Department of FRANCE
BELGIUM-DENMARK-FRANCE-GERMANY-GREECE-THAILAND
NETHERLANDS-IRELAND-ITALY-SPAIN-PORTUGAL-CHINA 01-ENGLAND
Volume 16 / Issue 1 -- January 2018

2018
HAPPY NEW YEAR
Fellow Legionnaires and Legion families,

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sonja and I were busy in December. We went to Landstuhl USO “Warrior’s Center” on the 2nd to visit the troops and cadre. The ladies from the American Legion Department Auxiliary gave out candies and gifts to the troops and baked cakes to add a piece of home to Germany. Thank you, ladies for an outstanding event.

Audie Murphy Post GR30 had our annual Christmas party on the 9th. We had about 100 members and guests. Audie Murphy Unit GR30 prepared the food and brought the prizes for the raffle. Everyone enjoyed the event. Thank you, members of Audie Murphy Post and Unit 30 for your support in this event.

Don’t forget we have the Oratorical Contest coming up at the end of January. We still have the “GoFundMe” for Boys/Girls state. Please assist this program. You can find the link at http://www.amerlegiondeptfrance.org . March is around the corner. We have the Sons of the Legion DEC, the American Legion Post Service Officers training course, and the Department Executive Meeting.

For updates on Department events, visit our webpage at http://www.amerlegiondeptfrance.org or our Facebook site at www.facebook.com/ALDeptFrance.

James Dennis/Commander/Department of France

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Chaplain’s Closet
Pastoral Services Division - Landstuhl Regional Medical Center

The Chaplain’s Clothes Closet (CCC) at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) started in October 2001 at the onset of Operation Enduring Freedom. The CCC provides a variety of new essential clothing and comfort items for our deployed U.S. Service Members, DOD employees, coalition partners, and US contractors as they are evacuated to LRMC for treatment.

The Chaplain’s Closet supports service members each month. Since the Chaplain’s Closet is a non-funded humanitarian entity within the Department of Defense, we rely on the generous donations of fellow Americans and others, both substantive and monetary, to provide these items. We truly appreciate the efforts of each and every person willing to share “hugs from home” and words of encouragement with those who have given so much for the cause of Freedom in our world! Below is a list of items Service Members typically request and take from the Chaplain’s Closet. This list will be updated periodically.

**September 2017 “TOP REQUESTED ITEMS”**

- Military Duffle Bags / Black Duffle bags ( no logos)
- Unisex sweatshirts Medium
- Unisex sweatpants Small/Medium/Large
- Candy (fun size)
- Healthy snacks (snack bars with hemp seeds are not allowed)
- Basketball Shorts Small/Medium/Large
- Hoodies Small/Medium/Large
- Long sleeve T-Shirts, all sizes
- Shaving cream

Monetary donations to the Chaplain’s Closet fund for Warrior Programming, high-demand and seasonal items are acceptable (please make payable to: Landstuhl Regional Medical Center CTOF) Thank you again for your assistance! Working together, we can make a huge difference in the lives and recuperation of our Heroes!

Please DO NOT send used items

LANDSTHUL REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
Attn: Chaplain’s Clothes Closet
MCEU-LST-CH
Unit 33100
APO AE 09180-3100
**Department Officers - 2018 Membership Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>EMAIL/PHONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commander</td>
<td>James Dennis / GR30</td>
<td><a href="mailto:departmentdennis@gmail.com">departmentdennis@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjutant</td>
<td>Maxwell Rice / GR79</td>
<td><a href="mailto:colwhibboy@yahoo.com">colwhibboy@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEC/Finance Officer</td>
<td>Nola Maloney / GR03</td>
<td><a href="mailto:NECMaloney@gmail.com">NECMaloney@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternate NEC/Finance Officer</td>
<td>James Settle / GR42</td>
<td><a href="mailto:james.settle@kabelbw.de">james.settle@kabelbw.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCAL</td>
<td>Joe D. Brown / GR79</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vcalbrown50@gmail.com">vcalbrown50@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICE COMMANDER</td>
<td>Casby Logan / GR07</td>
<td><a href="mailto:casby@hotmail.com">casby@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICE COMMANDER</td>
<td>David Etter / GR01</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bigdave59@gmail.com">bigdave59@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICE COMMANDER</td>
<td>Christopher Buchanan / GR1982</td>
<td><a href="mailto:christopherbuchan@hotmail.com">christopherbuchan@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICE COMMANDER</td>
<td>Jimmie Dale / GR07</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jimmiedale87@gmail.com">jimmiedale87@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaplain</td>
<td>Don Chamberlain / GR79</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chamberlainindw@hotmail.de">chamberlainindw@hotmail.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historian</td>
<td>Raymond Perez Jr. / NL01</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Raymond.perezjr@yahoo.com">Raymond.perezjr@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Officer</td>
<td>Laura Buckner / BE02</td>
<td><a href="mailto:serviceofficerdoe@yahoo.com">serviceofficerdoe@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge Advocate</td>
<td>Keith Abernathy / GR79</td>
<td><a href="mailto:keithabernathy1942@yahoo.de">keithabernathy1942@yahoo.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergeant-at-Arms</td>
<td>Raymond Vincent Jr. / NL01</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rvincent6603@yahoo.com">rvincent6603@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Adjutant</td>
<td>Robert Fuelling / FR01</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Rfie111704@aol.com">Rfie111704@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Americanism Chairman Carl Hackworth…**

> It is requested that all Americanism reports be sent to me prior to our DEC’s.

Carl Hackworth  
Dudenroder Str. 1  
63654 Buedingen, Germany  
[carl@hackworth.de](mailto:carl@hackworth.de) / Tel.: 004960425454989 / Mobil: 00491764248922 / Fax: 004960425454987

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**The American Legion, Department of France website**

[http://www.amerlegiondeptfrance.org](http://www.amerlegiondeptfrance.org)

**Also Visit The Department of France Facebook page**

WANTED TODAY…pictures and stories of your posts, your members. Share your experiences, let everyone know what you are doing and contributing to your “American Legion Family”

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My Fellow Legionnaires, SAL Members, Auxiliary Members, Legion Riders and all other VIPs;

Sending each of you my warmest wishes for a very Happy, Healthy and Safe 2018!! A
new year with new challenges to be turned into opportunities as we continue to take care of
Veterans and their Families!

I want to take this opportunity to say “Thank you” to Dave Etter, Department Vice
Commander, for all his most progressive and productive work as a Vice Commander since his
election to the position in June 2017. VC Dave will be leaving us at the end of January due to his
acceptance of a position at National American Legion HQs as Assistant Director of Training for
Veterans Programs. God speed and all the best to you Dave!!

Like most of you my month was spent in preparation of Christmas activities in the
community and family. This is the busiest time of year for many folks in trying to ensure no one
the community is forgotten at this special time of year. Food Drives and Angel Trees abound in
helping ensure the needs of those less affluent are met, helping to make their holidays a little brighter. There is nothing as
enlightening to the heart as in assisting those in need of assistance – those needs come in all sorts of forms and capacities. Every
little bit helps to make a difference in our world.

I was honored to assist a local Post here in Tucson over the Christmas Season with their Angel Tree Program and helping
local Veterans.

The NEC is now preparing for the Washington D.C. Conference coming in late February. At this conference we go and speak
with our State Representatives and then have an audience with some of Congress. More to follow on this when it’s over.

**Overseas Graves Decoration Trust Fund:** There currently are funds available but your request needs to get put in right
away before the funds are depleted – they are disbursed on a first come first served basis!!! See the guideline and request
documentation in this Newsletter!!

**Go Fund Me for Boys/Girls State:** This fund is easy to donate to and it stays within our Department for use to help us send
students to the USA so they can participate with their peers in a once in a lifetime opportunity. As Past Department Commander
Haggen points out – if we all only gave $5 it would allow us to reach our goal to send a student sponsored by a Post from the High
Schools in Europe. We voted at the 2nd DEC to start this program but there has not been much put in there yet – this needs to be
accomplished by the 3rd DEC so we know where we stand on our ability to fund those students. On behalf of the students I THANK
YOU in advance for your donation to this extremely worthy tax deductible donation.

**Public Service Announcements and other information:** The American Legion has an abundance of promotional tools to
assist with promoting the American Legion and its programs. There easily accessible on line at the Legion’s Vimeo Channel at
https://vimeo.com/americanlegion. The Vimeo Channel also features a “Membership Moment” video series on how to welcome and
engage new members, recruit members, and re-engage expired members. The PSAs focus on membership recruitment, preparing
for the Legion’s centennial, and Legion programs. You can also access brochures that highlight American Legion programs and
services that fall under the Four Pillars at www.legion.org/publications.

**FINANCE NEWS:** If you have receipts to turn in for reimbursement this is what you will need to do: Add up all your receipts, send
me a scanned copy of them by email. No receipts means no money. If you are a Committee Chairman or Post who will need budgeted
money before we meet for the 3rd DEC I want and need to know that. If you have up-front the cost of a program then when
event/program is completed turn in the receipts for reimbursement. No matter what money is given out – I will want receipts and
return of excess funds not used when event is over (these can be used in other critical programs we have/need or be saved for the
next year).

On-Line Renewal checks to Posts were passed out at 2nd DEC. If you have not cashed your check yet – please do so!! The
checks are only good for so long.

Eiffel Towers – I have ordered the pins. Hopefully they will be completed and ready by the end of January. The cost will $2
per pin.

**Emblem Sales** – I will be sending out the Emblem Sales reimbursement requirement to each person who had Department
orders since the Convention. A copy of the Emblem Sales Receipts will be given to each person involved. The hiccups in our billing
have been fixed – you can expect to see your bill within the next two weeks. I will be in Europe Jan 12 – 23 to meet with the Centennial
Group in Paris, if you want to pay while I am there – let me know and I will send directions on how to do that.

**CENTENNIAL:** The National Centennial Commission is promoting “Every Post Has a Story”. They suggest we all write a little history
about how your Post got started. They are doing a huge placemat format of the history of each Department. The story of your Post
just might get put on this keepsake item (it is double sided and quite large so there is plenty of room for many short stories. There is
no cost for the History Placemat except a little of your time to write up the history. Please send me your documents when you have
finished them. I will store them until the Centennial Commission requests ours. The next meeting for Department Centennial is 17
January in Paris, France.
With that I will close out this month’s article with wishes for a healthy, safe and successful 2018 for all of us!!! Safe travels for all!!! I look forward to seeing many of you in the New Year!!

Most Sincerely,
Your NECLady Nola

“No matter our outward differences – we're all in this together” President O’Bama – during his outgoing speech in office.

OVERSEAS GRAVES DECORATION TRUST FUND GUIDELINES

Trust Fund Members
Consists of the current National Commander of The American Legion, who shall be chairman, and the immediate Past National Commander of The American Legion and his predecessor, who shall be known as the Trustees, and who shall serve respectively for three, two and one years to be calculated from the last day of the national convention of The American Legion. The American Legion National Adjutant will serve as recording secretary, The American Legion National Treasurer will be Financial Advisor, and the Chairman of the Finance Commission who shall serve so long as he or she remains as chairman. Each retiring trustee is released from any and all liability by reason of his acts as trustee. The Trustees are charged with the custody, control and administration of the fund, the income of said fund are used to honor, preserve and decorate the graves of those U.S. Veterans who served in the World Wars, Conflicts, and Hostilities and who are buried overseas.

Purpose
Rather than barbecues, races or even parades, the real idea of Memorial Day is to remember those who served their country in uniform and are no longer with us. The American Legion has been in the forefront of such efforts since its existence – no matter how far-flung the fallen comrade.

The American Legion Overseas Graves Decoration Trust Fund was established in the 1920s, and provide all U.S. flags – from Emblem Sales, made in the USA – flown at cemeteries and burial sites in foreign countries where American troops are buried or otherwise memorialized. The first fundraising for the decoration of overseas graves took place in 1921-1922, and its current organizational plan has been in force since 1935.

The Trustees shall use the income of the Overseas Graves Decoration Trust Fund to honor, preserve, and decorate the graves of those who served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America in World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict, and of those who served during the period of the Vietnam Hostilities, who lie overseas. They may adopt and use such methods and means as they may deem advisable, including the active cooperation and aid of overseas Departments and Posts of The American Legion and any other agencies, and in pursuance thereof may prescribe details, methods, and practices deemed necessary, expedient, or convenient. The income shall be used exclusively to honor, preserve, and decorate the graves and for no other purpose, and under no circumstances shall the Trustees have the power or authority to expend, use or divert the Trust Fund or any part thereof for any other purpose.

In addition to the above guidelines this fund will financially aid Departments and Posts outside the continental United States of America to honor and decorate individual graves of those veterans who were laid to rest outside American Battle Monument Commission controlled facilities.

Funds Request Procedures
Fund requests will be sent to The American Legion National Adjutant. The following information is required for each request for funds.
1. The name of the Veteran.
2. The cemetery name and location (city and country) where the veteran is at rest.
3. A quote in writing (not to exceed $50.00) from a local florist, for flowers to decorate each veteran’s grave.
4. A mailing address for Emblem Sales use so they can mail each Department or Post “U.S.A. made American flag” for each grave to be decorated.
5. A mailing address for The American Legion National Treasure so he can mail each Department or Post the requested funds for each grave to be decorated.
6. After the Grave Side Ceremony in May of each year a picture with caption must be forwarded to the FODPAL Secretary.

THE FUNDS FROM THE OVERSEAS GRAVE DECORATION TRUST FUND ARE DISPENSED ON A FIRST COME FIRST SERVE BASES ANNUALLY UNTIL THE INCOME EACH YEAR IS DEPLETED

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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

"Our next meeting is planned in conjunction with the Department of France Third DEC"

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER  Laura Buckner

The Department of France is having a Service Officers training course on the 16th of March 2017 in Ansbach at the Post Home from Post GR1982 at 09:00 hours. We are asking all Service Officers to attend this informative course. If your Post does not have a Service Officer, perhaps a member might want to attend this course. This would give your Post more information on what to do for processing claims and how to properly fill out the forms needed for these claims. Service Officer Buckner and Assistant Service Officer Phillips have worked diligently to make a Department of France Post Service Officers Manual. We need to support this course to help the veterans in Europe and your Post.

Please contact Service Officer Buckner at serviceofficerdofr@yahoo.com or Assistant Service Officer Phillips at frank@fphillips.de to have a proper headcount of Posts attending.
DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER AT LARGE  Joe D. Brown

My fellow Legionaries,

As your Department Vcal Commander I will ask you what a Legion member asked me “do you know what the value is of being a Legionnaire is” its being able to support your family, your community, your Nation, Our past Veterans, our Veterans, our future I wish all of you a healthy and safe 2018.

This month hopefully was a joyous one for everyone with the many parties and celebration. On 26 December John Wayne Post GR79 hosted the yearly dinner for the homeless in Heilbronn. The dinner has been hosted by GR79 for the past six years and is sponsored through donations from post members. There were 106 homeless personnel served and I would like to thank the members of the post for making this special event a success.

The Department Oratorical contest is scheduled to be held during the month of February in Stuttgart and being hosted by Post GR06. There are 10 posts within the department that have active communities with a high school, but how many will be holding post level contests at the moment is not known. The past years only a few of the posts with active communities have participated and hopefully this year there will have more participants. The following posts of the Department hopefully will be represented as a post or assistance from other posts within the Department, GR01 (Kaiserslautern), GR02 (Ramstein),06 (Stuttgart), GR07 (Wiesbaden), GR20 (Bitburg), GR45 (vilseck), GR1982 (Ansbach, previous year winner), BE02 (Belgium), EG02 (England), and NL01 (Netherland).

Membership is good, the Department is currently at 85% and by the end of the month will make the 90% cutoff. Throughout the Department there are three awareness drives scheduled, January 13, 2018 EG02 in Lakenheath, and during the month February GR20 in Bitburg, and GR45 in Vilseck. GR02 since being re-augmented is slowly running but the commander is making progress and should be fully operational by the end of the membership year.

If you have any problems with your post or membership feel free to contact your assigned Vice Commander, myself or the Department Commander. The awards manual was sent out by the Department Commander and now is the time to start preparing your award packet to recognize the many commitments that your post and members have put forward to sponsor the many successful events within the many communities throughout the department. We must remember the ideals of what the American Legion stands for, justice, freedom and democracy. We are here to support our veterans, their families, our communities and the care of our veterans through the programs set out at the National Level. Many of our Posts need to be more involved with these programs, I would strive to make that happen. All Post Commanders need to properly display your POW-MIA Table, American Flag and your Post Legion Banner at all your meetings.

I look forward to getting out to each post and assisting in any way I can.

Thank you, and as always, remember if you need to contact me I am just an E-mail away vcalbrown50@gmail.com M-0170-1888034. In closing, please keep those in harm’s way and their families, not only in your thoughts but your prayers as well.

As always, I stress to all of you to take a few moments out of your busy day and say a small prayer for all of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines, that are still in harm’s way that they may return home safely to their loved ones. May God bless you all.

I personally replaced all of the American flags At the 11 graves in Heilbronn on 29 December 2017

Membership Chairman / VCAL Charlie Brown
GR07 Supports Girl Scouts Third Annual Bake-Off Competition

Riley Leroy Pitts Post GR07 provided a judge for the Wiesbaden Girl Scouts Third Annual Bake-Off. The event was held on 9 December at the Wiesbaden Army Community Services cafeteria. The event provided an opportunity for Daisy, Brownie, and Junior Girl Scouts (Grades K-5) to practice planning, baking, and problem-solving skills. It also provided an opportunity for the girls to develop speaking skills as each girl presented her own cookies to the judges. Leftover cookies were donated to soldiers living in the barracks. The event was a huge success with representation from several organizations from the Wiesbaden community. GR07 Adjutant, Mike Murley, served as the representative and judge on behalf of the Post and was joined by both the Warrant Officer Association and Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS) program representatives to serve as judges for the Brownie Scouts. GR07 Chaplain and Child/Youth Services Chairman, Ronald Morgan, also helped coordinate and promote the event with the Wiesbaden Girl Scouts Chapter.

(Pictured: Adjutant Mikel Murley, AL Post GR07; President, WOA; Representative BOSS)

GR07 Helps Judge Oratorical Contest

Post GR07 1st Vice Commander and Department Vice Commander, Jimmie Dale, served as a judge for Post BE-02’s Oratorical Contest 9 Dec 17 in Shape, Belgium. Comrade Dale said it was a great event which included six contestants. All contestants demonstrated excellent oratorical skills and overall scoring was very close.

Next GR07 General Membership Meeting

Saturday, 6 January 2018 at 3pm
Marsweg 3, 65191 Wiesbaden (Bldg. 7005 Crestview Housing Area)

GR07 Wishes Everyone A Happy New Year 2018!
Since the last SAL DEC membership is doing good thanks to all squadrons that have done at least one transmittal this membership year. The members in the squadrons are declining and we need to consider as to who we have in the posts that are eligible for dual membership to increase the membership and possible more members in attendance for the DECs. The complete legion family is the only way to have full participation with the communities from The American Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, and The Legion Rider. Let us make the last half of the membership year more successful by obtaining 100% membership.

Sal Commander Charlie Brown

The Third DEC will be hosted by Omar Bradley Post GR42

Time and location TBA
On 26 December John Wayne Post GR79 hosted the yearly dinner for the homeless in Heilbronn. The dinner has been hosted by GR79 for the past six years and is sponsored through donations from post members. There were 106 homeless personnel served and I would like to thank the members of the post for making this special event a success.
Department of France

Hello Ladies and Legionnaires;

DC Dennis and I attended a Christmas party for the troops on the 2nd of December in Landstuhl at the “Warrior Center”. We brought cake and gifts for the troops. I would like to thank Department Auxiliary Secretary Mattson, First Vice Cochran, and Mrs. Purdy. A large thank you to Tam, Shawn and Woody at the USO “Warrior Center” in Landstuhl. We had a great time and a few laughs.

We are going to Landstuhl on 17th of January to visit the troops at the USO for Valentine’s Day. We are asking the Legion family to join us. Please do contact the Auxiliary Secretary Mattson for a head count and if you wish to donate items. We are also collecting for the Chaplains closet (flyer included).

Also in March we are having the DEC in Ansbach. I would like to see a large presence.

Thank You. Sonja Dennis/President/Department of France

Figure 1: To the Left to right is Department President Sonja Dennis, Shwn Stidham, Tam Frese, Caroline Cochran, Secretary Anne Marie Mattson and Woody Woodard at the Warrior Center in Landstuhl.

Figure 2: Cadre at Landstuhl receiving Christmas cards made by Elementary School children.

Figure 3: Cadre at Landstuhl receiving Christmas cards made by Elementary School children.

Figure 4: Department President Dennis as Mrs. Santa giving out a Red Cross bear and a can of goodies to the troops. Caroline Cochran and Department Commander Dennis was assisting Mrs. Santa.

Figure 5: Department President Dennis as Mrs. Santa giving out a Red Cross bear and a can of goodies to the troops.
DEC and PSO Training Access Issues

Legion Post GR1982 in Ansbach-Katterbach will be hosting the Department Executive Committee meeting (DEC) on 17 March 2018 and also the Post Service Officer (PSO) training on 16 March 2018. Since both events will be located on a military installation, we need to discuss access to the installation with all attendees.

If you have an ID card, either as Active Duty, DoD Civilian or Retiree, and are registered in the European IACS system; then you have no problem. If you are not in one of these categories, then you have two options. The easiest option, for everyone concerned, is to ride with someone who has an ID card. They can then sign you in. The other option is to provide us the information that we need to put you on an access roster that we will work for these events. The issue here is that we will need the information no later than THREE weeks before the events.

Please start making your plans and checking your options now. Then we will not have issues as we get nearer to mid-March. More information will be put out through Department in the near future. Watch your email.

VA Suspends Applications for New ID Cards

The Department of Veterans Affairs has suspended applications for its new veteran identification card program due to a large number of applicants, according to a notice on its website. The new, free ID card was ordered by Congress in 2015 as a way to give veterans proof of service at businesses without carrying a copy of their DD-214 forms. The VA a week ago rolled out the online application for the card for all honorably discharged veterans, but the system appeared to immediately face technical problems. For more details, see this Military.com article.
AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE
Post Service Officer Training

MARCH 16, 2018
Katterbach, Germany

The American Legion, Department of France, is presenting their first official Post Service Officer training course.

This training course will provide guidance to post service officers and enable all to better assist veterans with their VA claims.

INSTRUCTORS
Laura Buckner: Department Service Officer
Frank Phillips: Assistant DSO
Jill Downs: VA Representative

REGISTRATION:
Registration is required!
Please send an email to ADSO Frank Phillips at fdphillips59@gmail.com

Upon completion, all participants will be tested on proficiency as a service officer. All participants passing the test will receive a “trained” certificate.

LOCATION(s)
Training Seminar / DEC
AL Post 1982, Von-Steuben-Str. BLDG 5515, 91522 Katterbach
Dinner, 16 March
Gasthaus Goldener Stern, Ansbacher Str. 3, 91560 Heilsbronn

Hotel rooms are available at:
www.goldner-sterne-heilsbronn.de
SNGL: 47€ / DBL 70€ (7 miles to DEC)
15 rooms blocked for us. mention „Frank“

www.hotel-windmuehle.de
DBL 70€ (9 Miles to DEC)
no rooms blocked for us.

PROGRAM
0830-0900
CHECK IN / REGISTRATION
0900-1000
PSO DUTIES / RESPONSIBILITIES VA POLICIES
1000-1200
SMART CLAIM
BASIC CLAIM - STEP BY STEP
1200-1245
LUNCH BREAK - LEGION HOME
1245-1345
FOREIGN MEDICAL PROGRAM
1345-1530
VA REPRESENTATIVE CLAIM PROCESSING / TIPS
1530-1600
TEST
1830-????
DINNER IN HEILSBRONN
with VA REP, DSO, ADSO DPT COMMANDER
17 MARCH - 0900
DEC - KATTERBACH

BE ON TIME!
We have limited time to complete the training.
Bipartisan support for legislation expanding caregiver benefits

By Johnathon Clinkscales

The American Legion and several other veterans service organizations (VSOs) recently delivered more than 180,000 signed petitions to Congress that urges lawmakers to pass bipartisan legislation that will expand caregiver benefits for all disabled veterans under the Department of Veterans Affairs Comprehensive Caregiver Assistance Program. The bill, which the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs passed on Nov. 29 by a 14-1 vote, would help improve existing health care and services provided under the VA by expanding eligibility for veterans of all generations, including Vietnam-era servicemembers. It would also provide permanent, streamlined access to health care and services with a new Veterans Community Care Program.

The petitions were delivered during a press conference on Dec. 6 at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. VSO representatives spoke about the importance of ensuring equal benefits to veterans of all generations. House and Senate leaders, including sponsors of the Caring for Our Veterans Act of 2017, were also present to voice their support and celebrate the bill’s passage last week in the Senate VA committee.

“Far too many veterans and their caregivers have been denied access to VA’s comprehensive caregivers benefits for the wrong reason,” said American Legion National Legislative Deputy Director Derek Fronabarger. “The American Legion believes eligibility for veterans’ benefits should not be based on when a veteran served, but rather how they served and their physical and mental condition upon returning home.”

“As the daughter of a World War II veteran who visits with veterans in my home state of Washington, I have seen firsthand the vital role that caregivers fulfill,” said Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., a senior Senate VA committee member who is the bill’s lead sponsor. “It is impossible to overstate the value of having a family member or a loved one, by your side, while overcoming an illness or coping with an injury.

“The sacrifice that many caregivers make to provide vital day-to-day care for our wounded veterans often goes unnoticed. Taking care of our veterans means taking care of the caregivers who help make their recovery possible.”

Under VA’s current Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, only veterans who served on or after 9/11 are eligible for enhanced support. The Caring for Our Veterans Act seeks to provide caregiver benefits to veterans injured before May 7, 1975. Veterans who were injured between 1975 and 2001 would be eligible two years after this bill is enacted.

“We made a promise to care for our brave men and women when they return home from war – that includes supporting our caregivers,” Murray said. “We cannot stop until we get this done.”

Fronabarger said the nation should not and cannot treat veterans differently based only on their service. He said that withholding caregiver benefits of those who served before 9/11 is not giving them the respect and dignity they deserve.

“It is our hope to correct a serious flaw in the original caregiver legislation by removing the discriminatory barriers that prevent some of our nation’s most deserving veterans, and their caregivers, from receiving the comprehensive assistance they have earned,” he said.

“The American Legion supports any responsible legislation that expands caregiver support to all veterans.”

“Caregivers are true partners in the delivery of health care to veterans and they deserve quality support,” said Rep. Ryan Costello, R-Penn. “It is time that we expand this program to veterans of all generations.”

The Caring for Our Veterans Act is now awaiting a vote in the full Senate. If passed, the bill would provide about $4 billion for the Veterans Choice Fund and create standards for timely payment to community care providers.

“Often, caregivers put their lives on hold to provide full-time assistance to the veteran. This can take an immense toll on families, relationships, bank accounts and the health and well-being of caregivers,” said Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., SVAC’s ranking member who introduced the bill. “We cannot rest easy until our efforts to expand the VA’s caregiver support program comes to fruition. Republicans, democrats and independents must continue to work together to get this legislation across the finish line and signed into law.”
Legion applauds VA’s updated guidance on medical marijuana
The American Legion Dec 20, 2017

The Department of Veterans Affairs’ recently issued updated guidance on medical marijuana urges government doctors to discuss with veterans marijuana use, due to its clinical relevance to patient care, and discuss marijuana use with any veterans requesting information about marijuana, an update praised by The American Legion.

“I applaud the VA in taking this bold move toward treating veterans and also fulfilling resolutions passed by The American Legion,” said American Legion National Commander Denise H. Rohan. “We do not support recreational use of drugs, but we do think the medicinal possibilities of cannabis should not be ignored by the VA. We are all about putting the health of veterans first.”

Because marijuana is a Schedule I controlled substance, VA doctors cannot prescribe medical marijuana, recommend it or assist patients with getting it.

The American Legion has two medical marijuana-related resolutions passed by the National Executive Committee:

Resolution 11 was passed during the Legion’s 2016 National Convention in Cincinnati. The resolution calls on the Drug Enforcement Agency to license privately funded medical marijuana production operations in the United States to enable safe and efficient cannabis drug development research; and urging Congress to remove marijuana from Schedule I and reclassify it in a category that, at a minimum, will recognize cannabis as a drug with potential medical value.

Resolution 28 was passed during the 2017 National Convention in Reno, Nev. The resolution calls for permitting VA medical providers to openly discuss with veterans the use of marijuana for medical purposes, as well as recommend it where legal.

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