



Legion News



DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE

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

May 2020

Vol. 18, No. 05

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER...Jimmie Dale



INFORMATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE:

Due to the COVID-19 virus, which is an unprecedented virus that is spreading all over the world, infecting people and causing death. The Commander has issued the following orders:

The Department of France will not conduct any activities where members must gather together in groups, until this virus is contained, and it is safe to conduct normal business again, as deemed by local government agencies/ authorities.

The following activities have been cancelled for the Department of France:

1. Memorial Day Ceremony in Saint Avold France 24 May 2020
2. Boys/Girls State 21–27 June 2020 Director(Comrade Schram)Notified of this status/action

The following activities have been postponed for the Department of France until further notice:

1. Awards Committee Meeting the current date 11 April 2020
2. 4th DEC, Convention and the 1st DEC. The venue for the current date 18-20 June 2020 is to be cancelled

In accordance with Article VII Department Constitution Section 3:

Section 3. If the Department Convention shall fail to meet or elect and install officers at the appointed time, those in office shall continue and exercise full authority until their successors are duly elected and installed.

Additional Information On Legion Family Events

1. SAL 4th DEC, Convention and 1st DEC postponed until further notice Current Date 6 June 2020
2. American Legion Auxiliary District of France 4th DEC, Convention and 1st DEC Postponed until further notice Current Date 20 June 2020
3. All Legion Riders activities (Planned Rides) postponed/suspended until further notice

Please stay safe and follow the guidance of your local authorities. Take care of each other by conducting those very important BUDDY CHECKS!

Yours in comradeship:

James M. Settle...*NECMan Department of France / Assistant Adjutant / PDCDR*

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Health emergency forces cancellation of American Legion national convention

(INDIANAPOLIS, April 8, 2020) -- The American Legion's 102nd National Convention, originally scheduled for Louisville, Ky., Aug. 28 – Sept. 3, 2020, is canceled due to public-health concerns, ongoing restrictions and uncertainties related to the global coronavirus-COVID-19 pandemic.

“The safety of our members and compliance with state and federal public-health restrictions and guidelines made this decision not only prudent but necessary,” American Legion National Commander James W. “Bill” Oxford said. “The commonwealth of Kentucky has taken emergency actions to prevent the spread of infections and to follow federal guidance that restrict public gatherings and urge social distancing. No one can say with any certainty when these measures will be lifted or in what manner.”

The American Legion National Executive Committee approved a resolution Wednesday, April 8, by email to cancel the annual convention of wartime veterans and their families for the first time in history. The 2020 Sons of The American Legion National Convention is also canceled.

“Local American Legion services – such as Buddy Checks, blood drives, meal delivery and volunteer assistance – remain the top priority of the organization as we navigate these challenging waters,” Oxford said. “Community efforts are now under way throughout the country and around the world, while many American Legion state and foreign departments are canceling or postponing their conventions and elections to protect public health in the midst of this pandemic. Normally, national convention delegates are appointed during department conventions. This year is anything but normal.”

The 102nd National Convention is now scheduled for Aug. 27 – Sept. 2, 2021, in Phoenix. Terms of currently serving national officers, including National Commander Oxford, are extended until then, according to the resolution. Nationally appointed American Legion commission and committee chairpersons will also remain in their positions until the Fall 2021 meeting of the National Executive Committee.

The convention cancellation and extension of national officer terms are within the authority of the NEC, according to The American Legion's constitution and bylaws.

Also Wednesday, the NEC selected Louisville as the site of the 2026 American Legion National Convention, the first available date.

With a current membership of nearly two million wartime veterans, The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, patriotic youth programs and Americanism. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through nearly 13,000 posts worldwide. From the drafting of the original GI Bill to the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs, The American Legion, www.legion.org, is the most influential voice for America's veterans.

Media contacts: John Raughter, jraughter@legion.org, (317) 630-1350

Commodore John Barry Post Ireland 03

Commodore John Barry post was chartered in 1957 by Irishmen who served with the US Armed Forces during WW1 and WW2. Our Post members reside in the western counties of Mayo, Galway, Roscommon, Donegal and Leitrim and the Post's postal address and meeting location has been Claremorris, Co. Mayo.

Commodore John Barry was born in 1745 in Ballysampsion on our Lady's Island Wexford, Co. Wexford, in the south East of Ireland. Barry emigrated, adopted America and joined the Continental Navy and made rank of Captain in December 1775, during the American Revolutionary War. Barry was the first Captain placed in command of a US war ship (USS America) commissioned for service under the Continental flag. After the war he became the first Commissioned US Navy officer at the rank of Commodore, an honorary title given to him by the first president of the US, George Washington. This gives an idea of how long Irish people have honourably served in the US military. Barry is known in the history books as the "Father of the US Navy".

One of the main contributions our Post has made over the past 10 years, aside from the support of our members, has been to unearth the history of men and women from Ireland who had distinguished US military careers but who were largely unknown in their native Ireland with many laying in unmarked graves for over 90 years. We facilitated the rededication of 22 graves for members of the US Armed Forces buried in Ireland who had served in WWI.

Co. Mayo has a proud history of Irishmen and women who have served in the US military. The first Medals of Honor (MOH) were presented during the American Civil war and in 1863, 110 Irishmen received the MOH, and the very first US Army MOH was presented to BG Bernard J.D. Irwin from Co. Clare. Since 1863, historians have estimated that somewhere between 25 and 30 million men and women have honourably served in the US Armed forces and a large percentage of that statistic comprised Irish born or Americans of Irish ancestry. So, given the amount of time that has passed since 1863 and the number of people who have served in the US Armed Forces and that only 3,508 Medals of Honor have been presented as of 2020, it is clear how prestigious the MOH is. Just under 500 MOH have been presented to men born outside the US, well over 600 have been presented to recipients' next of kin as they were killed in action.

I sit on the board of directors of a registered charity here in Ireland called Irish Veteran. In 2018, with permission from the Congressional Medal of Honor society (CMOHS) located in South Carolina, we opened the very first MOH museum located outside the in US in beautiful downtown Kinsale, Co. Cork in the south West of Ireland. With a very sharp K-Bar fighting knife we cut the ribbon to open the museum and our main exhibit was a 120 year old MOH belonging to US Navy Michael Gibbons of Newport, Co. Mayo.

When we opened the MOH museum in Kinsale, we asked the CMOHS how many Irish people have received the MOH. They got back to us with "we don't know exactly but we have found 253 Irishmen have received 258 MOH". Of the 19 men who have received TWO MOH, five were Irish born and three claimed to be Irish American. A law passed a while back states that from now on no one will receive two MOH.

One of the five Irish two-time recipients was US Navy Chief Water Tender John King from Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo. King received his first MOH in 1901 and his second in 1909. Ballinrobe is about 10 miles from Newport where Michael Gibbons was born. In 1961 the ship USS John King (DDG-3) was dedicated in honor of Chief Water Tender John King. In 2009, 13 American Legionnaires led a parade in Ballinrobe to help unveil a handsome statue of John King in Market Square, Ballinrobe.

My first association with US Navy Michael Gibbons was on the 4th of July, 1999. Our American Legion Post was contacted by the Gibbons family and told their Grand Uncle Michael Gibbons served in the US Navy during the Spanish American war in 1898. Michael Gibbons had lain for over 66 years in an unmarked grave in the Kilmeena cemetery in Newport, Co. Mayo. The three American Legion Posts here in Ireland at the time formed an honor guard at grave side and rendered a full graveside re-dedication ceremony for Michael Gibbons.

Michael was born in 1866 in Newport, Co, Mayo, immigrated to the US, and joined the US Navy. Michael was stationed aboard the USS Nashville ship in 1898. Another great ship of the time was the USS Maine and in February of 1898 the Maine exploded in the harbour of Havana, Cuba, sunk and took the lives of over 300 sailors. The Spanish had recently invaded Cuba and to this day no one can determine the exact cause of the USS Maine sinking but through the help of newspaper headlines the Spanish got the blame. The battle cry "Remember the Maine, to Hell with Spain" became very popular. In May of 1898, President Mc Kinnley declared war with Spain and sent 11 ships from south Florida to Cuba. The USS Marblehead was the lead ship with Michael's ship the Nashville as main escort. If you search for Spanish-American war: Raid on Cienfuegos you can read how Michael Gibbons and ten other Irish men received the MOH for their daring raid.



29 March is Viet Nam War Veterans Day, a special day to honor and thank Viet Nam war veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice. One of Co. Mayo's proud sons who died in the Viet Nam war was US Marine CPL Patrick Bob Gallagher from Ballyhaunis. Patrick was 23 years old in 1967 when he was killed by a sniper. Just days before his death, Patrick received the Navy Cross from General Westmoreland for dealing with four enemy grenades. Patrick threw himself on the first grenade and it did not explode, three more were tossed into his foxhole and Patrick threw them into a nearby pond where they exploded with no one hurt. Just hours before boarding a plane to return home to a hero's welcome, Patrick was killed in action. In 2018, we started a petition requesting the US government to name a US Navy ship in Patrick's honor, last year we got our wish. As we speak, Patrick's ship the USS Patrick Gallagher (DDG) is being built in a ship yard in Maine. When it makes a port of call here in Ireland, we will make history with two United State Navy ships named for two Irish men from Co. Mayo. Sgt at Arms Michael Slyman and past Commander Ron Howko at grave side of US Marine Patrick Gallagher.



Department of France Past Commanders Club



PCC President Dennis Owens info@dennisowens.com



PCC Secretary Quincy Foster qcfooster@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 Past Commanders Club is only \$25.00 / Renewal dues for the Past Commanders Club is only \$10.00

Brush up on Legion knowledge while home

The American Legion
APR 03, 2020



Newsletter Editor...*David N. Greaux*

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

Davidg1959@t-online.de

Term extended for SAL national officers

The American Legion
APR 30, 2020

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER...*Frank Phillips*



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Francis Dale Phillips
Department Service Officer
VA Accredited Service Officer
American Legion, Department of France

Wednesday, March 25, 2020

Comrades,

I want to inform our Veterans about the current CORONA VIRUS situation and the Department of Veteran Affairs.

The American Legion Department of France is still continuing to process claims.

Because of current events, the DOS / ADSO offices are closed to the public. The American Legion Regional Office is closed. Contact is available via e-mail.

All appointments that have been scheduled, will be contacted per e-mail or phone. We will try to set up a teleconference to assist you.

For new appointments, we ask that you send us an e-mail, after the 13th of May 2020. Our office has appointments (teleconference) booked through the 14th of May. We will contact you and set up new appointments.

Please do not call, as we are working with other claimants on the telephone. Send us an e-mail, we will get back to you as soon as possible.

After the 14th of May 2020, our office will take phone calls on Wednesdays **OR** Fridays between 1300 and 1600 hours. This is for making appointments only. We will not have time to discuss your claims. We will schedule a time to call you back to discuss your claim.

The Department of Veteran Affairs is still working! Claims are still being processed. The VA is still operating. Most employees are working from home. At this time, claims are being processed normally.

As far as the Compensation and Pension exams, scheduled exams will still take place. There will be a reduction of exams, until this crisis is over. Please be patient and understand. You will be contacted by the VES as soon as C&P exams are possible.

Please stay safe and follow all advisories, regarding the Corona Virus.

Take preventative actions to include the following:

- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Washing your hands often with soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- Using alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with at least 60-percent alcohol) if soap and water are not available.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently-touched objects and surfaces.
- Refraining from touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Staying home when sick.

Do not forget our older Veterans. Please do the Buddy Check and call them. See if we can help them with their situation. If there is a way the DSO can help, please feel free to contact our office.

Excerpts from VA OCONUS Bulletin issued on 25 March 2020 at 1700 hours:

1. .. The Pittsburgh Regional Office, along with the BDD sites in Germany & Korea are currently closed to the public and will no longer accept walk-in claims assistance, scheduled

Frank Phillips (Francis Dale Phillips) Neuendettelsauer Str. 15, D-91560 Heilsbronn, Germany
Tel: 09802 83 3607 Call for appointment Wed or Fri between 1300-1600 email: Francis.Phillips2@va.gov 1



Francis Dale Phillips
Department Service Officer
VA Accredited Service Officer
American Legion, Department of France

Wednesday, March 25, 2020

appointments, counseling, or other in-person services. For those individuals who require assistance from the BDD offices, you may contact the Landstuhl BDD office

VBA benefits and services provided to Veterans, families, and survivors will continue to be delivered throughout the duration of COVID-19 impacts.

2. COMPENSATION & PENSION EXAMS

- Due to COVID-19, there are instances when claimants are asking to cancel or postpone scheduling their examination appointments because of social distancing practices. VA will not deny a claim solely for a failure to report for an exam at this time.
- Veterans and Servicemembers who wish to reschedule an exam due to COVID-19 concerns should contact the exam vendor directly. Vendors will hold the exam request in their system and will reschedule appointments once it is safe to do so.

Please also notify VA either via phone (412-395-6272) or from Germany 0800 1890363

3. BOARD OF VETERANS APPEALS (BVA) HEARINGS

- Effective Monday, March 23, 2020, the Board is suspending all video and Central Office hearings through at least May 1, 2020. We understand that Veterans have been waiting for these hearings and we don't want to delay an longer than necessary. The Board will work with Veterans, VSOs, an representatives to provide virtual hearings where possible.

4. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION & EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (VR&E)

- VR&E counselors will be reaching out to establish a plan to maintain communication throughout this period and ensure there are no lapses in VR&E services or any negative impact on the processing of your claim.
- *Facilities Converting to Distance Learning Only* - In an attempt to control the spread of COVID-19, many facilities are temporarily converting to distance learning only, meaning in-residence classes are transitioning to an on-line format for a period of time. This change is not the result of a reclassification of the type of program, meaning the facilities are not officially reclassifying in-residence classes to on-line classes for VA purposes; **Therefore, there is no need to request an updated certification for the current term as a result of this change.** Also, it is VR&E's policy to pay the in-residence rate for a term that includes a combination of in-residence and on-line training. However, if this practice is still in place at the beginning of the facility's next scheduled term, an updated certification must be sent to the facility to verify the classification of the type of program.

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LEGION TV

Tune in to find videos of American Legion history and inspirational stories of members assisting their community, state and nation. PSA's & Promotional videos too! Available for download and sharing on social media!

www.legion.org/legiontv

THE AMERICAN LEGION

MEMBERSHIP
PUBLIC RELATIONS GUIDE

Memorial Day
REMEMBER AND HONOR

Toolkit can help posts Conduct Buddy Checks During the pandemic

Happy Mother's Day

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Online renewal is fast, convenient and safe.

CLICK TO BEGIN

For the Freedoms that we all enjoy... Our Thanks go to the young men and women serving in all branches of the military.

We Salute You!

Birthdates of our Military Services

- US Army - June 14, 1775
- US Navy - October 13, 1775
- US Marines - November 10, 1775
- US Coast Guard - August 4, 1790
- US Air Force - Sept 18, 1947



DETACHMENT OF FRANCE

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Sergeant-at-Arms Lee Preston lpreston1957@gmail.com

Due to the COVID-19 Situation, our Detachment Convention had to be postponed until further notice!!!

Online Membership Processing Now Available for
Sons of the American Legion



Grande Chef de Gare 2020MY...Lee Preston



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.

Due to the COVID-19 Situation, it was decided and approved by the membership that all Grand positions will remain in place for the 2021 Membership Year!!!

The Grand is planning a Cheminot for July 2020...if possible. Information will be sent out to the Voyageurs.

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.

