i>	JUDGE ADVOCATE <i>James Settle GR42</i>	SERGEANT-AT-ARMS <i>James Dennis GR30</i>	HISTORIAN <i>Carlos Gonzalez, GR01</i>

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER



Dennis Owens

Greetings Department of France,

I hope you all were able to enjoy with your family and with other veterans Memorial Day. I know VCAL Jim Brotherton and his wife went down to St. Avold to represent our Department and I appreciate that from him. It allowed me to be present in our namesake Margraten ABMC here in the Netherlands to greet our oldest Post NL01 member, 105 year old Domnick Critilli, WWII Veteran from New York and Roger Kilfoil and to attend our May Post meeting. Unfortunately, Dominick picked up pneumonia just before the trip and wisely decided not to take the trip. I learned of this a couple of days after the Mission Margraten Plus group had landed in the Netherlands. However, I did meet a couple other really nice and still very

switched-on 100 year veterans who did come on that trip from New York to Margraten to thank the adopters of the graves of our fallen WWII brothers and sisters who are buried in the Margraten ABMC American War Cemetery. You might have realized this program by reading the cover story in our Legion Magazine May 2026 edition.

Next month June 18-20 will be our Department Convention. I would encourage as many of you to attend the Convention as delegates. All relative information has been sent out to your Post Commander and Post Adjutant from our Department Adjutant Fleming. The Convention will be held in Ochsenfurt Germany, just south of Würzburg Germany, the same place we were two years ago. It is a fine hotel from Best Western called Polisina on Marktbreiter Straße 265, 97199 Ochsenfurt. Please register as soon as possible through our Past Department Commander and current Sgt at Arms James Dennis using the forms sent to your Post Commander and Adjutant.

This year has been challenging in several ways. I do not see us making our Department membership goal. We are just above 91% which puts us in 48th place of 55 Departments world-

wide. Last year we were the 1st place Department. Not great results this year, but I can say that the No Recruiting on Base rule has hit us extremely hard. Regardless, I look at next membership year as a challenge to do better collectively. It is crucial in my opinion that we find a way to bring veterans into our Tribe and Legion Family for so many reasons...

- Primarily to help veterans in our area realize, with our VSOs help, their VA Benefits.
- To be with people who think and talk like veterans where we are comfortable in each other's company.
- To really help reduce the alarming number of veteran Suicides with our proven Be The One program.
- To help our youth realize their goals of our Oratorical Contest, Scouting, JROTC Drill competitions, Competition Shooting and Boys State.
- To help provide Final Respects for veterans laid to rest over here in Europe and Thailand. The Posts in Thailand even do respectful Burials at Sea.

- To visit sick veterans picking up their spirits when really needed, letting them know they are not alone.

All of this takes volunteer time and commitment to do these things and more for others. Folks, that is what being a member of the American Legion means to me.

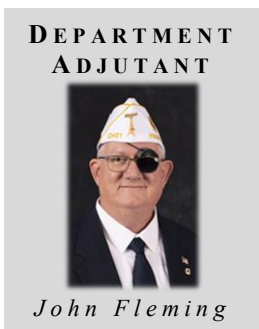
Speaking of Youth Programs, I am very proud of our Post NL01's

Oratorical Contest winner Sophia Wick where she went further to win the Department's Oratorical Contest and got the opportunity to compete in the National Oratorical Contest. Even though she did not place 1st, 2nd or even 3rd place at National, she garnered so much experience and is ready and eager to do a much better job next year. Sophia is just a Sophomore in High School. She still has three more years / opportunities to take home the American Legion's Oratorical Contest top step at National and the scholarship

of \$25,000 that goes with it. Post NL01 wishes her the very best!

Let's keep all of that in mind as we close out the 2025-2026 Membership Year (MY) go into the 2026-2027 MY and really try to do better, together, this next year.

Very best wishes,
Commander Dennis



Department Adjutant's Corner

Greetings Comrades,

Consolidated Post Report (CPR) – is now available on myLegion.org, so please log in and start adding the 2025-2026 Report. This report covers the period 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026. You can also download a copy of the form if you would like to use it to keep notes of your Posts activities. [CPR](#)

Please read the letter below from National Vice Commander Ron LaRose.

To: Department Leadership and Post Officers

Subject: *The Importance of Consolidated Post Reports (CPRs)*

Legionnaires,

As we move through another year of serving veterans, their families, and our communities, I want to stress the importance of completing and

submitting your Consolidated Post Reports (CPRs).

CPRs are not simply another piece of paperwork required by National Headquarters. They are one of the most important tools we have as an organization. The information gathered through CPRs allows The American Legion to demonstrate our impact nationwide and provide real numbers to Congress, state leaders, and communities about the work our posts are doing every single day. Whether it is veteran assistance, youth programs, community service, Americanism activities, or support for military families, those numbers matter.

But the importance of CPRs goes far beyond the national level.

At the department level, CPRs help leadership identify the incredible work being done across our posts and recognize those posts that are actively making a difference in their communities. They tell the story of success, dedication, and service happening throughout our department.

More importantly, CPRs also help identify posts that may be struggling, inactive, or unsure of where to start. When reports are missing or show limited activity, it allows department leadership to reach out, offer

assistance, provide resources, and help those posts become more engaged and successful. The goal is not punishment or criticism — the goal is growth, mentorship, and strengthening our organization from the ground up.

A completed CPR gives us a clearer picture of where we are succeeding and where we need to focus our efforts. It helps us ensure that no post is left behind.

I encourage every post to take the time to complete and submit your CPR accurately and on time. The work you do matters, and your report helps ensure that work is seen, recognized, and supported.

Thank you for everything you continue to do in service to veterans, our communities, and The American Legion.

For God and Country,

Ron LaRose National Vice Commander
The American Legion

Dates to Remember:

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

Thanks, and best wishes.

John Fleming

American Legion DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE Annual Convention 18 June 2026 – 21 June 2026



**The Best Western Hotel Polisina
Marktbreiter Strasse 265
97199 Ochsenfurt, Germany**

DEPARTMENT VCAL



Jim Brotherton

Good day fellow Legionnaires and Comrades.

This will be my last newsletter article for the membership year 2025-2026. It has been a year of ups and downs for our Department, but we have made it the beginning of a new membership year. We did not do as well as past

years. This gives us now the opportunity to set our sights and goals on improving the new membership year and show we are the greatest Department in the American Legion.

I would like to personally thank everyone for the support and help they have given throughout the year. Your contributions and support was immensely appreciated. Without you behind me, some things would not have been possible. One example was our in place Mid-Winter Conference, a first for our Department and I feel was very successful.

As we head into the next chapter of our Department, I would like to talk about the elections for our new membership year. I know, for myself, having now served as a Vice Commander at Large for the past year, and having served as

a Department Vice Commander for the past three years, it has been a very rewarding experience and something I am proud of. Nothing feels better than knowing when you have contributed and given back something to your fellow Comrades. We all do these things through volunteers, not for personal recognition, but because we care about our Veterans.

I would like to encourage each and everyone to step up, to help fill the roles of leadership our Department requires as we head into the Department elections. I would also need to add, with volunteering comes duty and responsibilities. You need, you must, be ready to give the 110% required for the position you volunteer for and requires of you. You need to be there when your Department calls on you. I promise, when you have

performed your duty and responsibility to the best of your ability, you will have a sense of job fulfilment. You can look back, with pride, what you were able to accomplish.

These jobs and positions I speak of are not just elected Officer positions, but a whole array of programs that we need volunteers to oversee. Whether it is working with the Scouting programs,

the Oratorical contest, exploring expanding the number of Posts in our Department, we need volunteers. We need your help and support. When we go into our elections and appointments, think about raising your hand, volunteering, help, support the many areas and programs the Department oversees. We as a Department cannot do this with you.

I would like to thank again the people who made my past year enjoyable, rewarding, challenging and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the 98th DEC/Convention in June. Signing off as you pass Department VCAL. Salute.

Jim Brotherton
Vice Commander at Large

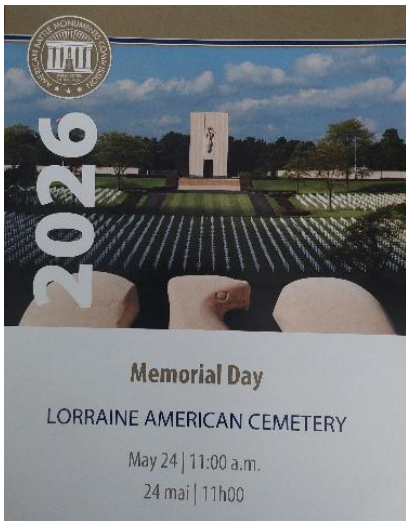
While the American Cemetery Lorraine France may not be the largest American Cemetery in Europe, it is the largest number of graves from World War II, 10,481. There are also 444 names listed on the wall for the Missing in Action.

remembrance was represented by Department Adjutant John Fleming, his son, James Fleming (SAL), Past Department Vice Commander John Gerdeman, and myself Department VCAL Jim Brotherton. The Department Colors were presented by JROTC Cadets Stuttgart High School.

We, the Department of France, wish to extend our thanks to everyone for their support and representation for remembering the fallen from all wars. Thank You.

Jim Brotherton / Vice Commander at Large

The American Legion, Department of France, attendance at this



**DEPARTMENT
VICE
COMMANDER**



Valerie Prehoda

Greetings from Omaha Beach! Though I will be unable to attend our June meetings in person, I was happy to be able to participate in the 2nd anniversary of the NCDU-Scouts & Raiders monument park that we dedicated on the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

It was an honor to represent you all and my message was well-received. On June 6, I will be doing much the same

at the Utah Beach NCDU monument...when I visit these monuments, along with the Lone Sailor on Utah Beach, all of which I played a significant role in bringing to reality, my heart is heavy for the losses we and our allies suffered in WWII, but also full at the same time, full of love for my fellow comrades-in-arms, and grateful to be in their, your, company. See you all virtually soon, and Semper Fi!

Brothers, sisters, and comrades, as my year as department vice commander concludes, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your guidance and support. This has been a remarkable learning experience, and I hope that the team considers me for this role again. Regardless of our cap colors—red, white, or blue—we are all dedicated volunteers in the American Legion Family, committed to assisting one another. Personal glory has

no place here; it's about veterans helping veterans. Thank you for being essential to this incredible family. For God and country, may God bless.

**DEPARTMENT
VICE
COMMANDER**



Kerwin Hester

PICTURES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE AT PULASKI BBQ SATURDAY 16 MAY 26

Provided by Department Historian Carlos Gonzalez





KAISERSLAUTERN POST GR01

KAISERSLAUTERN, GERMANY

8 May 2026 Commander Garcia GR01 Presents 20 Certificates of Appreciation to Scout Troop 69 for Three events, Helping GR01 pack for move, and for two separate Grave Decoration events.



27 of April 2026, Mr. David Cornell DECA from the Vogelweh Commissary, Certificate of Appreciation for helping Post GR01 in donations to the Sembach food bank.

Certification Of Accomplishment to the Kaiserslautern H.S. JROTC for a donation to Post GR01 presented to Cadet Commander for Class of 2026



Recipients for Military Excellence, Scholastic Excellence

SCHOLASTIC

EXCELLENCE



4th of May 2026 at Ramstein H.S. JROTC and are the recipients for Military Excellence, Scholastic Excellence. Post GR01 Cmdr. Garcia



April 25 2026 - 16 May 2026, Kaiserslautern Post GR01 joined forces with Girls Scout Troop 1920 and Boys Scout Troop 69 to decorate American grave sites. Post Executive Committee member Lee Singfield, Graves Registration Coordinator, Carlos Gonzalez, Graves Registration

Program, Nick Long, Scout Master for Troop 1920 and 69, led the Scouts through the cemeteries and decorated 46 grave sites. The principles of good behavior and respect where exemplified while the Scouts cleaned, placed flowers and American flags on each grave site. Special recognition to

The American Legion Overseas Grave Decoration Trust Fund Program, for supporting Post GR01, contributing to the great success of our annual event. There is nothing more pleasurable than honoring our men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country.



May 16, 2026: The annual Kindergraves Memorial Service took place on Saturday, May 16, 2026, at 10:00 AM at the Kaiserslautern Main Cemetery (Waldfriedhof). The ceremony honored the 451 American infants and children buried at the site who passed away between 1952 and 1971 while their families were stationed in Europe. The public commemoration was hosted jointly by the Kaiserslautern Kindergraves Memorial Foundation (KKMF), the Ramstein Area Chiefs Group (RACG), and the German-American and International Women's Club (GAIWC).

Early Morning Grave Decoration: Volunteers met at dawn to decorate all

451 individual gravesites with a fresh rose and a small American flag.

Chapel Gathering: Attendees and officials gathered at the Daenner Chapel (located near Daenner Kaserne across from Kleber Kaserne) at 10:00 AM.

Procession: The Ramstein High School Junior ROTC Color Guard led the formal procession from the chapel down to the final burial plot.

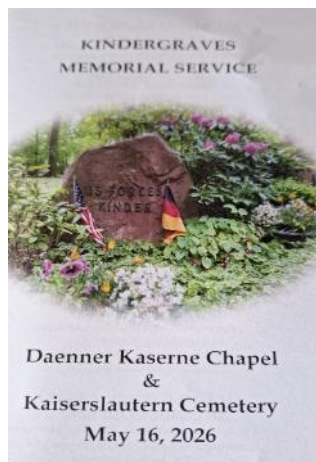
Wreath-Laying Ceremony: Senior military and civilian leaders placed official floral wreaths at the front monument on behalf of their respective service branches and community groups.

Candle Lighting & Blessing: Joint blessings were performed by U.S.

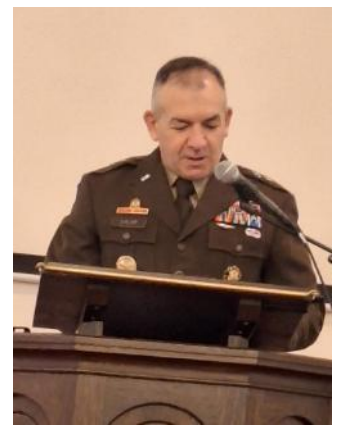
Army and German chaplains, followed by a candle-lighting ceremony in memory of the children.

Key Speakers: The event included speeches focusing on German-American friendship and remembrance, featuring Deputy Mayor Anja Pfeiffer and Maj. Gen. Michael B. Lalor of the 21st Theater Sustainment Command.

Taps: The ceremony concluded with a traditional moment of silence and a bugle performance of "Taps". Representing Post GR01, Commander, David Garcia and Doris Garcia Auxiliary Unit, Post GR01, as Photographer.



Deputy Mayor Anja Pfeiffer



Major General Michael B. Lalor

Continuation: May 16, 2026, The annual Kinder graves Memorial Service...



May 24, 2026: Post GR01 hosted their annual St. Avold Reception. Stuttgart JROTC High School, 32 Cadets travel to St. Avold France Lorraine Cemetery to participate in the Department of

France Memorial Day Ceremony. Their return trip agenda included stopping by Post GR01 to enjoy a grill meal (consisting of burgers, hot dogs, wurst with side dishes. Norman

Matzke, LTC, USA (RET), Senior Army Instructor made the comment...“the kids always looks forward to stopping at Post GR01”.



MARGRATEN POST NL01

4 May, a very important day in the Netherlands, a day where a 2-minute moment of silence is observed throughout the entire country to remember the people who died in the war.

Our American Legion Post has the honor of attending the remembrance ceremony in the village of Opijnen. To honor the eight (8) Airmen who are buried in this small Dutch village, the men who died 30 July 1943 when their B-17 was shot down

NETHERLANDS

over this village. Since 1949, this village has observed this moment almost every year to date. The only place in the Netherlands, perhaps all of Europe, where they lie, as they died, side by side.

Jim Brotherton / Vice Commander at Large



The second most important event involves a monument that was erected in a field in the Belgium countryside, dedicated to 11 Afro-American soldiers, who were not killed, but rather

tortured, mutilated and murdered. A heartbreaking story, one of many that came out of WWII.

The short story here is about 11 soldiers, how they ended up where they did and what followed afterwards.

These 11 soldiers were separated from their unit, the 333rd Field Artillery, when their position was overrun. Facing freezing temperatures, they found refuge in a local farmhouse, home of the Langer family in the village of Wereth.

The Langers, at great personal risk, offered them food and warmth. Betrayed by a Nazi sympathizer, the

soldiers were captured by an SS patrol. They surrendered without a fight to protect the family who had given them shelter.

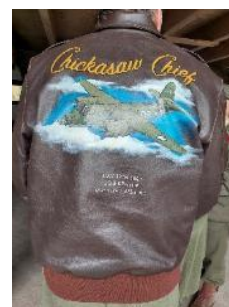
"The soldiers then marched to a nearby field, where they were brutally tortured and murdered. The bodies, discovered weeks later, bore witness to the horrific war crimes committed against them.

I encourage everyone who sees or reads this posting to research the story through Google search, enter 'Wereth 11 Memorial', this will give you the complete history and introduce you to these 11 soldiers who sacrificed their lives to protect this Belgium family. (additional material provided by Col. USA Kevin LaSharrne Jackson).



Had the pleasure of attending an event sponsored by the Royal British Legion. It was a Memorial dedication involving 3 B-26 bombers. This particular memorial was for the 3rd acft that was damaged when two other acft collided; it had to make an

emergency landing in the field behind the plaque. Was a small ceremony but as always, a chance to meet some very interesting people. Thank you RBL for the invitation.

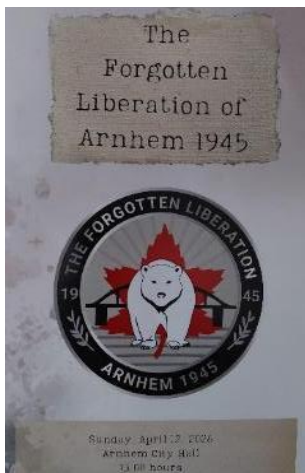


Forgotten Liberation of Arnhem

Our Post had the honour of representing the American Legion at the ceremony for the Forgotten Liberation of Arnhem. The word forgotten is used because nearly all the civilians had been evacuated from this city. There was really no one there to welcome the Liberators. This operation was known as

Operation Anger. This was primarily fought by the British 49th Infantry and supported by the Canadian Artillery, resulting in the deaths of 66 Allied members.

This year's ceremony had the privilege of having former Sergeant Arnold Walton, 100 years old, of the York & Lancaster Regiment, Hallamshire.



RHEIN NECKAR POST GR03

HEIDELBERG, GERMANY

On Memorial Day, Post GR03 was busy remembering and honoring our fellow comrades. Commander John Gerdeman visited the Lorraine American Cemetery in France for a wreath-laying ceremony. Also attending the ceremony were Department Vice Commander-at-Large Jim Brotherton and his wife, Laura; Department Adjutant John Fleming and his son; and Post GR01 Commander Dave Garcia and his wife.

While Commander Gerdeman was in France, Comrade Henry Johnson remained in Heidelberg, placing flags on the graves of our fellow comrades in remembrance of their service and sacrifice. Comrade Rich Sossamon was in the Netherlands at the Margraten American Cemetery. Margraten was a tremendous experience, where he met fellow Citadel graduate Roger Long. Together, they placed flowers on the graves of the eight Citadel graduates

buried there, honoring their memory and sacrifice.

On this Memorial Day weekend, we should all honor our fallen comrades and remember the sacrifices they made for our freedom. Let us never forget.

John P. Gerdeman - Post Commander GR03



Lorraine Cemetery France Wreath Laying



Kevin Savoy



Ray Johnson



Netherland



Rich Sossamon and Roger Long at John Dimitri's grave



Creswell Garlington



Arthur B. Hunt



Netherland

SGT WILLIAM D. NELSON POST GR09 NEU ULM, GERMANY

If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

With that slogan in mind GR09 unanimously reelected last years post officers for another year. Even Post Commander Aman who vowed to retire after this year agreed to another year, but this time his last. This will be a significant year in that GR09 is positioning itself to ensure that it will be a worthwhile and active organization for many years and available to support its important veterans. At the conclusion of the elections an additional position was filled with Eddie Irizarry being elected as the Post Historian.

Past Department Commander Abernathy conducted the elections.



Outgoing and newly elected officers receiving certificates of appreciation

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GR09 visits graves of veterans

For 20 years GR09 members have faithfully visited the graves of all of its veterans buried in the Ulm/Neu-Ulm vicinity but the visits took on a new significance starting in 2017 when the post started receiving a fifty US dollar contribution from the American Legion Overseas Graves Trust Fund for floral

arrangements for each grave for veterans interned in the local area. Thanks to this generous donation GR 09 received \$ 550 this year and each grave was decorated with an impressive flower arrangement and a streamer recognizing Neu-Ulm's American Legion. This demonstration of

patriotism also exhibits to German visitors to the cemeteries that Americans do not forget their comrades in arms.

This is a solemn event honouring two WW II war veterans, a Vietnam Purple Heart recipient and eight others who served honourably.



Floral arrangements arrive at cemetery



Former SAL member decorating grave of WW II veteran



GR 09 team ready to visit graves

JOHN WAYNE POST GR79

HEILBRONN, GERMANY



Legion Riders Toy Run, Erlangen, Germany



Membership Meeting with Dept. Vice Commander Hester, Post Commander Brown and Post Adjutant Rice



New GR79 member Dana Fish (m)



GR79 members



Memorial Day 2026

GR 79 POST HEILBRONN



Am Samstag 04.07.2026 um 13.00 Unabhängigkeit Fest
Saturday July 4 2026 (Independence Day) 13.00

Gartenfreunde Klingenberg
Im Bruch
74081 Heilbronn -Klingenberg

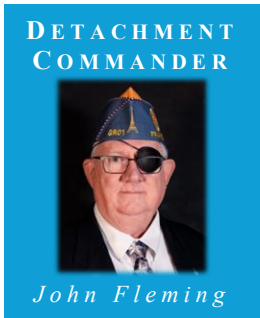


Early Ticket 30 Euro if purchased by June 13- 2026 At the Door 35 Euro
Kids Age 1 to 10 Free

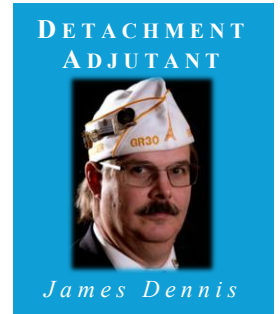
POC Past Commander Charlie Brown H-0170-1888034



2026 National Convention
Louisville, Kentucky, August 28 – September 3, 2026



DETACHMENT OF FRANCE



Sons of The American Legion,
Detachment of France

Detachment Commander

Hello Comrades,

Consolidated Squadron Report (CSR) – is now available on myLegion.org, so please log in and start adding the 2025-2026 Report. This report covers the period 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026. You can also download a copy of the form if you would like to use it to keep notes of your Posts activities. [CSR](#)

Membership: According to the 30 April 2026 SAL Membership report I received, we are at 104.19% of our 2026 Goal of 167!

CONGRATULATIONS on reaching the 100% goal! Let's not stop now, please talk to your expired Squadron members and ask them to renew. Please 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.

4th DEC/Convention/1st DEC: I ask that all Detachment Officers and all Squadrons plan to attend the 4th DEC/Convention/1st DEC on 13 June 2026. New officer elections will be held during the Convention, so

please plan to attend and **run for an officer position.**

We have changed the date of the 4th DEC/Convention/1st DEC due to some conflicts. The meeting will be hosted by Squadron GR01, in the Kaiserslautern Post/Squadron home, in building 368 on Rhine Ordnance Barracks.

Upcoming Events:
~~6 June 2026~~ 13 June 2026 – 4th DEC/Convention/1st DEC, hosted by Kaiserslautern Squadron GR01

John Fleming
Detachment Commander

DETACHMENT OF FRANCE ANNUAL CONVENTION

SATURDAY, 13 JUNE 2026
GR01 POST HOME



The NEF Trust Committee has amended the trust to allow SAL members to apply for National Emergency Fund grants.

Members of the Sons of The American Legion are eligible to receive grants from The American Legion's National Emergency Fund (NEF).

The NEF Trust Committee met May 4 during the Spring Meetings in Indianapolis to amend the trust to allow SAL members to apply for NEF grants.

While application forms and information on Legion.org are in the process of being updated to reflect the change, effective immediately, SAL members can apply for an NEF grant if they meet the necessary qualifications.

Similar to individual Legionnaires, SAL members may qualify for an NEF grant of up to \$3,000 if:

They have been displaced from their primary residence due to damage sustained during a declared natural disaster. If emergency/disaster shelters are available, and the applicant

chooses not to stay at a shelter, their reason must be included in the application.

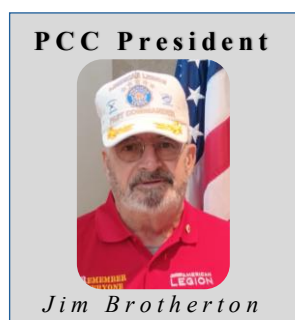
The SAL member must be active at the time of the disaster and at the time of application.

NEF grants are not meant to replace or repair items, only to meet the most immediate needs (i.e., temporary housing, food, water, clothing, diapers, etc.) during the period immediately following the disaster. They also do not cover insurance compensation or monetary losses from a business, structures on your property (barns, tool sheds, etc.), equipment or vehicles.

For more information, go to [Legion.org/Emergency](https://legion.org/emergency).

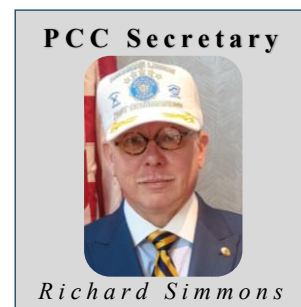


The 4th District Executive Committee Meeting along with the District Convention and 1st DEC Meeting will convene at 11:00 hours on Saturday, 20 June 2026 at the Best Western Hotel Polisina, Marktbreiter Str. 265, 97199 Ochsenfurt, Germany and via Video Link. The agenda of business to be considered at the meeting will be provided at the registration desk. Registration of DEC delegates will begin at 10:00 hours on Saturday, 20 June 2026. District Convention, and 1st DEC will follow immediately thereafter.



Department of France Past Commanders Club 2026MY

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



Past and Present Department Commanders, Department Vice Commanders At Large, Department Vice Commanders, Post Commanders, SAL Detachment Commanders, SAL Squadron Commanders, Auxiliary Department Presidents, Auxiliary Unit Presidents... so if you were just voted into 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

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

Grand Elections were held on 23 May 2026. The elected Officer for the 2027 Membership Year are:



*Cheminot Nationale Joe James
Chef De Train At Large Kerwin Hester
Avocat John Gerdeman*

*Alt Cheminot Nationale Lee Preston
Conductor Jim Brotherton
Garde La Porte Joe Brown*

*Grand Chef de Gare David Garcia
Commissaire Intendant David Greaux
Commis Voyageur Michael Young*

DATE TO REMEMBER: 11 July 2026 – Grande Wreck / Promenade – Heilbronn, Germany

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HOW IS YOUR POST CELEBRATING AMERICA'S 250TH BIRTHDAY?



America250 announces nationwide “Moments” countdown.

American Legion posts and departments are preparing to celebrate America’s 250th birthday in a variety of ways. Camp Jackson

American Legion Post 112 in Brownstown, Ind., for example, is planning a special Fourth of July parade for this year titled “250 Years, the Story of Us.”

The American Legion Magazine wants to know what your post or department is doing to mark the semiquincentennial. Email magazine@legion.org with details, or post a preview at legiontown.org in the America 250 category.

The America250 initiative, meanwhile, has announced plans for a five-day countdown of national “Moments”:

- The Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library American Frontier Celebration and Broadcast Special from Medora, N.D., on July 1
- A proposed special session of Congress in Philadelphia on July 2 for placement of the

Semiquincentennial Time Capsule
• A special Ball Drop Celebration in Times Square on July 3, the first non-New Year’s Eve ball drop in its 120-year history

• America’s Ultimate Block Party on July 4, a nationwide event that will bring the spirit of America250 initiatives to life through large-scale celebrations and viewing parties in major cities, paired with hyperlocal community gatherings across the country

• America’s Day of Reflection on July 5, intended to mark a transition from the celebration of the semiquincentennial to the “After the Fireworks” phase of America250 activities that will carry through the end of 2026. The day is an opportunity for Americans “to reflect on what the journey to the (nation’s) 250th has meant to them and how they can prepare for the path ahead.”

Learn more at america250.org.

Juneteenth National Independence Day

This federal holiday is celebrated every 19th of June each year starting year 2021.



Band performing in Texas for Emancipation Day, June 19, 1900

On June 17, 2021, President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, formally establishing a federal holiday that commemorates the end of slavery in the United States. Known as Juneteenth (short for “June Nineteenth”), this was officially celebrated by the entire country for the first time this year.

So how did Juneteenth become a federal holiday? And, what exactly did people do to celebrate it?

A Brief History of Juneteenth

On the eve of January 1, 1863, enslaved and free African-Americans across the United States gathered together in churches and homes, breathlessly awaiting news about the Emancipation Proclamation. Their prayers were answered when, on the stroke of midnight, all slaves in the Confederate states were declared legally free from their masters.

From here on out, this night became known as “Freedom’s Eve.”

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

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