

The AMERICAN LEGION

Department of France



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November 2015



DEPARTMENT COMMANDER *Keith Abernathy*

I wish to extend my heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Mrs. Inge Cervenka, wife of Legionnaire Rick Cervenka, Commander of Dwight D. Eisenhower Post GR13, in Augsburg. Mrs. Cervenka passed away on Monday 19 October 2015. I know she will be sorely missed. Again my condolences to the family for Mrs. Cervenka.

On 3 October I was in Bidingen at GR14 On 10 October I was in Schweinfurt by GR42 and also attended my first Sons of The American Legion (SAL) DEC (2nd). It was a very interesting meeting and I learned a lot about SAL. I now know we have 8 SAL Squadrons in the Department SAL Detachment with Lee Preston as the Detachment Commander. Out of the 8 Squadrons only 2 chose to attend the DEC. 4 individuals made decisions for the 6 other Squadrons. Comrades Joe Brown, David Greaux, Casby Logan and James Settle, voted the 3rd DEC again in Schweinfurt and, plus the Convention to also be held there. This is not the way should be accomplished. If you have a Squadron at your Post you have a representative at the DEC's to help make the process amenable to all. The old adage is true " if you don't vote don't complain"! I will be attending the 3rd SAL DEC in March and hope to see all Squadrons represented. On 17 October as you all know I was in Heilbronn for the Department 2nd DEC. I have to say it was in my opinion a very good DEC. We had a good turnout. Our guests were superb and I'm glad they came. I have to give special thanks to John Wayne Post GR79 and to their Commander Roy Martin and Adjutant Ross Shepard III for the great job that was done hosting the DEC.

Post Constitutions and By-Laws were requested for review by The Judge Advocate James Settle in June of this year. We have 28 Posts and as of today he has only received 7. The Post Constitution and By-Laws should mirror the Departments which in turn should mirror Nationals. All post that have not forwarded their Constitution and By-Laws please do as soon as possible so we are running on the same tracks.

I took my wife to Mallorca for her round Birthday and we would have had a nice time if we had seen the soon. However, my wife enjoyed it. We did things together and ate like you wouldn't believe.

The Convention and Birthdays are over and so are the vacations. Now it is down to the business of running the Department. I will be coming to visit your post. I will not show up unannounced. I will call the commander and ask if I can come, if yes I'll be there, if no I won't but I will still have spoken to the commander. If I come to your post I will have your Department Vice Commander in attendance.

Membership, membership, membership: it is imperative that the Post Membership Chairman get checks and transmittals married up and transmitted to the Department membership Chairman. It does not make sense to send a transmittal without checks or checks without transmittals. They cannot be transmitted to national unless the are complete. So pay attention and get it right the first time. The Membership Chairman has sent out an Email requesting transmittals be sent to him so he do a transmittal to National next week.

Keith Abernathy / Commander / keithabernathy1942@yahoo.de



Commander hits on three key topics at Fall Meetings

The American Legion

American Legion National Commander Dale Barnett opened the Fall Meetings on Wednesday by focusing on three key topics: veterans walks, VA and membership.

Barnett has challenged all Legion departments to conduct a Walk for Veterans event to raise awareness about veterans and the Legion's positive impact on communities nationwide. Since the beginning of September, awareness walks have been held in New Hampshire, Missouri, Connecticut and Indiana.

"I want to thank you for the awareness walks. What a great opportunity for us to share our message to our communities on what we do in The American Legion," Barnett said. "I'm overwhelmed by the responses I've had from various departments who are going out and walking with veterans to tell our story."

Barnett shared that two 92-year-old World War II veterans made the entire 2.5-mile walk in New Hampshire with encouragement from passersby honking their horns. And members of the Auxiliary sang "God Bless America."

"Thanks for stepping up. I hope we can do awareness walks in as many places as we can, and it doesn't have to be with me," he said, encouraging departments, districts or posts to hold walks whether or not they coincide with a visit from the national commander.

On Oct. 21, Barnett will be attending a House Committee on Veterans' Affairs hearing in Washington, D.C., regarding an examination of the VA Office of Inspector General's final report on the "inappropriate use of position and misuse of relocation program and incentives." And he encouraged Legionnaires to join him.

The report states VA staff are being relocated, due to not fulfilling their job requirements, to other VA positions with higher pay. An example in the report states one relocation cost taxpayers \$274,000.

"I will be at the hearing. And I want you to join me because I want them to see The American Legion to let them know that we're going to hold the VA accountable," Barnett said. "It's a system worth saving, but it's not a system worth protecting senior executive officers who take advantage of the situation. We owe it to our taxpayers, and we owe it to our veterans."

"I hope many of you will be able to join me as we continue to fight for veterans benefits in our nation's capital."

As for Legion membership, six departments are ahead of where they were last year at this time. "That's not the direction I want to go with membership. That's not the direction we need to go," Barnett said. "I know it's difficult; I know it's hard. But I know that you want to be on a winning team, and we've got to turn membership around."

With the \$5 membership dues increase starting in 2016, Barnett said the next 60 days should be an incentive for Legionnaires to "work membership to be above where we were last year."

"We need to shoot for the stars," he said. "I need your help. We need to do it for the organization; we need to do it as we approach our 100th anniversary. We've got to stop talking, and we've got to start acting."

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS - 2016 MEMBERSHIP YEAR

COMMANDER Keith Abernathy GR79 <i>keithabernathy1942@yahoo.de</i>	ADJUTANT Maxwell Rice GR79 <i>colwichboy@yahoo.com</i>	NECMAN John Miller GR1982 <i>miller-roth@t-online.de</i>	ALT. NECMAN Ronald Moore GR05 <i>gypsy_moore@yahoo.de</i>
VICE COMMANDER AT LARGE Joe D. Brown GR79 <i>vcalbrown50@gmail.com</i> GR07 GR20 GR42 CH01 DK01 NL01 TH00(Thailand) Post9999 & New Post Development	VICE COMMANDER Lyndon Hudson FR01 <i>lyndonandmargaret@yahoo.com</i> GR03 GR06 GR09 GR13 GR79 BE02	VICE COMMANDER Quincy Foster GR05 <i>quincy@karssandra.com</i> GR01 GR02 GR14 FR01 IR01 FR05 IR63	VICE COMMANDER John Shanahan IR63 <i>jhshanahan@gmail.com</i> IR02 IR03 IT01 PO01 GC01 SP292
VICE COMMANDER Casby Logan GR07 <i>casbyj@hotmail.com</i> GR05 GR30 GR45 GR1982	CHAPLAIN Jimmie Dale GR07 <i>jimmiedale.87@gmail.com</i>	HISTORIAN Michael Keating IR02 <i>michael.keating@t-online.de</i>	FINANCE OFFICER Gary Miller GR06 <i>billsfan_gary@hotmail.com</i>
SERVICE OFFICER Paul Claybough GR1982 <i>profsoldier72@yahoo.com</i>	JUDGE ADVOCATE James M. Settle GR42 <i>james.settle@kabelbw.de</i>		SERGEANT-AT-ARMS Christopher Buchanan GR1982 <i>christoperbuch@hotmail.com</i>

Please send all input for the Department Newsletter to my email address at the latest three days prior to the end of the month. If possible. Constructive suggestions to improve the Newsletter are also welcome.

If you want to stay informed on what is happening with **YOUR** Department you can also visit the following sites,
www.AmerLegionDeptFrance.org / www.Facebook.com/ALDeptFrance / www.legion.org/fodpal

Thank You.

David N. Greaux / *davidgreaux@t-online.de*



From the Editor

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT *Maxwell Rice*



SUBJECT: 2016 Oratorical Finals

This is notice for The Department of France Oratorical. It will be held on the 20th of February 2016. Hosted by BE02 in Belgium, the location and times will be posted at a later date.

Post are reminder that they should get an early start so that there candidates will be prepared and have had time to train.

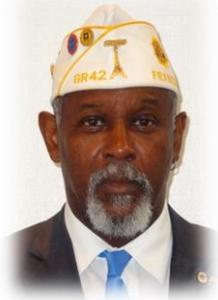
Should you have any questions please contact the Dept. Oratorical Chairman Douglas Clemence or Dept. Adjutant Maxwell Rice.



Veterans Day originated as "Armistice Day" on Nov. 11, 1919, the first anniversary of the end of World War I. Congress passed a resolution in 1926 for an annual observance, and Nov. 11 became a national holiday beginning in 1938. Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day—a common misunderstanding, according to

the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Memorial Day (the fourth Monday in May) honors American service members who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries incurred during battle, while Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER AT LARGE / MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN Joe D. Brown



My fellow Legionaries, Auxiliary and S.A.L. Members.

Communication within the Department. I challenge all of us to do better job in this arena, so that we can better support, and guide the Post, and accomplish the Department missions. In addition we need to support each other, that is if you need help ask, I am sure with the wealth of knowledge we have within this Department someone is capable, and willing to help Department of France if you need help or want to do a membership drive tell me i will help you make your 100% but we need to communication.

Remember this year 2016 the Oratorical will be in Belgium so start now talking to the school it would be nice to go to Belgium with 6-7 contest.

Right now we are at number 38 for National. We made the 60% but we doing good right now but don't stop keep moving to make that 100% we still have posts out there have not transmittal not one member

for 2016 so just start now the post that made 100% my cap off for you for the good work. We did a Membership drive in Panzer Exchange we pick up 25 new members for GR 06.

The 2 DEC was in Heilbronn GR 79 good work, nice turn out for the Department

We must remember the ideals of what the American Legion stand for, justice, freedom and democracy. We are here to support our veterans, their families, our communities, widows 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 those programs. I would strive to make that happen. Post Commander when you have your General Membership Meeting you need your POW-MIA Table and American Flag and your Post Legion Flag we have post out there do not do this so start this year.

If you have a Legionaries in your Post Sick or in the Hospital or Deceased please e-mail the Department Adjutant and the Department Chaplain

As always, remember, if you need to contact me I am just an E-mail vcalbrow50@gmail.com away. 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.

Membership Chairman / VCAL / Charlie Brown

2015 MEMBERSHIP STANDINGS OF DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE 30 OCTOBER 2015 MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN										
#	POST	PUFL	REGULAR	NEW Members	TOTAL MEMBERS	ON LINE	NEED	2016 DEPT. GOAL	PERCENT OF 2016 GOAL	NUMBER TRANSMITTED
1	DK01	Copenhagen	1	0	0	1	0	0	100.00%	1
2	FR01	France	103	179	2	282	44	51	81.91 %	231
3	GC 01	Athens	4	18	0	22	1	17	22.72%	5
4	IT 01	Rome	2	9	0	11	1	8	27.27%	3
5	NL 01	Rotterdam	3	0	0	3	0	0	100.00%	3
6	PO 01	Portugal	3	9	0	12	3	6	50.00%	6
7	BE 02	Flanders Field	15	56	15	71	22	0	100.15. %	82
8	IR 02	Father Francis Duffy	0	43	0	43	0	43	0,00%	0
9	IR 03	Comm. John Barry	2	18	1	20	0	4	80.00%	16
10	FR 05	Riveria	13	18	0	28	0	4	85.71%	24
11	IR 63	John F. Kennedy	3	32	1	35	0	6	82.85%	29
12	SP 292	Madrid	8	21	0	29	3	10	65.51%	19
13	GR 01	Kaiserslautern	45	139	10	240	29	132	45.00%	108
14	GR 03	Rhein Neckar	24	61	0	75	14	28	62.66%	47
15	GR 05	Rhein Main	26	38	6	71	7	6	100.5%	75
16	GR 06	Stuttgart	127	156	27	283	18	67	85.86%	243
17	GR 07	Riley Leroy Pitts	10	41	17	48	8	1	97.91%	47
18	GR 09	William D. Nelson	26	22	1	48	3	2	95.83%	46
20	GR 13	Dwight D. Eisenhower	26	53	2	79	8	25	68.35%	54
21	GR 14	Thomas W. Barnett	25	38	7	63	8	18	85.71%	54
22	GR 20	Eifel	17	1	0	18	0	0	100.00%	18
23	GR 30	Audie Murphy	13	21	0	34	5	16	52.94%	18
24	GR 42	Omar Bradley	19	28	0	47	2	10	70.21%	33
25	GR 45	Vilseck	1	1	0	5	0	3	40.00%	2
26	GR 79	John Wayne	14	40	2	50	2	0	100.1 %	55
27	GR02		0	18	3	18	0	0	16.00%	3
28	GR 1982	Ansbach	20	125	22	120	9	81	74.16%	89
29	HQ9999		23	94	0	74	26	54	68.91%	51
30	CH 01	China	230	1050	12	1066	280	786	55.81%	595
Department Totals		796	2086	128	2882	485	925	2882	67.90%	1957
National Goal for Department is 2.882 Members										



GR79 and BE02 Legion Riders at Second DEC



Past Dept. Commander Settle awards BE02 Commander Schram



FR01 WW2 Vet, Dept. Commander, VCAL, FR01 Commander Hale and Auxiliary Member



GR1982 Commander Aungst receives online check from membership chairman Brown



GR06 Membership Drive

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER Lyndon Hudson



Alongside the Department VCAL, assisted GR06 with their membership drive on the 3rd of October at Panzer Caserne's PX. Overall I'd say it was a resounding success. The new recruit in the photo was the first of the day, recruited by VCAL Brown.



5 October 2015: I attended Post GR79's stated meeting. They will be having a Thanksgiving Dinner Party on 21 November starting at 14hr. Price is 15€ at the door or 13€ for early ticket purchase, available until the 16th. Location: BTC Frim In NSU-Oberisheim, 74172 (Neckargarter Str 32 entrance). POC: 2nd VC McAndrews 0152-5757 or Adj Shephard, rshephard3rd@gmail.com 0176-4722 7166 or 071131-405 88 92.

14 October 2015: I attended Post GR06's stated meeting. They'd like for everyone to check out their website at: <http://www.americanlegionstuttgartde.org/>. On 28 November they will be having another membership drive. During their last membership drive we recruited 4 new members for Posts other than GR06, so, any help from outside Stuttgart I'm sure would be greatly appreciated.

17 October 2015: I attended the DEC hosted by GR79. They did a great job and the food was excellent.

Regards, Lyndon Hudson, VC



Sick Call

Please keep in mind that Comrade John Purdy Commander of Post GR01 will be going into the hospital, University Clinic in Heidelberg for surgery for reoccurring throat cancer on the 13th of November 2015. Please keep Comrade Purdy and his family in your thoughts and prayers and wishes for a successful operation, and a speedy recovery.

James Settle / Department Judge Advocate / IPDC

The department was notified by the adjutant of John Wayne Post 79 (Comrade Shephard), that Comrade Robert Downs a long time member of John Wayne Post 79 was hospitalized, and had surgery performed on the 23rd of October, to remove a malignant tumor from his lungs. The doctor indicates that the prognosis is good, and the family is hoping for him to be home very soon. Please keep Comrade Downs, and his family in your thoughts and prayers, for a very speedy recovery. Get well cards can be sent to Comrade Robert Downs at the below address.

Robert Downs
Herbert-Hooverstr 21
74074 Heilbronn

James Settle / Department Judge Advocate / IPDC

Department Vice Commander John Shanahan



We all need a little “TLC” – and that goes for Legionnaires as well. Yes, that stands for “tender, loving care” something that we extend to family members, friends and comrades. It is, after all, what we’re about as the nation’s largest service organization for veterans. Job #1 for us is to look after all veterans – those who are members of the Legion and those who might become Legion members and all who are in need of our help.

For those in leadership positions in Posts and in the Department, there’s another way of thinking about “TLC” that applies especially to all of us: “teamwork, leadership and communications.”

I had this particularly in mind during this last month as I visited our Athens, Greece Post, GC-01. It’s a long way from Athens to central Europe and there had not been any face to face meetings with local members in quite some time. I want to recognize the kindness, hospitality and genuine good will that I experienced from all members, especially Commander Elias Pendas, Vice Commander Tino Orphanos, and Post Adjutant Chris Holidis. I had the opportunity to meet with members of the Post during my visit and to meet with CAPT. Robert Palm, USN and Senior Chief Elena Galindo, USN of the Embassy’s DAO Office. I found it interesting that CAPT. Palm knew very little about the Legion – but was eager to learn. Senior Chief Galindo was terrific – she took a stack of membership applications and Legion brochures and agreed to distribute among Embassy military personnel. Better yet, she indicated that she was retiring soon, planned on staying in Athens and would join the Athens Post. That’s as good as it gets!



My travels this past month took me to Claremorris in County Mayo, Ireland for the AGM for Post IR-03, our West of Ireland post. I had the honor of installing the re-elected Post Commander Ron Howko and Post Adjutant Michael Noone. The photo below shows these gentlemen pictured with the most senior



member of the Post who was the special honoree for the day. This Post has an outstanding track record in recognizing and supporting the families of deceased service members, as many veterans who have passed away wish to be returned to their native Ireland for burial. This is a great example of the “tender loving care” exhibited by our Legionnaires and one that we should be proud of. Thanks to Post IR-03 for inviting me to be part of your day,

I encourage you to keep our Legion spirit of TLC in mind and to practice it in both our care for one another and for the ways in which we exercise our leadership responsibilities in the Legion.

With best wishes to all, For God and Country, John

DETACHMENT OF FRANCE

Squadrons: GR01, BE02, GR06, GR07, GR14, GR42, GR79, CH01



Lee Preston... *Detachment of France Commander "2016"*

Hello Sons of the American Legion, Detachment of France,

First, I would like to congratulate ALL of the Squadrons for putting the Detachment over the top (100%). This is a tribute to the dedication that our members have to this Detachment. Second, I would like to thank the members that came to the 2nd DEC on 10 October. We had a good meeting and got important business accomplished. We did an overview of the budget and decided that I would get in contact with the Department finance officer to confirm it. After many E-mails and a phone call I was able to get a budget worked out that would fit and will present it to the DEC in March. We are having a problem with getting information from some Squadrons. I need the Name, Address, Telephone Number, and E-mail of the Commander and Adjutant of ALL Squadrons in the Detachment. This information is required at National ASAP. Please send this information to me at lpreston1957@gmail.com. The 3rd DEC will be held in the Frankfurt area and is being sponsored by the Detachment. 1st Vice Commander Brown will get the DEC set up and we will get the information out to the Squadrons as soon as possible. I am hoping that having the DEC in the Frankfurt area will get more attendance and more involvement in the operation of YOUR Detachment. The 4th DEC, Convention, and 1st DEC will be hosted again by Squadron 42. Details will be sent out as they become available. My wife and I will be attending the Veterans Day Wreath laying at Saint Avold on 11 November with hopefully a stop by GR01 after. We will lay a wreath in honor of our veterans from the Detachment. Please, on this day and always, remember those veterans that have given the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedom they have given us, for without them; we would have not prevailed. As I finish with that thought; please join us at the next DEC as well as our convention and make this Detachment grow and prosper from the experience we have within.

PARIS POST FR01

SGM Frank M. Crosley joined Paris Post #1 in 1972 when he retired. He served in Korea and went to Vietnam in Aug. 1965. When he was promoted to Sergeant Major in 1967, he was the youngest person in his grade in USAREUR at the time of his promotion. He went to PEL in 2005. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

This October, my daughter Michèle, legionnaire and auxiliary, accompanied me Ginette, Auxiliary of Paris Post 1 to pay our respects to my husband. Paris Post #1 decided to deposit some flowers on his tomb, remembering PP1 Adjutant. We thank them for their gesture.



Department of France Past Commanders Club



Jimmie Dale...*President "2016"*

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 will be during our Department Third DEC

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE... *David Greaux, PCC Secretary "2016"*



Retirement Appreciation Days

The American Legion “Flanders Field” Post BE02 participated at the Retirement Appreciation Day events at SHAPE (03 Oct) and USAG Schinnen (09 Oct). At both events we were able to inform the retirees of several of our programs. Many of the retirees were interest in our “Get Out the Vote” campaign and our Veteran Service Organization program. We are now helping several retirees with their VA claims.

Brussels Info Fair

On Thursdays, 08 Oct, Auxiliary Member Kym Shutley and Commander Schram from Post BE02 participated in an Information Fair held at the US Embassy in Brussels. During the day, we were able to inform newcomers to Belgium of our programs for the veterans, their families and the community. Several of the newcomers were interested in our High Scholl Oratorical Contest and the Boys State / Girls State programs.

Bikers For Children

Members of the Legion Riders Paul Dunn, Karen Himmelheber and Jeffrey Ryan Andrews) supported the “Bikers For Children” event in Wemmel, Belgium. The "Bikers for Children" raise money to help sick, and handicapped children, or children that are in bad living situations at home. The group routinely donates to schools for the handicapped, and following the rally donated 2 new computers to help a class of students in the Ardennes. The rally had a turnout of approximately 500 motorcycles.

Venture Crew 511

Our Venture Crew 511 participated in 2015 Fall Camporee Waterloo, Belgium during the weekend of 03 October. While the Battle of Waterloo occurred 200 years ago, Boy Scout Troops and Venture Crews, from all over Europe came together to experience the events of that day on the Battle Fields of Waterloo





Belgian teen soldier, American veteran

The first thing 89-year-old Maurice Sperandieu will tell you is the meaning of his name. “Hope in God,” he softly says, seated beside his daughter, Lee, at an American Legion steak dinner in Brussels, Belgium.

Sperandieu does not need to explain the three words. They are undoubtedly a mantra he repeated often in one of several languages he spoke in 1944 when he volunteered to serve in the U.S. Army. Following Belgium’s liberation in September of that year, he went on to fight in the Battle of the Bulge and later translated terms of surrender to German soldiers, as well as long-awaited words of rescue to Holocaust survivors as he and his unit moved eastward in the final half-year of World War II.

When Sperandieu turned 18 in June 1944, his country had been under Nazi occupation for more than four years. The Allies had just stormed the beaches of Normandy and were fighting their way across Europe. By September, they had reached Belgium and Luxembourg, where they established the final major combat line of Germany’s defense against the inevitable. There, in the winter of 1944 and 1945, the Battle of the Bulge would account for more than 89,000 U.S. casualties, including nearly 20,000 killed in action.

As the Allies were battling to harden the line, the teenage Sperandieu saw a U.S. GI about his age shot and killed by a German sniper. “I looked at him and thought, ‘That could be me,’” Sperandieu says. “I thought about what this young guy had done for me.”

To get into the U.S. Army as a Belgian volunteer, he needed parental consent. His father, a veteran who had fought alongside Americans in World War I, granted it.

“I volunteered because my dad did, for 20 years,” says Sperandieu, peering through glasses that fail to give him much vision anymore. “It was normal that I would follow his example. It was normal, but it was frightening at the same time. You were risking your life every day.”

By the time he was trained and serving in the U.S. Army’s 4th Infantry Division, the thunder of bombs and crackle of gunfire were familiar white noise to Sperandieu, who knew that death could strike anyone, combatant or not, at any moment. “My dad was proud. I was excited. But he said to me it was possible I wouldn’t come back.” That was a risk they were willing to accept.

As a boy surrounded by war, Sperandieu had taken refuge in schoolwork, confident that liberation was imminent. He excelled in language studies, skills the Army later put to use. He was attached to an MP unit that consisted of a first lieutenant, a sergeant, a driver and him. As the Allies pushed the Germans

back, Sperandieu and his team could be found in their jeep near the front, translating to the Germans what was coming and what they needed to do about it.

After the Battle of the Bulge, German resistance began to soften. As the Allies continued to push the line toward Berlin, Sperandieu personally saw Gen. George S. Patton on two occasions as they moved forward, looking for billets. “The Germans were starting to surrender. Even the Germans had had enough of the fighting. Sometimes we didn’t know if a place had already been taken by the American troops.”

Sperandieu’s advance team did encounter enemy fire, once forcing the teenage translator to leap out of their moving jeep while under attack from the air. “A few (German) planes were still active. They tried to kill us. Fortunately, they were not that accurate.”

In April 1945, Sperandieu and the first lieutenant were scouting a German village when they entered a big building. They went in and began opening doors, one by one. “They were nice rooms. Silent. I opened one last door, and there were at least 15 high-ranking Nazi staff officers. I was raising my tommy gun. They looked at us. We looked at them. Nobody said a word. After a few seconds, my lieutenant said, ‘Let’s go.’ I think that was a good decision.”

The outnumbered U.S. soldiers could easily have been gunned down by the enemy officers. However, says Sperandieu, “They were not speaking about attacking. They were speaking about surrendering.”

When his unit reached the Buchenwald concentration camp in western Germany, Sperandieu saw a scene that would be seared into his memory forever. “The prisoners were all sick and dying,” he recalls. “Lying on the ground, barely able to speak. Horrible ... horrible.”

Today, he believes the tuberculosis he contracted after he got out of the Army in 1946 was connected to the liberation of Buchenwald, a place he has revisited over the years if only to provide firsthand testimony of one of history’s darkest chapters. “The Germans don’t want the whole story told, but I was there.”

Shortly after the war, Sperandieu joined The American Legion. He is a Paid Up for Life member of Belgium’s Flanders Field Post BE02. “For 32 years I organized remembrance walks for the Battle of the Bulge,” he explains. His winter walks – retracing the steps of the Allies in that fateful winter – continue to this day and are organized by the City of Bastogne.

Sperandieu tried to re-enlist in the Army to fight in the Korean War. “They wouldn’t take me,” he says. “My eyes were not that good.”

He and his wife, Elly, later adopted two South Korean girls who had been orphaned after the conflict. Lee and Lin grew up in Belgium and live there today. Lee is an active member of the American Legion Auxiliary in the Department of France and has created a Facebook page on behalf of her father. She also helps him get around and explains what he cannot see. “I am his eyes,” she says.

Sperandieu says the war “has always been a part of my life, and it will be until the end.” On that hope, the World War II veteran from Belgium can be even more certain than he was in 1944, when the words that make up the meaning of his name proved both therapeutic and prophetic, as he and his fellow soldiers helped change the course of human history.

Kaiserslautern Post GR01

On 11 Nov 2015, GR01 will participate in a Wreath Laying Ceremony at the American Lorraine Cemetery in St. Avold, France at 1100. Members of the American Legion and Ramstein Military Harley Owners Group will depart Ramstein Airbase at 0900 for the hour ride to St. Avold. After the ceremony, all are invited to a BBQ to be held at the GR01 Post, Bldg 368, Rhine Ordnance Barracks for a small donation.

On 12 December 2015, Post GR01 will be having its Annual Christmas Party at the Burgshanke Restaurant in Hohenecken, Kaiserslautern. The event will include a White Elephant Gift Exchange with value of gift between Euro 20-25.

SGT William D. Nelson Post GR09

The William D. Nelson Post GR 09 Legionnaires have arrived!

No matter where the DECs are held in Germany it has become almost routine to witness the arrival of a mini-bus carrying anywhere from seven to nine individuals who upon exiting the bus still display wit and vigor. After stretching their limbs and checking out the surroundings you're bound to hear, "Okay, where is the meeting place? GR 09 has arrived!"

For several years numerous GR 09 Legionnaires have supported the Department of France (DOF) with their presence at DECs. Every member pays a share for the rental of the vehicle and the Post Commander is entrusted with the driving. In addition to attending the meetings the group also enjoys the trips as it provides the opportunity to discuss, argue or kibitz on a variety of subjects including sports and politics. Sometimes it seems the ride is too short as upon arrival discussions are still going while the troops "pours out" of the bus. The return trip to Neu-Ulm is generally reserved for talking about the DEC meeting.

This support makes it easy for the Post Commander as he is always sure that the required number of delegates is available. GR 09 policy is that members rotate so that everyone can serve as a delegate.

GR 09 ready to return to Neu-Ulm



GR 09 welcomes another PUFL to its membership. Pictured below is Post Commander Jerry Aman presenting a PUFL certificate to new PUFL member Fred Matthes. GR 09 now has 26 PUFLs which accounts for over 50% of its total members.



John Wayne Post GR79

*YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND
AND ENJOY A THANKSGIVING DINNER PARTY*

with families, friends, guests, and Legionnaires. Planned foods include turkey, ham, different salads and much more. (15 Euros) for Adults or our Early Bird Price of (13 Euros). Tickets for (Euro 13) may be purchased until November 16th The dinner and comradeships there for you to enjoy. Come on out to the:



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Entrance Is on Neckargarter Strasse 32*



The activities sponsored by IWP-79 members, families & friends begins at 1400 hours (2:PM) November 21, 2015. Please contact me as soon as possible with number of guests that you plan to bring so that appropriate arrangements can be made

*POC: 2nd Vice Commander McAndrews 0152-57575691 or Adjutant Shephard,
rshephard3rd@gmail.com, 0176-4722 7166*

Fox News: Senators blast order barring female guards from transporting Gitmo inmates

Published October 27, 2015

Female soldiers serving at Guantanamo Bay are not being allowed to transport inmates following a court order issued in response to prisoners who complained on religious grounds, according to Republican senators who recently returned from a visit to the prison camp.

Inmates apparently complained the female soldiers' actions were an insult to their Islamic faith, but the senators blasted the court decision as an "insult to women." Top U.S. military leaders agreed the directive is "outrageous," while suggesting they're currently bound by the order.

Sen. Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., first revealed the decision at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing Tuesday morning. She told Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford that on a visit Friday to the detention center, she was told female soldiers were not being allowed to transport the "9/11 five" – five inmates suspected of masterminding the 2001 terror attack -- after the court order.

"We have a situation down there where we met with women guards who are being prevented from fully performing their mission because the five 9/11 attackers who are charged with killing 3,000 Americans will not allow them to perform their duties because they're women," Ayotte said.

"It's outrageous," Dunford agreed. "That's being worked by lawyers, it's an injunction. I'm not using that as an excuse, but that's where it is right now."

"I think it is counter to the way we treat service members, including female service members, and outrageous is a very good word for it," Defense Secretary Ash Carter added.

A military judge issued the order in January prohibiting female guards from transporting the defendants, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, to and from legal proceedings after they refused to meet with defense lawyers and complained that any physical contact with unrelated women violated their Muslim beliefs.

The ruling by Army Col. James Pohl was meant to deal with their complaints, which posed a threat to legal proceedings.

At a press conference following Tuesday's Senate hearing, Sens. Ayotte; Tim Scott, R-S.C.; and Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va. -- who accompanied Ayotte on the visit to the facility -- expanded on the issue.

Capito said the country is letting the "9/11 five dictate" the procedures in the U.S. military, adding that it is "amazing" a military judge would rule in such a way.

"Terrorists should not dictate to us what our men and women in uniform are permitted to do," Ayotte said. "This is not an insult to Islam, it's an insult to women."



POW/MIA Update

Soldier Missing From Korean War Accounted For

The Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) recently announced that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from the Korean War, have been identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Army Cpl. George H. Mason, 19, of Byhalia, Miss., has been laid to rest in his hometown on Oct. 20. In early February 1951, Mason was assigned to 2nd Reconnaissance Company, 2nd Infantry Division, and was deployed near Chuam-ni, South Korea, when their defensive line was attacked by Chinese forces. This attack forced the unit to withdraw south to a more defensible position. Mason was reported as missing in action Feb. 14, 1951.

On June 22, 1951, the People's Republic of China announced in a radio broadcast that Mason had been captured by enemy forces.

In 1953, during the prisoner of war exchanges historically known as "Operation Little Switch" and "Operation Big Switch," returning U.S. soldiers who had been held as prisoners of war did not have any information concerning Mason. When no further evidence supporting his capture was available, a military review board amended his status to presumed dead.

Between 1990 and 1994, North Korea returned 208 boxes of commingled human remains to the United States, which we now believe contain the remains of at least 600 U.S. servicemen who fought during the war. North Korean documents included in the repatriation indicate that some of the remains were recovered from the area where men captured from Mason's unit were believed to have died.

To identify Mason's remains, scientists from DPAA and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools, to include mitochondrial DNA analysis and Y-chromosome short tandem repeat (Y-STR) DNA analysis, which matched his brother.

Today, more than 7,800 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War. Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously turned over by North Korean officials or recovered by American recovery teams.

Unaccounted service members sorted by conflict which are currently being tracked by DoD:

World War II - 73,515 (it is estimated that tens of thousands are lost at sea)

Korean war - 7,846 (many believed to be in North Korea / no diplomatic relations hinders recovery)

Vietnam War including the countries Cambodia and Laos - 1,627

Cold War - 126

Libya - 1 air force pilot/1986

Persian Gulf War - 2 navy pilots/1991

Iraq War - 3 DoD contractors lost between 2003 - 2010

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for Americans who went missing while serving our country, visit the DPAA website at www.dpaa.mil

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***ABC13*: High school students serve as pallbearers for homeless veterans without loved ones**



Six high school students served as pallbearers during funerals for homeless veterans who had not been claimed by a loved one. (University of Detroit Jesuit High School)

Tuesday, October 27, 2015 02:27PM

When three homeless veterans were laid to rest last week, their funerals were given dignity and respect from an unlikely source: high school students.

Five seniors and a junior from the University of Detroit Jesuit High School and Academy in Detroit, Michigan served as the pallbearers for funerals of veterans who had not been claimed by loved ones.

"I was glad and truly honored to have experienced and served those veterans who sacrificed their lives for our country," one of the students, Joshua Gonzalez, said in a reflection. "Being their pallbearer was just a little something that I could do to repay them for what they did for all of us."

The idea for the program came from the students themselves during a discussion about how they could serve the community, the school said [in a press release](#). Students traveled to Cleveland to learn about a similar program.

"The pallbearer program at U of D Jesuit says a lot about the school and the young men who attend there," said Terry Desmond, the director of the funeral home that arranged the burials. "Their service to the less fortunate honors the dignity of individuals who are mostly out-of-the-view of our society."

In reflections written about the experience, some of the students said they were not sure what to expect and were a little uneasy about participating, but they were all glad they did. The students all rode together to the funeral, carried the casket to the grave and prayed together afterward. The solemnity of the process made an impression on the students, they said.

"During the experience, I was inspired and filled with awe by witnessing the different, yet similar, funeral customs that each branch of the United States Armed Forces presented," Gonzalez explained.

Above all, the students said, it was important to do something for veterans who might not otherwise get a proper burial.

"Many people outlive their families or don't have any one to be with them at their funeral," said 12th-grader Leonard Froehlich. "We strongly felt that everyone deserved the dignity of having people present at their last moments."

\$5 membership dues increase approved

The American Legion - October 5, 2015

The American Legion National Executive Committee approved a \$5 dues increase during the organization's 97th national convention in Baltimore in early September. This represents the first National Headquarters per-capita dues increase in nearly a decade, during which time the U.S. cost of living has increased 13 percent.

Legion posts increasing membership dues as a result of National Headquarters dues increase must fill out and return the Post Data Report form to their department headquarters. This updated information will appear on future membership renewal notices.

The Post Data Report must be returned to National Headquarters by Dec. 9 for it to be reflected on the renewal notice that is distributed on Jan. 8. Departments should be communicating with their posts on when they will need to receive all Post Data Reports in order to make the deadline to National. Post leaders who have questions about their deadlines and procedures should contact their departments.

A brochure titled "The 2016 National Dues Increase" explains more about the need for the dues increase. It is available for download.

<http://www.legion.org/dispatch/230121/5-membership-dues-increase-approved#sthash.ikiBvN7v.dpuf>



This award is designed to recognize American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion members who are actively involved in the Scouting program. This award is not meant to be a selective or limited award, but one that is available to any American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion member who completes the requirements for the award. The award is meant to recognize dedication and work required by an American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion member to assist in furthering the Scouting program in The American Legion.



The award consists of a gold and purple square knot, which may be worn on the Scout uniform, certificate and congratulatory letter from the national commander of The American Legion.



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