Hello Comrades,

I hope everyone had an enjoyed month as February ends. The Department had the Oratorical contest this month in Ansbach hosted by Post GR 1982. They did a fantastic job with the set up and the event was a very organized thank you Comrade Buchanan and the rest of the team from your Post. We had two contestants one from BE02 and the other was from Post GR1982. Both contestants did a superb job and I was very proud to witness how smart our youth are today and how competitive the event was. Sadly, there could only be one 1st place winner and this year 1st place winner was from BE02 followed by 2nd place GR1982, I would like to congratulate the sponsors for providing some great competitors. It was great to see the Department NECMan James Settle and the IPC James Dennis in attendance at the event.

I would like to thank all the Posts and the Department members for their continued support to help support the Department recruiting and renewal of membership this month. Due to our schedule we were not able to conduct any awareness drives, but we will attempt to have one on 29 Feb 20 in Ramstein.

Don't forget the following upcoming events:
*Service Officer Training 20 Mar 20 in Ansbach / *The 3rd DEC 21 Mar 20 also in Ansbach

This month comments I know is a little short hopefully next month I will have more to input for the newsletter.

Respectfully, Jimmie Dale / Commander / Department of France

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**DEPARTMENT OFFICERS 2020MY**

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**ADJUTANT Maxwell Rice**  
GR79  colwichboy@yahoo.com
DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE
AWARD PACKETS 2020MY

The Department Awards Committee will convene on 11 April 2020. Posts must submit their award packets NLT 6 April 2020.

All Post must submit their Awards Packets to the Department VCAL by the 6th of April 2020. All packets must be submitted in hard copy. In addition, electronic copies must be sent to VCAL Brown at vcalbrown50@gmail.com, NECMan Settle at james.settle@kabelbw.de and Department Adjutant Rice at colwichboy@yahoo.com.

Awards submitted after the 6th of April 2020 will not be reviewed or submitted to the Awards Committee.

Award packets may also be turned in at the 3rd DEC on 21 March 2020, note that electronic copies are still required.

The address to send your hard copy of your award packets is: Joe Brown, Bambergerstr 1, 74078 Heilbronn

Department of France Past Commanders Club

PCC President Dennis Owens info@dennisowens.com

PCC Secretary Quincy Foster qcfoster@yahoo.com

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 office you are eligible to join

Initial dues for the Pašt Commanders Club is only $25.00 / Renewal dues for the Pašt Commanders Club is only $10.00
American honored this month by France for WWII exploits and work on PTSD dies at 94

Stephen J. Weiss stands near the Arc de Triomphe on Feb. 14, 2020, in Paris, where he took part in a ceremony to honor veterans of the Office of Strategic Services, a precursor to the CIA that helped liberate France during World War II. Weiss, 94, died last week in his London apartment.

CHAD GARLAND/STARS AND STRIPES

Shortly before a twilight ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris on Friday, Feb. 14, 2020, are, from left, French Afghanistan veteran Cyril Pefaure, U.S. Navy veteran and American Legion post commander Brian Schell, and World War II Army veteran Stephen Weiss. Weiss worked with the Office of Strategic Services, a precursor of the CIA, behind enemy lines in 1944. Weiss, 94, died last week in his London apartment.

CHAD GARLAND/STARS AND STRIPES
DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER…Frank Phillips

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News from the Department Service Officer:

Our Department Service Office is getting swamped with new Claims! We need your support. We will be offering a basic PSO training course on the 20th of March 2020. Anyone may attend this time. The course will give you an insight on how a PSO may help a Veteran. It will not allow you to “assist” the Veteran in filing a claim. You will learn the following:

- What forms are needed
- POC of our, current, 3 American Legion VA Reps
- What are presumptive condition
- What are secondary conditions
- Survivor Death Benefits
- Foreign Medical Program
- And so on…

At the end of the course, you will have to take a test. Upon successful completion of the test, you will be awarded a certificate at the 3rd DEC the next day.

We need your support!
Veterans Commissary and Exchange Privileges

INSTRUCTIONS

Preface: WASHINGTON — Beginning New Year’s Day, 2020, commissaries, post exchanges and recreational facilities across the Department of Defense will open their doors to more than 4.1 million additional veterans.

Privileges will be extended to veterans who are Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war, and all who have any level of service-connected disabilities. Individuals who are designated, as primary family caregivers of eligible veterans will also be granted privileges if they are recognized under the Department of Veterans Affairs’ Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.


Currently for Germany only

Following this checklist will assist you in obtaining your privileges. Please complete each question.

☐ **Question: Do you have a Veteran Affairs Claim Decision letter stating that you have a Service-connected disability of 0% or above?**
  ➔ If you do have a service-connected condition, continue to next question.
  ➔ **If not:** Visit your nearest Veteran Service Organization or VA Office to submit your Claim.
    o Proceed to next question when accomplished.

☐ **Question: Do you have a Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)?**
  ➔ If you have a VHIC card, proceed to the next question
  ➔ 1. **If not:** you must be enrolled in the Veteran Health Care System! You can accomplish this by filling out the VA Form 10-10EZ or calling 001 877 222 8387.
      [https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/](https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/)
  2. Plan to visit the States to obtain a VHIC card.
    a. Prior to departing to CONUS, you should contact the local VA hospital in the area you are visiting. Visit [https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/allstate.asp](https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/allstate.asp) Ask them if your records are on file in their system and make an appointment. (If your files are in the system, you will not need a copy of your decision letter)
      i. Please be aware that it takes 5 to 10 working days to receive, via mail, your VHIC card.
      ii. They will not send the card overseas; they only send the card to an APO address or to a local US mailing address (relative).
    a. Proceed to next question when accomplished.
Question: Do you have an Installation Access Card (IAC) to access a military installation?

- If you have a base installation pass, please proceed to next question.
- If not: You will need the following documentation in order to apply for your installation pass

Veterans residing in Germany:
- Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)
- Valid Passport
- PGCC (German Police Good Conduct Certificate (Führungszeugnis))
  - This may be obtained at your local city hall (Rathaus)
- Current German residency permit (Aufenthalterlaubnis).
- AE Form 190-16A (Application for Installation Access)
  - AE Form 190-16A can be found online at [https://www.aepubs.eur.army.mil/](https://www.aepubs.eur.army.mil/)
- AE Form 604-1B (Security Questionnaire)
  - AE Form 604-1B can be found online at [https://www.aepubs.eur.army.mil/](https://www.aepubs.eur.army.mil/)
- LNSP – Local National Screening Program (If residing in the EU - will be submitted through IACS)

Tourist visiting Germany up to 90 days:
- Valid Passport
- Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)

- Contact your nearest military IACS office for an appointment or walk in possibility.
    - Be aware that the Installation Pass will limit you to access Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and one US military installation.
    - Proceed to next question when accomplished.

Question: Do you have a German “Pink” customs card?

- If you have your German Customs Form, please proceed to last question.
- If not: Contact the nearest US military customs office.

Veterans residing in Germany:
- You will need the following
  - Valid Passport
  - Current German residency permit (Aufenthalterlaubnis).
  - VHIC (Veteran Health Identification Card)

Tourist visiting Germany up to 90 days:
- Flight Itinerary showing when you entered Germany and when you leave
  - Must use privileges a minimum of 30 days or more!

Once you visit the local US Customs Office, on base, and have met the requirements, you will be issued a Status Verification form that you must take to the local German Tax Office (Zollamt): You will be issued a German Customs Certificate (Pink Card). At the end of each month, you must take the receipts of all US purchases (Commissary and PX) to the Zollamt and pay German taxes on your purchases.

- Proceed to next question when accomplished.

QUESTION: Why are you not shopping yet?

Frank Phillips (Francis Dale Phillips) USAG ANSBACH MPD VSO, UNIT 28721 BOX 6511, APO AE 09177
Tel: +49 9802 83 2269 Wed & Fri 1300-1600
email: francis.phillips2@va.gov
On Saturday 22 February at the Ansbach Middle School, Victoria Geehreng, a junior at the Brussels American High School competed in the American Legion Department of France's 2020 Oratorical “Scholarship” Contest.

As the winner of the contest, she now advances to the National Oratorical Contest in April at Indianapolis, Indiana. She will compete with 52 other candidates from around the United States for a $20,000 scholarship.

Since 1938, the oratorical contest has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship. The American Legion's National Organization awards the scholarships, which can be used at any college or university in the United States.

Submitted by Joseph Schram / Commander BE02
2020 MY OFFICERS

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Judge Advocate James Dennis  detachmentdennis@gmail.com  Sergeant-at-Arms Lee Preston  lpreston1957@gmail.com

07 March 2020 – SAL 3RD DEC hosted by GR79

Gaststette “Zum Reegen Im Reid”
Reidweg 52
74078 Heilbronn- Frankenbach, Germany

06 June 2020 – SAL Convention hosted by GR79

Online Membership Processing Now Available for
Sons of the American Legion
Further facility closures at US bases in Europe possible as coronavirus spreads, Wolters says


Joe Gromelski/Stars and Stripes

SGT William D. Nelson Post GR09

GR09 and local community pay tribute to seven WW II Americans who died while serving their country

For the past seven years GR 09 has paid tribute to the memory of seven WW II Americans by conducting a memorial service and the placing of a wreath at a monument erected by the village for the seven who died when their B-17 bomber crashed near the village of Pfaffenhofen. Each year the Bürgermeister (Mayor) of Pfaffenhofen attended this event organized by GR 09 however this year was to be different as it was the 75th anniversary of the crash and Mayor Josef Walz wanted a larger ceremony to recognize the sacrifices of lives of young men and women during wartime. Therefore in 2019 it was agreed that he would organize the support of the village officials and local residents and GR 09 was to take care of the American involvement.

Coincidently 22 February 2020 was a Saturday and the weather, unlike previous years, was perfect and both the Mayor and GR 09 Post Commander Jerry Aman were amazed at the large group of attendees at the monument to listen to the speeches and to witness the wreath laying ceremony.

A total of 29 local Americans and Legionnaires were accompanied by Bundeswehr (German Military) personnel, reservists and veteran organizations and approximately 70 local citizens. GR09 was pleased to have the support of US EUCOM Chaplain (Colonel) Kleet Barclay and US Air Force Ramstein Civilian Michael Edwards who gave dedication speeches. Interestingly Mr. Edwards was an honored guest at the official dedication of the monument in March 2011.

Wreaths and floral arrangements were placed at the monument by GR09, Village of Pfaffenhofen and the Ulmer Traditional Artillery 1906 Club. After prayers by the Chaplains of three denominations taps was played by a local bugler and everyone retired to the Marienfried Religious Retreat restaurant for coffee and cake.

Post Commander Jerry Aman flanked by Mayor local Bundeswehr reservists and veterans clubs Walz and local clergy.
Further information on the monument can be found at www.legion.org/memorials.

Your Military

These military clinics will stop taking 200,000 non-active duty patients. Here’s the list.

Patricia Kime

In this file photo, a Navy corpsman assigned to Naval Health Clinic Corpus Christ, administers an influenza vaccine to a patient. The facility is among those slated for changes under a new Pentagon plan to shift the mission of some military health facilities to caring for only active duty personnel (U.S. Navy photo by Bill W. Love/Released)

~ 10 ~
Maintaining American Legion Nonpartisanship

This year ushers in a presidential election. And while American Legion posts are encouraged to promote “Get Out the Vote” (GOTV) efforts, it is important to remember to remain nonpartisan in the process.

The American Legion is a nonpolitical, nonpartisan organization but advocates for all U.S. citizens to register and vote in all elections. The American Legion does not show preference for or against any particular candidate or political party.

Since its inception in 1920, The American Legion’s Get Out The Vote program has encouraged Americans to exercise their right to vote and help others understand the importance of the electoral process. The program suggests activities on how American Legion posts can increase voter turnout such as calling potential voters to get to the polls, volunteer in their communities by providing rides to and from the polls if necessary, use social media to share information about poll locations and times, and place newspaper ads or public service announcements in local media that promote registration and voting.

To help with GOTV efforts, American Legion Family members can download The American Legion’s “Get Out the Vote” and “Vote, America” brochures at www.legion.org/vote/publications. GOTV public service announcements and news releases are also available.

You can still encourage voting registration and participation while remaining nonpartisan, and here’s how and why.

Q: How can an American Legion post avoid the appearance of partisanship when conducting GOTV activities?
A: Volunteers working on an American Legion-sponsored registration and voting drive should not wear campaign buttons or make their personal views about candidates, parties and issues known in any way while they are engaged in nonpartisan activities for their post. Campaign materials or literature should be removed from an area where nonpartisan activities are taking place.

Q: Can a member be active in a campaign when the Legion has to remain nonpartisan?
A: As individuals, Legionnaires can be as partisan as they like. Legionnaires engaged in partisan activities – such as attending a candidate’s rally – should do so without wearing the American Legion cap or other Legion attire. When working for the Legion post, a member must treat all candidates equally without making candidate endorsements. To do otherwise will endanger the post’s nonprofit status with the IRS.

Q: Why can’t The American Legion endorse a candidate?
A: Federal election laws require that any registration drive conducted or sponsored by groups like The American Legion be nonpartisan. In other words, the IRS mandates the strict nonpartisanship of all such activities by organizations eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions under Section 501(c)(19) of the Code. Failure to do so could endanger an American Legion post’s nonprofit status. A nonpartisan organization does not support, oppose or provide aid to any candidate for public office or to any political party. In a nonpartisan drive, registration and voting assistance, and information and materials must be offered and made available to all, regardless of which candidate or party they support.

(Reprint of American Legion digital article “American Legion reminds you to vote in 2020”, February 03, 2020)
American Legion
Department of France

3rd Department Executive Committee Meeting
March 21, 2020
Katterbach, Germany

LOCATION:
American Legion Post 1982 Home
Enter through Main Gate
Sachsen bei Ansbach
GPS: 49.306547, 10.645799

Accommodations available
Gasthof Goldner Stern
Ansbacher Str. 3
91560 Heilsbronn
09872 1262

Gasthof Hotel zu Windmühle
Rummelsberger Str. 1
91522 Ansbach
Tel: 0981 972000

Army Ansbach Lodging
Urlas Housing, Bldg. 8152
91522 Ansbach
09802 837014

No Base Access?
Contact Adjutant Estus Smith: estus@live.com
before 1 March 2020

The American Legion Family
DEC Preparations

The Department Executive Committee (DEC) meeting, hosted by Post GR1982 in Ansbach-Katterbach on 21 March 2020, should be on your calendar by now. We hope that we will have a good turn-out for this important Department event. What may NOT yet be on your calendar are the dates for several very important preparatory actions that are critical to the success of this DEC. These dates include:

1 March – Deadline for getting on the access roster to get access to the military installation. This date has probably passed by the time you read this. If you need to be signed in, try to ride with someone who can sign you in, i.e. Active Duty or Retired Soldier or DA Civilian with access. If this is impossible for you, contact Estus Smith, Adjutant of Post GR1982, for assistance. Email is estus@live.com

ASAP – If you are planning to spend the night of 20 or 21 March in Katterbach, contact one of the following to make your reservations.

Gasthaus Zum Loewen, Marktplatz 6, 91560 Heisbronn, phone 09872-1231

Hotel-Gasthof zur Windmuehle, Rummelsberger Str 1, 91522 Ansbach, phone 0981-972-000

**Gasthaus Goldener Stern has no more vacancies.

15 March – Attending the DEC and planning to eat the noon meal on-site? Please contact Estus at estus@live.com to confirm your meal.

15 March – If you are planning to attend the “meet and greet” meal Friday evening, please confirm your attendance with Estus at estus@live.com by this date.

Should you have questions or need further information, please contact Post Adjutant Estus Smith at the email above or cell 0152-5406-8940.

Hope to see you at the DEC.

Estus Smith
Adjutant
Post GR1982

David Chavez Post 1982 hosted the American Legion Department of France Oratorical Contest on Saturday, February 22, 2020, at the Ansbach Middle/High School.

Victoria Geehreng, a Junior at the Brussels American High School, was the winner. She will represent the Department of France at the 2020 National High School Oratorical Contest Finals in Indianapolis, Indiana on April 18-19.
Second place honors went to Celine Liptrot, a Senior at Ansbach American Middle/High School.

The National-level contest will be held at the Wyndham Indianapolis West hotel, where more than 50 youth from across the country deliver a speech on the U.S. Constitution. The top three finalists will compete for a total of $52,000 in college scholarships.

The American Legion Oratorical Contest affords high school students the opportunity to gain an appreciation and knowledge of the Constitution of the United States, develop their leadership and speaking skills and to help prepare them for the duties and responsibilities of American citizenship.

First Place Victoria Geehreng

Second Place Celine Liptrot

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.

**GRAND ELECTIONS...25 April 2020...BE THERE!**

*Gaststette “Zum Reegen Im Reid”*

*Reidweg 52*

*74078 Heilbronn- Frankenberg, Germany*
HEY YOU!

DON´T FORGET...

THE DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE
AMERICAN LEGION THIRD DEC
ON SATURDAY 21 MARCH 2020

SEE YOU THERE!
CORONAVIRUS SAFETY

Follow these easy steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds.
- Sneeze or cough? Cover your mouth.
- Disinfect surfaces around your home and work.
- If you’re sick, stay home.

American Red Cross