



Legion News

DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE



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

August 2023

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DEPARTMENT
COMMANDER

Robert Gray

I want to take this opportunity to address the Department of France American Legion Family. Due to the heat and weather conditions, add travel and vacationing, please, be safe. Because the Department of France has a large geographical location, and the average age of our Legionnaires is 67 years old, there are certain things we need to take into consideration. This is the best time to use the buddy system, ensure that you carry enough medical medication, and stay cool. Always be aware of the area in which you're traveling and keep an eye on the weather reports. Be aware of the locations of hospitals, police stations, and ambulance services. If something should happen, please contact your Post. We will do what we can if help is needed. Keep in mind that we are experiencing record weather conditions.

To celebrate the 4th of July holiday, I was invited out to GR79, by Commander Charlie Brown. I was not able to attend, due to other obligations, but Vice Commander John Gerdeman attended. VC Gerdeman gave great reviews. On the 4th of July, I was invited to GR05's outdoor picnic. It was fantastic to meet everyone there. Also in attendance were Vice Commander John Gerdeman and VCAL Dennis Owens. It was my pleasure to meet the commander and comrades and to fellowship with everyone.

For those Legionnaires who are getting per diem for travel, at this time of the year gas prices are going through the roof. What we must

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do is look for alternatives, using WhatsApp, Facebook, email, Skype, and telephone. Your per diem goes fast. We will discuss this at the next Commanders Advisory Council meeting [CAC].

On 6 August 2023, at 1400 hours, we will be holding a virtual Commander and Adjutant meeting (C & A). This is so we can build a rapport between the Department and Post leadership. Post-leadership will have the opportunity to discuss issues and convey collective goals, strategies, and objectives. The agenda will be sent out with the meeting link. I look forward to seeing everyone there.

Again, I'm going to keep this very short until 6 August 2023. There are a lot of issues to discuss. So, in closing, I wish everyone a beautiful and prosperous summer, please stay safe, and if any problems arise, please contact your Post.

Robert Gray



Department Adjutant's Corner

Greeting Comrades,

I do not have a lot of news this month, as I am traveling in the US.

I can tell you that we will be continuing the Department Calendar. It is currently under review. I do know that the 2nd DEC will be at the Novotel in Saint Avold, France, on 28 October 2023, so please start planning to attend.

I believe that planning has begun for our next Mid-Winter Conference. If anyone has any suggestions for topics you would like to hear, please email me and VCAL Dennis Owens.

Thanks, and best wishes. John Fleming

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT



John Fleming

DEPARTMENT VCAL



Dennis Owens

Vice Commander's Corner...

Greetings Department of France,

I am happy to be your VCAL again this year. I have been asked what my plans are for a prosperous year for us by Commander Gray. My answer to him is to let our Vice Commanders meet at least twice with the Posts they have been

assigned and have a heartfelt conversation with each Post Commander with a prepared questionnaire and a Post Evaluation to find the Posts Strengths and weaknesses. To offer any advice they can and help wherever they can. I am pleased to say that I've heard back from VC Gerdeman and VC Brotherton and what both have relayed to me is thus far very good news on their Posts. I am

delighted that I have a Department Commander that has faith in me as VCAL this year.

To all Post Commanders and Adjutants, please welcome your Vice Commander into your Post to go over the questionnaire and evaluation, you will learn a lot about your own Post by doing so. Also, please invite your Vice Commander to a meeting or two, especially your Elections Meeting so he or she can induct your Officers. Your Vice Commander would be very proud to do so.

Very best wishes this membership year, I know we are already off to a good start.

Dennis Owens
VCAL
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I have been traveling a lot this month.

My first trip was down to Heilbronn Post 79 On the 1st of July for their Independence party. There I met the commander Charles Brown and the 1st Vice commander Comrade Martin and the adjutant Maxwell Rice. The membership threw a successful party. I got to talk to a lot of their members and their guests. I even played a 50/50 raffle and lost.

Then it was off to Frankfurt GRO5 4th of July BBQ & meeting. It was held in Oberwalluf - Walluf. Commander Ernie O. Cojoe and I talked about the post, and what was happening. The BBQ was a great success. The department commander Robert Gray, Vice commander at large

Dennis Owens was also there. We all had a great time. And again, I played 50/50 and again I lost no luck.

One more Trip this month off to Kaiserslautern GRO1 to their post executive meeting. I was met by 1 Vice Commander Dave Garcia and 2 Vice Commander Mike Young about the problem the post is having. How they are trying to solve it. The good thing is they might have a new post home in Miesau.

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER



John Gerdeman



GR79



GR05

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER



Jim Brotherton

Good Day Legionnaires,

First let me begin by saying 'thanks' for letting me enjoy another year as a Department Vice Commander, it is a challenging, rewarding task and I look forward to serving the Department, the Commander, the Posts under my purview, and my fellow members of the American Legion.

Since the last DEC it has been busy times. Visiting some of my Posts Commanders for one. I had an invitation and opportunity to represent our Department at a monument rededication and wreath laying at the County Mayo Peace Park in Castlebar Ireland, American Legion Commodore John Barry Post IR03 Commanded by Ron Howko. Ron has done an excellent job of working with the Irish Veterans Group in County Mayo, representing the American Legion and making us each aware how deep our Irish/American ties are with this land.

I had the opportunity to attend a lecture Ron gives to the local museums and functions. It covers the military, Irish/American, members who have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor (MOH). Of the 300+ Medals (my apologies if the number is wrong) he mentions, 19 have been awarded to Irish/American descendants, 2 of the 19 have been awarded the MOH twice.

The monument and rededication ceremony the following day was outstanding. The Irish Veterans organization hold the American Legion in high esteem, and I felt very welcome. I hope our American Legion members will one day have the opportunity to hear Commander Howko's lecture, maybe as a guest speaker at one of our DEC's.



MAYO PEACE PARK AND GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE



DEPARTMENT
VICE COMMANDER



Valerie Préhoda

Greetings from wonderful Pas-de-Calais to all my DFR comrades - Hopefully your lives have not been as hectic as mine - but it's all good! July has flown by - I turned 65 and spent a good portion of it prepping for the big bash, which included my official housewarming and my neighbor's 49th birthday. It was an epic event! Apart from working my Post (BE02) membership status and getting spun up on rules and regs, it's been a quiet month DFR-wise. I look forward to providing substantive input for next month's newsletter now that I've got my own house in order - Semper Fi!



My Fellow Legionnaires,

As July comes to an end and I have become the Immediate Past Department Commander (IPDC), I want to express my greatest appreciation for all the support that I received over the last year. Over a year ago, I stood before the body of our delegates and presented my plans and goals and the direction that I thought the

Department of France should be going. A year later, I once again stood before you and was both excited and saddened that we had reached the end of what I thought was a great but also challenging year. It was a great honor for me to have served and somehow survived the year as your Department Commander. I want to again congratulate Commander Robert Gray and wish him the best in the coming year. Congratulations to all the reelected officers and those who were newly elected, I know that you will all serve the Department with the highest standards of professionalism and will treat all our members with the dignity and respect that they all deserve.

Though I mentioned it many times throughout the convention weekend, I cannot express how thankful that I was to have great Legionnaires, mentors, and friends who exercised the greatest amount of patience with me as I navigated and discovered the right and left limits of my role as Commander. Through it all, I feel like as an organization, we were able to accomplish a large majority of my goals and set the stage for continuing improvements for the future of our organization.

Improving our ability to help veterans, improving communications, ensuring every member exercised their right to express their voice and vote, increasing attendance and participation at Department level events, conducting structured and productive Department-level meetings, and providing predictability were always my top priorities.

Those who shared my vision were instrumental in achieving all that we were able to achieve. We as a collective would not have achieved and advanced my initiatives without the work of a strong supporting cast, the Department officers. We clearly did not achieve everything, but that team took my vision and guidance and ran with them. I would not have survived the year without their hard work and patience.

Likewise, the Department of France would not have had such a wonderful year without the work of our Post's members and their leadership. I want to again thank you all for all your support, together we were effective and together we can continue to develop ourselves and our organization. Thank you for your support and thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your commander.

As many know, the reason that I did not seek reelection for this year, I have taken employment back in the United States and will be leaving my OCONUS assignment in August. I plan to continue supporting the Department of France as the IPDC and hope to return for the Department convention next summer.

I want to send a special thank you to the following individuals, whether you realize it or not, you helped me in more ways than you will ever know.

(Names appear without title and in no specific order)

Kandice Steinlicht
David Greaux
Frank Phillips
Rick Ojeda

Isaac Steinlicht
Lee Preston
Robert Gray
John Pope

James Settle
Todd Johnson
Mike Young
Jeff Danico

James Dennis
Charly Brown
Hans Stockenberger
John Gerdeman

Dennis Owens
Joseph Schram
Jim Brotherton
Quincy Foster

Doug Haggan
Lee Preston
Gary Miller
Roger Embry

IPDC Joshua Steinlicht

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For God and Country

The American Legion

Department of France

Director, Department Service Officers

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



Monday, July 3, 2023

Subject: Activities from the DSO, July 2023

This month was a busy month for the DSO. I will start with the most important event.

July 13th, 2023 Location LRMC; Landstuhl Army Hospital:

After a tour of the facility, I met with the Under Secretary of the Veteran Affairs, Mr Ronald Burke. I was accompanied by NEC Man James Settle and DSO David Fredlund. Also present was the BDD Director Phyllis Barnes.

We had a very productive meeting. Mr Burke had worked as a Veteran Service Officer for five years and was familiar with some of the problems the accredited service officers face.

In our 90-minute meeting, some of the issues discussed are below:

1. Foreign Medical Program (FMP)
 - a. Issues involving in non-issue of coverage letters for veterans needing expensive medical care, or surgery – therefore endangering lives, in some cases.
 - b. Direct deposit reimbursement instead of paper checks
2. Veteran exams quality
 - a. QTC performing "catch up". (Calling to schedule appointments, when appointments were finished)
 - b. QTC will have a mobile audio testing unit
3. Immediate Power of Attorney activation. Mr Burke had worked on the process so that VSOs can immediately activate the 21-22, without waiting 3 to 5 working days. He will check on the status and why this has not been accomplished.

All, in all, this meeting was a successful conversation with the VA! Mr Burke will be contacting me, to follow up on these, and more, issues.



July 6th, 2023 Location US Consulate Munich, Germany

I was invited to the US Consulate in Munich, Germany, to attend the 4th of July celebration with the Consular General Tim Liston. Members of the US Ansbach Garrison (where my office is located) were in attendance. I was able to talk to my consular contacts and the G Liston. I met the new CG from the 7th ATC and other officers. Of course, business cards and contact information were exchanged. Huge event with over 800 attendees.



July 7th, 2023 Location Nürnberg, Germany

Invitation for the German American Institute, in Nürnberg, Germany 4th of July event. Attendance was over 2500 guests! Huge event, met other veterans and exchanged contact information



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In honor of American independence, Paris Post 1 and the Franco-American community gathered in the 16th Arrondissement of Paris on the 4th of July to pay our respects to those who fought for our freedoms, and who helped create the United States of America. Special thanks to Adjoint Maire Katherine de Meaux and her team at the 16th Arrondissement for this extraordinary celebration for their community and visitors to Paris.



Paris Post 1 is very thankful for the extraordinary support and attendance from our community in Paris for our 4th of July ceremonies and events this year! We are grateful to have many special guests and visitors from around the world who joined us this year at Pershing Hall and for our ceremonies and garden party hosted by the 16th Arrondissement Mairie at the Place des Etats-Unis. The close relationship between France and the USA grows stronger every time we share these important days of independence and remembrance together.



4th of July at Pershing Hall was a success!

Paris Post 1 is very grateful to have a large community supporting our ceremony days. This year for the 4th of July, Paris Post 1 welcomed many members of our community, and several non-profit associations who are all dedicated to preserving history in France. In the photo above, American veterans from Paris Post 1 and Benjamin Franklin VFW Post 605 joined with members of local French association Le Soldats de Plomb. Special thanks to Rémi and his team at Le Soldats de Plomb for joining us, and for making the trip from Orleans to Paris!



Special guests and visitors from around the world

At this year's ceremony and social event, Paris Post 1 was grateful to see many from our community in France plus visiting family members from the USA. A special thank you to Amanda (center photo above with bright smile), daughter of Paris Post 1 Chaplain Gary Nadolski, for traveling from Chicago, Illinois in the USA to visit us for the 4th of July! Paris Post 1 is very grateful to have our family members in the USA joining us in France!



Special thank you to Pimco, BNP Paribas Real Estate, Jefferies Investments, Corporate Value Associates, Sadelle's and Kith!

This year's ceremony and social event for 4th of July was made possible due to the extraordinary efforts made by many at Paris Post 1 and Pershing Hall! We thank you all very much for your dedication and support for Paris Post 1's ceremonies at Pershing Hall. This year Pimco Real Estate and BNP Paribas Real Estate in Paris provided Paris Post 1 with a fully catered event in addition to Kith and Sadelle's Cafe in Pershing Hall baked up some of their tasty "French toast" (which was a favorite from one of our prior events at Pershing Hall). Thanks to the leadership and hard work of Chrisley Deleignies at Jefferies and Eric Torossian at BNP Paribas, our 4th of July event and ceremony at Pershing Hall was perfect! Paris Post 1 would like to give a special thank you to Jefferies Investments at Pershing Hall for their support for our Independence Day ceremony, it really means a lot to our American veterans, auxiliary and community to have the support of our local community partners.

**CONGRATULATIONS
COMMANDER MARK PRIMMER
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
Department of Europe**



In addition to celebrating our freedom, and honoring our past veterans for their services for our country, Paris Post 1 had the special opportunity to congratulate one of our own, local American veteran Mark Primmer, as he grows our partner veteran association in Paris: Benjamin Franklin VFW Post 605.

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 605 works with Paris Post 1 to ensure all veterans in France are able to join local activities, find ways to volunteer in their community, and also to find support when facing difficulties.

Paris Post 1 was honored to have Commander Mark Primmer join us at Pershing Hall as both of our organizations started our Independence Day ceremonies and events. Our typical ceremony days go from the morning to the evening.

For this year's 4th of July, Paris Post 1 honored Commander Primmer on his new position as the Commander for the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) for their Department of Europe. Mark has spent several years growing the VFW's veterans association in Paris, and he will be an excellent Department Commander for the VFW in Europe.

Check out Benjamin Franklin VFW Post 605's announcement for Commander Primmer on their website:

www.vfw605.org

Paris Post 1 thanks Commander Primmer for his dedication to his country and community, and we look forward to continuing our hard work together in France!

**MAIRIE du XVIeme
ARRONDISSEMENT de PARIS
Place des Etats-Unis, 4th of July**



After Pershing Hall everyone moved our Independence Day ceremonies to the Place des Etats-Unis in the 16th Arrondissement where Franco-American, Adjoint Maire Katherine de Meaux, lead our community with four more ceremonies.

Paris Post 1 is honored to share these important days with the leaders of our community in Paris. We thank Maire Francis Szpiner of the 16th Arrondissement for his support and generosity for this year's 4th of July ceremonies and garden party at the Place des Etats-Unis.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to supporting your community!



Group photo in front of the statue Marshal Jean-Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau.

Rochambeau was a French nobleman and general whose army played a critical role in helping the United States defeat the British Army at Yorktown in 1781 during the American Revolutionary War.

He was commander-in-chief of the French Expeditionary Force sent by France to help the American Continental Army fight against British forces.



Paris Post 1 Commander Bryan Schell and VFW Europe Commander Mark Primmer giving their annual 4th of July speech together representing American veteran solidarity in France.

Showing their solidarity in France, Paris Post 1 and VFW Post 605 have been giving a shared speech together for several years.

Paris Post 1 looks forward to working with the VFW to ensure American veterans and families in France have the support they need!



Daughters of the American Revolution Rochambeau Chapter in Paris with local French veteran association flag bearers at the 4th of July ceremony at the Washington and LaFayette statue at the Place des Etats-Unis.

George Washington met the nineteen-year-old Marquis de Lafayette on August 5, 1777, less than a week after the Continental Congress appointed the young Frenchman to be a volunteer Major General in the Continental Army. Lafayette was assigned to serve on Washington's staff.

Lafayette served the cause without pay and actually paid the equivalent of more than \$200,000 of his own money for the salaries and uniforms and other expenses for his staff, aides, and junior officers.

Paris Post 1 is honored to be able to pay homage to these two heroes of the American Revolution!



American and French military joining together to remember Independence Day in France

French Navy veteran and Conseillère Municipale for Neuilly-sur-Seine's Mission Coordination des actions Défense et Référént Armées, Madame Marie-Laure Charles, and Captain Thomas Winkler, U.S. Navy Attaché from the U.S. Embassy Paris, honoring French and American veterans of the American Revolution at the Place des Etats-Unis for 4th of July.

Paris Post 1 is very grateful to have the support and attendance of our veterans and military at our 4th of July.

Thank you for your service for your country and community!



The Ducher Family, creators of the Never Forget rose, visit Paris for the 4th of July!

Special guests, and friends of Paris Post 1, Monsieur Fabien and Madame Florence Ducher from the Roseraie Ducher outside of Lyon, France with Paris Post 1 Commander Bryan Schell. Many know the Ducher family for their creation of the Never Forget rose which was first created in honor of the Unknown Soldier Centennial which took place in 2021.

Monsieur Ducher's great grandfather grew and supplied the white roses for the Unknown Soldier choosing ceremony in Chalons-en-Champagne in France in 1921.

Paris Post 1 was very thankful for the Ducher family to take the trip from Lyon to Paris for this year's 4th of July ceremonies!

THE 369TH EXPERIENCE Honoring the legacy of the Harlem Hellfighters



Special guests from the 369th Experience visiting from the USA joined Paris Post 1 at the Place des Etats-Unis.

We were grateful that Stephany Neal and her band were able to join us for our 4th of July, and we look forward to keeping in touch with them on their next visit to France.

Check out the 369th Experience's video (below) and website to see how you can support and see them perform!



The 369th Experience is a nonprofit organization dedicated to acknowledging, educating and preserving the legacy of Lieutenant James Reese Europe, Second Lieutenant Noble Sissle, and The 369th Infantry Regiment.

This regiment, made up of African American and Puerto Rican soldiers, was one of the longest-serving and most decorated units of the American Expeditionary Force in World War I.

The 369th served on the battlefield, without backup, longer than any other American regiment.

More than 100 years later the 369th were officially named The Harlem Hellfighters and awarded the Congressional Gold Medal by President Biden.



Paris Post 1 is honored to recognize these heroes, and we look forward to seeing everyone at the 369th

Experience on their next trip back to France!

AMERICAN DELEGATION TO FRANCE Paralympics in Sucy-en-Brie



Paris Post 1 joins the American Delegation to France for the Paralympics on the 4th of July!



The Paris 2024 Games will be the biggest sporting event ever organized in France.

This event is set to take place over 12 days from 28 August to 8 September 2024, bringing together 4,400 of the world's most outstanding Paralympic athletes.

Paris Post 1 Chaplain Gary Nadolski paid a visit to the American Paralympic Delegation that visited France to thank them for their hard work and dedication to representing the USA in the Olympics.



Paris Post 1 is a supporter of the Paralympics and Olympics coming to France Summer 2024!

USS LAFAYETTE New Ship & Ceremony at Picpus



Denise Bauer, Ambassadrice des...
@USAmbFrance

Elle s'appellera USS Lafayette. Le nom choisi pour la future frégate lance-missiles de classe Constellation rend hommage au marquis de Lafayette et à son aide durant la Guerre d'indépendance 🇺🇸. Ravie d'être aux côtés du Secrétaire à la Marine des États-Unis Carlos del Toro @SecNAV et l'Amiral Vandier, Chef d'état-major de la Marine nationale 🇫🇷, pour fêter cette annonce spéciale qui renforce les liens entre nos deux pays !



From the Twitter feed of Ambassador Denise Bauer (@USAmbFrance) at the U.S. Embassy Paris (because we like to share good news): "It will be called USS Lafayette. The name chosen for the future Constellation-class missile frigate pays tribute to the Marquis de Lafayette and his help during the War of Independence. Glad to be with the Secretary of the Navy Carlos del Toro @SecNAV and @AdmiralVandier, Chief of Staff of the French Navy, to celebrate this special announcement which strengthens the ties between our two countries!"



Ambassador Bauer also laid a wreath with Captain Thomas Winkler at Lafayette's grave at the Picpus Cemetery in Paris.

Picpus Cemetery is the largest private cemetery in Paris, France, located in the 12th arrondissement. It was created from land seized from the convent of the Chanoinesse de St-Augustin, during the French Revolution.

The cemetery is very popular with American visitors who visit the tomb of the Marquis de Lafayette (1757–1834), over which an American flag always flies.



Picpus Cemetery's most famous tomb is that of the Marquis de Lafayette. The French aristocrat and general who was a close friend of many American Founding Fathers including George Washington, Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson.

Lafayette was only 19 years old and without combat experience when he arrived in America. Defying the explicit orders of King Louis XVI, who did not wish to provoke Great Britain, the marquis eluded authorities and crossed the Atlantic Ocean to assist the rebellious Americans in 1777.

He died in 1834 from natural causes at the age of 76.

Paris Post 1 honors and remembers the Marquis de Lafayette for his dedication to the United States of America!

All photos and news of the new USS Lafayette ship and Picpus ceremony were shared from Ambassador Bauer's Twitter feed.

INDEPENDENCE DAY FRANCE Full parade including India's Punjab Army with full military display and flyovers



Independence Day in France is a big event which includes participants from all of France's departments around the world.

Bastille Day celebrates the storming of the Bastille prison in Paris on July 14, 1789, a moment of immense cultural and historical significance for the French Republic. It marks the start of the French Revolution, which was a pivotal moment in French history that came not long after the American Revolution.

The Pioneers of the Foreign Legion are a "unit of tradition". They march at the head of Foreign Legion detachments during ceremonial parades. The

Legion's Pioneers are bearded, wear buffalo leather aprons (tablier de buffle), and carry polished axes on their shoulders.

The unit is the only one of its kind remaining in service in the French Armed Forces.



This year Bastille Day Parade will have about 6,300 soldiers in various

marching contingents that includes tri-services contingent of Indian Army, Navy and IAF.

The Punjab Regiment, seen in the attached video and photo above, is one of the oldest in the Indian Army. The first battalion which today constitutes this regiment was created in 1805 by the then Maharaja of Patiala.

Indian Army's Punjab Regiment March At Bastille Day covered by the Hindustan Times



A military parade to mark Bastille Day took place in Paris, from the Arc de Triomphe to the Place Concorde all along the Champs-Élysées.

French President Emmanuel Macron and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi both attended the parade.

Paris Post 1 commemorates 231 years of independence in France!



V-J Day (1945) Aug 14, 2023

Japan's surrender, which marked the end of World War II, technically came on Aug. 15, 1945. But due to the time difference, which spans the international date line, word came to the United States on Aug. 14. Thus, that day (today) is celebrated as V-J Day.



PCC President Tim Litherland

Department of France Past Commanders Club 2024MY



PCC Secretary Frank Phillips

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

MARGRATEN POST NL01

MARGRATEN, HOLLAND

Margraten Post NL01 in The Netherlands has had a wonderful time at the FreedomFest that the Brunssum Garrison puts on each July to celebrate our Independence Day. This year the Fest was on the 1st of July. NL01 had a great showing serving the beverages to the crowd of over 1,000 people there for the various venders and firework show at 23:00. And our SGT-at-Arms Mark Chernek entertained the crowd with his band Music4Vets with a terrific show. We also had a chance to formally say farewell to our Past Post Commander Joshua Steinlicht and to present to him a hand-made Honor Walking Stick specially made for him from Mark Chernek. Enjoy the photos, Commander Dennis.





It is a sad day when you must place a Comrade and a good friend in the ground after his loss to cancer. Comrade and PUFL Jim “Jimbo” Perea was transferred to Post Everlasting on the 17th of June 2023. Post NL01 had the distinct privilege to provide a military honor guard funeral for his family. I can say that of all the flags I have presented to widows, this one was the hardest one for me as they are such dear friends of mine and my wife’s. Commander Dennis



KAISERSLAUTERN POST GR01 KAISERSLAUTERN, GERMANY

Kaiserslautern American Legion Post GR01, hosted the Veterans Family Picnic on 10 June 2023, together with The Post Auxiliary, VFW Post 0614 and the USO. The event could not have been so successful without the support of the Vogelweh Commissary and AAFES. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to Florian Augustine, (Vogelweh Grocery Manager), Louis Santiago, Kris Ravens, Randy Ross (Store Workers) and last but not least Daniel Grimes Sales District Supervisor, Exchange Europe Region Bakery Army & Air Force Exchange Service Europe. Kaiserslautern Post GR01, 2nd Vice Commander Mike Young presents certificates to Florian Augustine and Louis Santiago.

David Garcia - Commander GR01

FLANDERS FIELDS POST BE02 WEST FLANDERS, BELGIUM

Independence Day at USAG Brussels

In conjunction with USAG Brussels Independence Day event on Saturday, 01 July, members of the Flanders Field Post BE02, scouts from Troop 457 and friends provided a fundraising picnic, a variety of carnival games and even hosted a BB Gun range. The carnival games included a fishing game, suction cup archery, milk jug toss as well as several other games. In addition to the other activities, the Post also hosted an American Apple Pie contest. Colonel Lindsey Matthews, USAG Benelux Commander and Ms. Stacy Perez, USAG Benelux MWR volunteered to be judges of the event and were able to choose a first-place winner.



Post BE02 sponsors Eagle Scout Project

American Legion "Flanders Field" Post BE02 sponsored the Eagle Scout Project of Robert 'Trig' Mabrey, Troop 457, Brussels. Trig's project was to provide a location, materials, and labor to emplace a plaque monument to commemorate CPL William Leonard (DOD: 14 July 1918, 27th Division, WWI). The dedication ceremony took place on Friday, 14 July at the

location of the monument. The keynote speaker for the memorial dedication was Major Michael Balazinski, US Embassy Army Attaché. Guest included members of Troop 457, and dignitaries from the Municipality of Heuvelland

The plaque reads:

This monument is dedicated to the memory of Corporal William Leonard, (Jul 1890 – 14 July 1918) the first American combat soldier to die in Lys Liberation Offensive. CPL Leonard hailed from the town of Flushing, NY, where he served as the editor of the local newspaper. He enlisted immediately when war was declared and joined the 107th Infantry Regiment, 27th division. He continued writing in the regimental gazette and was well loved by his comrades for his wit and cheer. Leonard volunteered to join a British observation party "just to see how they do it." During an operation to repair barbed wire the night of the 14th, he was hit by an artillery fragment and killed instantly, the first man of his division to be killed in action. Corporal Leonard was buried on the Schapenberg above this monument, and his body was later moved to the Flanders Field American Cemetery, where he rests in honor to this day.



Sons of the American Legion Squadron BE02

Our newest and youngest member to our SAL squadron, James Plehiers, has become a junior guide at the Flanders Field American Cemetery.



Flanders Field American Cemetery Adoption Program

In April of 2014, the American Legion "Flanders Field" Post BE02 implemented an adoption program for the buried soldiers at the Flanders Field American Cemetery. Within one month all the graves and

names on the Wall of the Missing were adopted. Over 95% of the adopters were Belgian Citizens. Over the last 9 years, the adopters have continued to commemorate their adopted soldiers by searching for relatives. Many of the soldiers were immigrants to the United States and therefore had relatives from several countries of Europe.

Many others left family in the United States.



Adopter Gunther Verbeke and family, from Anzegem, Belgium, attended the monument dedication ceremony for CPL William Leonard on 14 July.

Here are two stories that have recently been published in local newspapers.



Adopter Godfried Claerhout from Tielt, Belgium adopted the grave of Captain William Erb. CPT Erb was killed in action 04 November 1918

From Gazette of Antwerp

Adopter, Krista Thys and husband from Zandhoven Belgium, visits soldier's family in California. In 2014, the Zandhovense adopted the grave of the American soldier George Steven March at the Flanders Field American Cemetery in Waregem. George March was killed in action on November 3, 1918.



GR 09's ANNUAL INDEPENDENCE DAY PICNIC

With the 4th of July falling on a regular workday GR 09 decided to hold its annual Independence Day picnic on the weekend and it was the right decision as 70 people participated in this event, a new record. Everything fell into place, perfect weather, large quantities of food, and enough volunteers to help make this a large success. Also adding to the success of the day was that two new members were recruited into the post. Since the event was on a weekend, children were able to attend, a first and refreshing experience for the post.

As in previous years GR 09 invited the members of its German partner unit, Ulmer Artillery Vereine 1906 and the group Donau Americans and Friends and everyone mingled and enjoyed seeing familiar faces again.



Pete Stamper and Morgan Anthony flipping burgers and ribs



Sara Olivarez keeping kids entertained with games & sporting events

JOHN WAYNE POST GR79

HEILBRONN, GERMANY

4th of July fest: Legion and SAL members



General Membership Meeting



4th of July Fest (L-R) GR03 Adjutant John Pruitt, Department Vice Commander John Gerdeman & Joe Brown.



Legion Rider Biker fest.

Boys State

Boys State / Girls State Brochures

I have 100 brochures available to the Posts. If you want some of these brochures, send me a mailing address and a point of contact. It is best to get these brochures out to the school within the first couple of weeks of classes.

AFN interviews

In August / September, I will be coordinating the following AFN interviews for the candidates that attended this year's program.

- Ansbach
- Stuttgart
- Lakenheath
- SHAPE

DEPARTMENT BOY'S STATE COMMITTEE



Joseph Schram

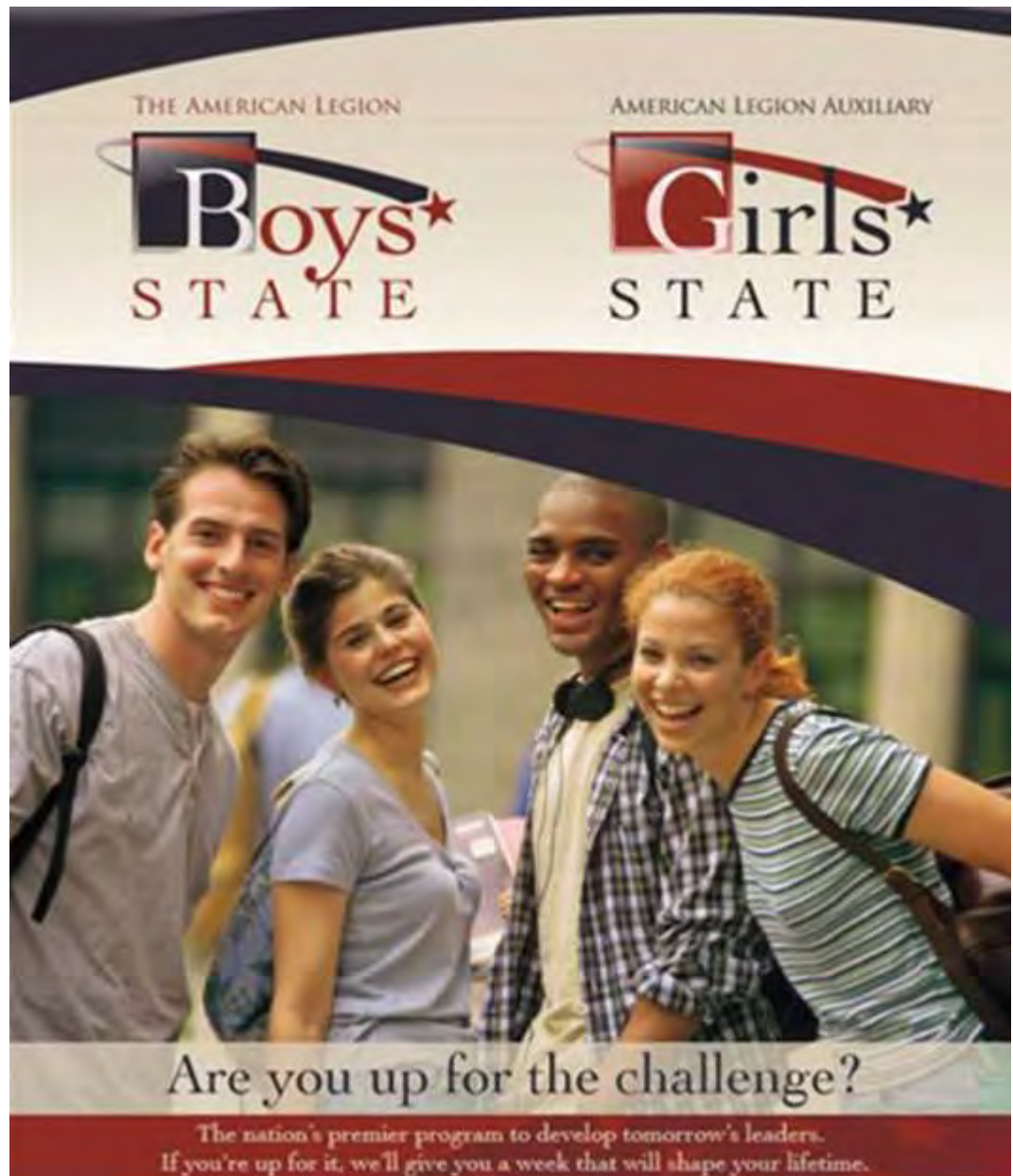
If your Post's Americanism Chairperson would like to participate in this interview, please let me know.

Americanism

Training Session: Boys State

I will be hosting and Boys State / Girls State training session on Tuesday evening, 12 September starting at 19:00 CET. This session will be recorded and available for later use. I will include the meeting link in the September edition of the Department Newsletter. The following items will be discussed during the training session:

- Lessons Learned from the 2023 programs.
- Advertising your Post's program
- Who is your target audience?
- Budgeting and financing your Post's Program
- Transportation coordination





Department of France

DEPARTMENT AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS DIRECTOR



Jim Brotherton

Good day Riders.

Before I continue with my introduction, I first want to thank the outgoing Department Rider Director and Assistant Director, Eddy Kane and Lee Preston. Both individuals did a wonderful job of getting the Legion Rider program back on track. I would especially want to thank Lee Preston for all the work, effort, and participation he has put into the American Legion Rider Legacy Scholarship Program on behalf of the Department. I hope we can count on Lee to continue these efforts and make us proud. These two gentlemen leave some pretty big boots to fill, and I hope I'm to the task.

Further with introductions. I'm Jim Brotherton, a lot of you may know me, for those that don't. I've been appointed by Department Commander Robert Grey to head up the Rider program within the Department. I'm Post NL01 Rider Director and helped establish our Chapter back in 2018. Most of my riding experience has been here in Europe, covering more years than I care to admit. I'm passionate about motorcycle riding even at the tender age of 72. With every ride you learn something new. I have continued to take safety and riding instructions even as late as last year, taking a 4 day 'ride the hills' training program. I encourage everyone to continue to take such classes and participate in these programs, it will only make you more proficient when out there on the road.

I will be looking to the 'Riders' we have in Europe to help me with further developing our program. I'm open to ideas, suggestions, and even constructive criticism to make our program better.

Please be safe out there, it's the 'other guy' you really need to look out for. Keep your head on swivel. Free feel to contact me anytime if you have questions, comments or just say 'hi'.

Department of France American Legion Riders,

I want to do two things in this month's Department Newsletter Article for the Legion Riders. First, I am happy to that Jim Brotherton decided to take the Department Legion Riders Director position. I believe that he will do a great job and I will help him when I can.

Next up, we did not make our goal for the Legacy Scholarship Fund donation this year but, I am extremely proud to announce that thanks to Riders Chapters NL01 and GR42, Personal Donations, and the selling of two Riders coins we will be able to turn over a check at National Convention this year for \$770,00.

We will get started on next year's donation as soon as I get back from National Convention. The first place that we will start is at the Department DEC on 28 October 2023 in Saint Avold, France. More to come on this in the next couple of Newsletter articles.

Thank you to those that assisted in this year's Legacy Scholarship Fund Donation!

Lee Preston/Chapter GR42 Director

DETACHMENT
COMMANDER



John Fleming



DETACHMENT
ADJUTANT



James Dennis

DETACHMENT OF FRANCE

Hello Comrades,

Sorry, but my new Cap has not arrived yet. I still plan to hold a video conference on the first Sunday of the month, starting in September. More information to follow when I return from my travels in the US.

Upcoming Events:

1400, 3 September 2023 – WebEx video Conference.

1 March 2024 – 3rd DEC, TBA.

14 October 2023 – 2nd DEC, Heilbronn, hosted by GR79.

1 June 2024 – 4th DEC/Conference/1st DEC, TBA.

I will have a proper photo as soon as my new Detachment Cap arrives.

John Fleming

Coast Guard Birthday Aug 4, 2023

Aug. 4 is the birthday of the Coast Guard, founded in 1790 with congressional authorization to build the first set of vessels aimed to help combat smuggling and enforce tariffs and taxes. [Here are some things you might not know](#) about the service branch that operates under the Department of Homeland Security.



Purple Heart Day Aug 7, 2023

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 28TH OF THE MONTH. I WOULD PREFER IF YOU SENT IT IN WORD FORMAT, PDF WOULD ALSO DO.
GET THE WORD OUT!**

Davidg1959@t-online.de

**DEPARTMENT
NEWSLETTER
EDITOR**



David Greaux



104TH AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL CONVENTION AUG 25, 2023

The [104th National Convention is Aug. 25-31, in Charlotte](#). National convention attendees participate in commission meetings, workshops and training sessions, as well as hear from distinguished guests, see award presentations and elect a new national commander.

FODPAL NATIONAL CONVENTION BREAKFAST

Past FODPAL President Jimmie Foster has called for the 2023 National Convention Breakfast to be held on Monday August 28, 2023 at 0700hrs. The breakfast will be held at Charlotte Convention Center, Room 207, Sections A-C, Meeting Level.

All FODPAL members and guests are welcome to attend.
As a reminder please don't forget to bring your Department giveaways for the breakfast raffle, we had some very good prize's last year.



GRANDE CHEF DE GARE *DAVID GARCIA*



GRANDE CORRESPONDANT *DAVID GREAUX*

La Société des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux (The Society of Forty Men and Eight Horses) is an independent, by invitation, honor society of American veterans, more commonly known as "The Forty & Eight".

The Forty & Eight is committed to charitable and patriotic aims. Our purpose is to uphold and defend the United States Constitution of the United States, to promote the well-being of veterans, their widows, widowers, and orphans, and to actively participate in selected charitable endeavors, which include among others, programs that promote child welfare and nurses training.

Membership is by invitation, and open only to honorably discharged veterans and honorably serving members of the United States Armed Forces.

Our next Promenade will be held Saturday 07 October 2023 – Kaiserslautern, Germany