We are now into the 3rd month of 2021. Remember that Covid-19 is still around. We must remain safe and protect ourselves, practice social distance and wear a mask when and where required. There is also another variant of Covid-19 going around, more cases have been reported here in Germany. A Vaccine is now being distributed into Groups. The Lockdown are starting to slow down and we hope to see some business’s opening soon in stages. We still must remain open hearted and think positive.

This coming month we will hold the Virtual Oratorical Contest due to that National had canceled theirs due to the Pandemic, we will also be holding our 3rd DEC virtual this month. I suggest that all Post refrain from having any closed meetings and follow the local laws.

Membership has been going strong thanks to all those Members that have renewed, we must reach our 100% goal for 2021. As of 28 Feb 2021, we stand at 85 %, We are still number 1 at National. Some Posts have already reach or exceeded this level. Make sure that you reach out to all your Post Members to renew, instruct your Members on how to renew online.

Most of all let us not forget the Buddy Check, remember that some Post members might not have a smartphone or computer. Pay them a Visit to see how they are doing. let us not forgot those that cannot be home due to mission requirements and those that have no one or nowhere to celebrate.

Thanks.
Greetings Comrades,

As we move into March, I will continue to stress a few items:

1. myLegion.org:
   
a. Most of our active Posts are using this tool very effectively. One active Post has not accessed their account since 3 January 2020 (if you are having problems accessing your account, contact me). The good news is, that of the 28 Posts with myLegion.org accounts, 21 Posts have accessed their account in January.
   
b. myLegion2021: As we all should know by now, myLegion.org is changing in the future. The announced switchover date is 1 April 2021 (and it’s no April Fools joke). The video at this link provides more information: [myLegion 2021](#)

2. Consolidated Post Report (CPR): The 2021 Membership year CPR is available on myLegion.org. We now have 17 out of 32 Posts that have now started their 2021 CPR. Great Job!

   Here is a suggestion: When you are in myLegion.org updating Membership, stop by the CPR and get it started. It will only take a few minutes, and your Post will be GREEN on the Department Adjutants report. Thanks.

3. Certification of Officers: Reminder, after Post elections or a change in Post Officers, it is required to send two forms to the Department Adjutant. Immediately after Post elections, the Notification of Post/Squadron Commanders & Adjutants form must be sent to the Department Adjutant. As soon as possible after Post elections, the Certification of Post Officials report needs to be forwarded to the Department Adjutant.
From Past Department VCAL Joe “Charlie” Brown,

Department Officers meet in Heilbronn, Germany to present some of the 2020MY awards to those present.

The other awards will be mailed to the recipients.

Pictured are Commander Award to PC Dale, Past Commander pin to PC Dale, PC Dale received Silver Brigade, PC awards for his Vice Commanders, PC receives Gold Brigade and Detachment Commander receives Emblem & Sale certificate for 200% Membership, 2020MY.
Greetings Comrades, I hope everyone was able to brave the winter weather last month and that you all continue to stay healthy and virus-free as we are starting to transition into the Spring months! In February, I had the honor of visiting Paris Post FR01 (virtually) for their monthly meeting. The Paris Post is doing wonderful things with the preservation of American Legion history. As I listened to Post Commander Bryan Shell discuss some of his Post’s recent activities in his Commander’s report, I realized that we, The American Legion Department of France, are making history every day. This past year, we paved the way for virtual meetings and learned how to take advantage of the technology that brings us together month after month. It is up to us to record and document our history and preserve it for the countless generations to come after ours. The stakeholders throughout the Department who hold all of the photographs, documents, and stories must ensure that these historical items are made accessible to everyone as Post property. The caretakers of our historical information are autonomous, and they must pass the information on as they transition into and out of these positions. It should be every Member’s goal to preserve our rich history for eternity. Unfortunately, our membership is mortal, and we must make sure that our information remains immortal.

After saying all of this, what is a better way to help write your Post’s history than by submitting your qualifying members for one of our many annual Department Awards? I highly encourage that all of the Posts offer an award recommendation for every category of awards that they are eligible for, as much as possible. Not taking the time to submit an award recommendation guarantees that the Post or Member will not receive the recognition they deserve. -VC Steinlicht
The American Legion
Department of France
Department Service Office

What we do
The Mission of the Department Service Office is to provide benefits information, assistance and advocacy to all who have served and their families. Many Veterans are unsure of their entitlement to benefits so we ask that anyone who identifies as having served to contact our office to be directed to an appropriate resource. The Department Service Office provides services and help with the following benefits:

Services:
- Comprehensive VA benefits counseling
- Assistance with Foreign Medical Program care enrollment
- Claims preparation and submission
- Claims follow-up to ensure final decisions
- Initiate and develop appeals on unfavorable VA decisions when appropriate to include representation at VA Hearings
- Survivors Death Benefits

What do Department Service Officers do?
A DSO will ensure that Veterans and their families receive all federal benefits available to them. DSO’s do this by providing effective and dedicated representation to veterans and their families, free of charge.

You will never receive a bill from us!
DSO’s are trained and accredited by the American Legion to represent veterans in their claims for benefits. DSO’s are versed in applicable federal laws to provide the best representation possible.
The Department Service Office should be the first stop for all recently discharged service members and anyone who has served in any of our armed forces branches to receive a complete benefit explanation.

Department Service Office Staff
Office Visitors by Appointment Only:
Please Call +49.9802.83.2269 for an appointment before visiting the office.

Francis Phillips
Department Service Officer
francis.philips2@va.gov
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Michael Sherman
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Assistant Department Service Officer
info@dennisowens.com
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Location Main Office
USAG Ansbach, Katterbach Kaserne
Building 5818, Room 318
91522 Katterbach-Ansbach, Germany
Map: https://goo.gl/maps/6XlQnGnTDu42
Department of France’s Oratorical “Scholarship” Contest

Sunday, 07 March. Contest starts at 13:00 (CET)

Because of the COVID-19 crisis and border restrictions, the Department’s contest will be conducted virtual.

Join us by using the following link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82238931922?pwd=eXRRZUxEWTZYNk5uQ01FdjdrZ01CQ0t0

Civil Air Patrol Cadet of the Year

Civil Air Patrol “Cadet of the Year” Award with the following:
- Plaque
- Certificate

The deadline for nominations to Department Adjutant is 15 March

Eagle Scout of the Year

Civil Air Patrol “Cadet of the Year” Award with the following:
- Plaque
- Certificate
- $500 Prize & Advancement to Nationals

The deadline for nominations to Department Adjutant is 15 March

Junior Three-Position Air Rifle Tournament

The Department of France would like to congratulate Wiktor Szczechanski, AF JROTC BE-931 Marksmanship (SHAPE American High School) for receiving the highest score in the Precision discipline for the Department and is considered the Department Champion in The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports National Postal Tournament.

We would also like to recognize that AF JROTC BE-931 Marksmanship (SHAPE American High School) received the highest score in the Precision discipline for the Department of France and is considered the Team Department Champion in The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports National Postal Tournament.
Boys State 2021
Scheduled for June 20-25, 2021
****WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY****

Eligibility:
Male 2020-2021 High School Juniors with at least 1 semester remaining in Senior Year

General Information:

b. Registration Due-Date: 1 May 2021
c. Information Hub: www.mdlegation.org/boysstate
d. Questions: boysstate@mdlegation.org

VIRTUAL GIRLS STATE

June 20 - 26, 2021

Hey Ladies!!!
Class of ’22 and Class of ’21.

Orientation Dates

- Tuesday May 11th - 7pm
- Wednesday May 12th - 7pm
- Thursday May 13th - 7pm
- Saturday May 15th - 3pm
- Sunday May 16th - 3pm

The DEC has voted to invite 2021 seniors and 2020 juniors this year.

There will be a $100 tuition fee that would cover program cost and a graduation packet for each participant.
AMERICAN LEGION
LIBERTY WALK
2021
Saturday August 28th, 2021

Commemorate the “Battle of the Vierstraat Ridge”
by the 27th & 30th US Divisions Aug/Sep 1918.

Place to be: Visitors Center Kemmel
Start walk: 09.00–13.00
7, 12 or 18 km
Expo visitors center: 09.00–15.00

FOOD AND DRINKS AVAILABLE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
americanlegionlibertywalk@gmail.com

The organization is not responsible for any accidents, damage or theft.
Responsible publisher: Joseph Schram, American Legion Flanders Field Post BE02
American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program

Flanders Field Post BE02 sponsored the, AF JROTC BE-931 Marksmanship team from SHAPE American HS. The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports National Postal Tournament announced that JROTC Cadet Wiktor Szczepanski received the highest score in the Precision discipline for the Department of France and is considered the Department Champion. In addition the AF JROTC BE-931 Marksmanship team received the highest score in the Precision discipline for the Department of France and is considered the Team Department Champion.

On Sunday, 07 February, the Flanders Field Post BE02 hosted the annual 4-Chaplain Sunday ceremony and exhibit at the AAFES PX on Chièvres Airbase. Assisting with this ceremony were the USAG Benelux chaplains, cadets from the Chièvres Civil Air Patrol Squadron, and VFW Post 605 members. In addition, Post BE02 members hosted a Information / Awareness Table.

American Legion
Flanders Field Post BE02

Virtual Historical Roundtable Series
Escape and Evasion: Experiences of the 106th Infantry Division with Carl Wouters

Sunday, 18 April 2021 Starts at 7 pm (CET)

Carl Wouters is a Belgian researcher on the 106th Infantry Division. He is the official Belgian liaison for the Division Association and one of the founders of the Belgian Chapter. The chapter organizes the annual remembrance ceremony at St. Vith and was also instrumental in the creation of the new POW monument in Schönberg, Belgium. He is currently working on a book about the experiences of the veterans that he has corresponded with over the years. Carl has guided families and veterans of the Golden Lion Division back to the former battlefields in the Ardennes and Eifel.

For more information, contact us at: flanders.fields.post.be02@gmail.com
Flanders Field Post BE02 hosted its 8th Annual American Legion Oratorical Contest on Saturday, 06 February using a virtual media. Contestants from SHAPE and Brussels American High Schools completed for monetary prizes and advancement to the Department of France's Oratorical Contest. The winner of the oratorical contest was Williams Gibbons III, a junior from Brussels American High School.

Civil Air Patrol "Cadet of the Year"
The American Legion Post BE02 is delighted to announce the selection of C/2dLt Charlie Livingstone from the Chiévres Air Base Civil Air Patrol Cadet Squadron as our Post CAP "Cadet of the Year." C/2dLt Livingstone will advance to the Department of France's Civil Air Patrol "Cadet of the Year" competition.

Congratulations go out to Thomas Buckner who has been chosen as the: Legionnaire of the Year 2020 for the American Legion "Flanders Field" Post BE02. Thomas has been instrumental in forming our four chartered Boy Scout Units and working on forming a new Venture Crew. As the Charted Organization Representative, Thomas is the key link between the Boys Scout Units and Post BE02.

For the past year, Thomas has been the Post Historian and assisted with the implementation of the Post's Historical Committee. Since September, the committee has hosted the American Legion Roundtable Series, a virtual discussion on aspects of U.S. involvement in Belgium.
The American Legion 2019–2020 National History Book Contest has been cancelled.

**Post Histories** (excerpt from Post Officer’s Guide)

The American Legion strongly encourages the preparation of post histories. Such information on the post’s activities will be of considerable value in years to come.

National Headquarters is aware that a professional historian does not fill the position of historian in most posts. This need not prevent a proper recording of the post’s activities. The scope of the information included is the main consideration, keeping in mind, however, comprehensiveness, readability, and arrangement, so as to make the history both an interesting account of the post and a reference source.

At the start of the new post year, the historian begins making a permanent record of the organization for the year ahead, from the installation of officers up to and including the installation of next year’s officers. To help gather specific details concerning the post, ask the post adjutant for a copy of the most recent Consolidated Post Report. The statistical summary will indicate the type and amount of activity that can help you put together as complete a picture as possible. Make plans to compile a complete post history since its founding, but focus, for the moment, on a one-year history. Then go back to the files and gradually write up the back story.

The national historian will conduct an annual one-year narrative history and yearbook (pictorial) history contest at the post level. These ongoing national contests will give stability and continuity to the recording of post events for future generations of Legionnaires. The department historian will notify posts of any national contest changes that may occur.

Included in this guide are comprehensive outlines to compile a one-year narrative history or yearbook with their respective judging standards for competition in the national contests.

To be eligible for the national contests, an entry in either category must be a first-place winner in the department’s contest and must be certified as such by the department historian and forwarded to the national historian.

Upon completion of the national contest, all entries will be returned to their respective posts unless otherwise instructed for different shipping arrangements.

The work of collecting, preserving, and recording the activities of The American Legion is an important endeavor and demands much detail work; hopefully you will find it inspiring and rewarding. Contact the department historian for additional ideas and information regarding department contest qualifications.
Ensuring our A.E.F. soldiers from WW1 are never forgotten

PARIS POST 1 ORIGINS REVEALED: Time Capsule recovered after 96 years in Pershing Hall foundation

The covid confinement and restrictions in Paris, France has produced an unexpected surprise after a Paris Post 1 Legionnaire researching the post’s historic archives came across documentation and photos of the bridge keystone from the battle of Chateau Thierry.

It was just a few years after World War 1 that Legionnaire Sedley Peck and others from Paris Post 1 went to Chateau Thierry to pay their respects after so many American soldiers had sacrificed their lives during this famous WW1 battle. Personally, chosen by our Legionnaires upon the rubble of the bridge, the City of Chateau Thierry and the Republic of France gave the keystone to Paris Post 1 to be placed in the foundation of their new permanent home in Paris in 1928 in a building they created called the American Legion Memorial Building, later to be known as Pershing Hall.
102nd Anniversary of the Birth of the American Legion
(next month in March)

The American Legion Paris Post 1 and friends of the Parisian community will join together to commemorate the 102nd anniversary of when the American Legion was created in Paris just after World War 1.

Department of France Commander Bernhard Ragner wrote about his experience at the original ceremonies in 1939 including historic speeches and details on the international display of famous individuals and associations who attended.

The commemoration started with official French military ceremonies at Les Invalides after which the procession made their way to rue Ernest Pschiari where the American Legion Caucus Plaque still remains today.

DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER EDITOR...DAVID N. GREAX

REMINDER...all newsletter articles should be turned in PRIOR to months end!

I was able to attend last months Mid Winter Video Conference. I was very impressed by the professionalism and the organization of the conference. Well done. As a Post Adjutant of more than twenty years, even I learned something new. The point I want to make is that, these conferences are important and informative for everyone. Davida1959@i-online.de
GR09 and village officials pay tribute to WW II Americans who perished in plane crash

On 22 February GR 09 conducted a memorial service in memory of seven WW II US Army Airmen who died near the village of Pfaffenhofen on 22 February 1945 when their B-17 bomber broke apart in midsection and crashed during a bombing run to Ulm.

In 2012 the village placed a monument at the crash site in memory of the seven who died in the service of their country and since 2014 both GR 09 members and village officials have paid tribute of these Americans. This ritual has been ongoing since May 2014 and neither a snow storm in 2016 nor the Covid-19 virus in 2021 kept members from meeting at the monument and placing a floral arrangement at the site, albeit due to Corona with a small number of participants.

Joining Post Commander Jerry Aman and Post Chaplain Tom Snook were Sebastian Sparwasser, Bürgermeister (Mayor) of Pfaffenhofen, Bundeswehr retired Ltc Reiner Miene, President of 1906 Ulm Traditional Germany Artillery Association, and Josef Walz, former Bürgermeister of Pfaffenhofen.

In his speech Bürgermeister Sparwasser recounted the story of the ill-fated flight of the B-17 and in conclusion thanked GR 09 for their dedication to maintaining the legacy of this event.

Further information on the ill-fated flight with photos can be found at www.legion.org/memorials, location: Germany.
Post GR1982 Commemorates the Four Chaplains

Legion Post GR1982 in Ansbach-Katterbach usually commemorates the Four Chaplains with a short ceremony at the Katterbach Chapel between the Protestant and Catholic services. This year, we did it a little differently.

We set up a commemorative table in the foyer in front of the Commissary and Post Exchange in Urlas Kaserne. The static display was set up on 2 February and stayed up until 9 February. Our display told the story of the Four Chaplains, and also provided information about what our Legion Post does for the local community. The display was well-accepted by the military community, and quite possibly reached more Soldiers and Family Members than the church service.  

GR1982 Adjutant Smith

St Patrick's Day, on March 17, remembers one of Ireland’s patron saints, St Patrick. It largely celebrates Irish-American culture in the United States.


20 March 2003 marked the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom with preemptive airstrikes on Saddam Hussein’s Presidential Palace and military targets followed by approximately 67,700 “boots on the ground” with 15,000 Navy personnel on ships in the region (Belasco).
Lee Preston
Department of France / Legion Riders Director / Chairperson

lpreston1057@gmail.com
+49 176 70599666

I want to remind everyone that your Chapter SOP based on the Department SOP Template for Chapters is due no later than 23 April 2021. Please get this completed by the deadline.

Once you have completed the SOP for your Chapter; be sure that your Post PEC has accepted and adopted it for your Chapter with Post Commander and Adjutant signature as well as Chapter Director and Adjutant, should you have one, and send a copy to me along with the minutes of the meeting adopting the Department SOP and accepting the Chapter SOP to the e-mail address located in my signature block below.

I am still trying to fill positions in the Department Committee that need to be filled and would kindly ask for volunteers to fill positions within the Department Legion Rider Committee. Most important at the moment is to have an Area Committee Chairperson and an Adjutant. Those wishing to volunteer please send me an E-mail with phone contact information so that I can contact you and discuss the positions and which one you would like to do. Thank you in advance for stepping up to make our Department Legion Riders program better.

We are looking to conduct a European Legacy Run, hopefully this year, and need everyone that would like to ride, support, or a Post that would like us to come through their area; please contact Department Vice Commander John Woodhouse or myself. This is just in the planning stage and hope to get some interest in this event. If we cannot get it together for this year, we will absolutely plan for next year.

I would also like to have a get together at some point this year with all of the Riders. Please let me know if there is any interest in this event as well. More to follow on this. Everything depends on CORONA and the restrictions at the moment.

Lee (Papa Smurf) Preston
Department Director/Committee Chairperson
lpreston1057@gmail.com
Fourth SAL DEC…06 March 2021 via electronic meeting. All Squadrons attending need to fill out their delegate form and send it to the Detachment Commander and Adjutant. All Squadrons will be contacted with instructions a few days prior to the meeting on GoToMeeting.

SAL Convention…05 June 2021 hosted by GR79

**National Vietnam War Veterans Day in the United States**

**First Observed in 2012**

Vietnam War Veterans Day was first observed as a one-time occasion on March 29, 2012, when President Barack Obama issued a proclamation calling on “all Americans to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.”

The day was then introduced as an annual event in 2017 when President Donald Trump signed the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017.

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.

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DUE TO THE CURRENT COVID-19 CIRCUMSTANCES, UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE FROM THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER, ALL FUTURE PICTURES TURNED IN FOR THE DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER PICTURING GROUPS OF LEGION FAMILY MEMBERS (2 or more – Legion, SAL, Auxiliary, Riders), FACE MASKS ARE REQUIRED TO BE WORN BY LEGION FAMILY MEMBERS, OUT IN THE OPEN AND INSIDE BUILDINGS. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRESENT GERMAN AND MILITARY POLICIES.