

The AMERICAN LEGION

Department of France



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DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

James Settle

My Fellow Legionaries

It's that time of the year again, what time is that, you ask, National Convention time. I will be attending this year's Convention, which is being held in Huston, Texas. Those interested in attending should know that there are Airlines offering reduced rates for travel to and from the Convention site (see attachment).

Thanks to Doug Haggan the Department has been well organized, all the required documents are done, and for those that reserved room's through Doug Haggan are on line, and awaiting your arrival. I know this will be a new experience for me.

I will depart for Huston on the 22nd of August and return on the morning of the 31st of August. The VCAL Comrade Joe Brown will assume the duties of the Department Commander in my absence from 21 August 2013 through 1 September 2013, I know the Department will be in good hands during this time.

Post BE02 is on the move. They are now a recognized PO, and are now authorized to do Fund Raisers and Membership Drives on Installations. They have a membership Drive scheduled for 3 August 2013 at the Chievers Airbase BX. Great job Commander Schram and Members of Flanders Field BE02.

Department Officers

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From the Editor...

Please send all input for the Department Newsletter to my e-mail address by the 25th of the month. Please use Word document format. 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

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If your Post has any donations for the Legacy Fund please contact either Comrade Moore or me.

MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERSHIP. I cannot stress membership enough. It is the bloodline of our organization. It enables us to perform our missions to the Veterans and their Families, and supports not only National Programs but ours also. While you are out there recruiting, new members do not forget your current members, get them to renew in a timely manner. If you have any questions on membership do not hesitate to contact the Membership Chairman Comrade Brown, at joedan.pascall@googlemail.com. He can answer your questions and resolve any problems you are having, with membership.

Announcements

Members of Post's FR01 and BE02 participated in a Normandy Fundraising Walk for the Wounded Warriors Program 7-15 July.

Members of post GR1982 will be holding a Fishing/BBQ event on the 3rd of August

Post GR03 will be holding their annual BBQ on the 17th of August and GR42 will be having theirs on the 18th of August. I plan on attending both of these events.

In closing I wish all of you a very happy and safe summer vacation period. Please keep those in harm's way and their families, in your thoughts and prayers also.

James M. Settle
Department Commander

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The Department Web Page is:
www.AmerLegionDeptFrance.org
The department has a Face Book page at the following www.Facebook.com/ALDeptFrance. Please visit and like this page. Thanks

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER AT LARGE

Joe D. Brown



My fellow Legionaries, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all for having the trust and faith in me to properly perform the duties as your Department VCAL. I will not let you down. Next, I would like to congratulate the newly elected officers. I know we have a great team this year and that we will move this Department forward and make it the best in National. Remember, each post has a Vice Commander and they should have already contacted you. The Vice Commanders are there to assist you in all matters, if you are having difficulties, please contact them. I hope all of you had a safe

and happy 4th of July; please look out for each other during your festivities.

On the 7th of July I attended GR79 4th of July Grill Party, turnout was good thanks goes out to the John Wayne team, good work keep going the right direction.



I VISITED GR06 ALONG WITH VICE AMAN, AND DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN ROSS SHEPHARD FOR THEIR ANNUAL ELECTIONS AND I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS.

I ALSO VISITED GR03 FOR ANNUAL ELECTIONS AND WOULD ALSO LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS.



I visited Gary Miller, the Department Finance Officer at his home and we discussed legion activities.

I Talk to the Department Commander James Settle 100 time on the phone, Department Adjutant Maxwell Rice, Department Service Officer Hall about his new officer at his home so if you need the service his officer is at his home, Department Chaplain Gino Cantu, and Department Historian Ross Shephard about legion work and how to make this department move to the top of the national scale.



GR09 INITIATES A NEW MEMBER.

GR09 MEMBERSHIP MEETING 27 JULY 2013



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JOHN WAYNE GR79 4TH OF JULY PARTY 2013 AND MEMBERS IN THEIR NEW POST HOME.

GR13 AT POST HOME 27 JULY 2013



SICKCALL:

Comrade Hall GR03 was hospitalized but back at home doing good
Claudious Jackson GR 14
CHARLIE BROWN GR 79
JOHN ODOM GR 07

PHILLIP GATCHELL GR 03
WILLIE HAINES GR 14
JAMES MOSS GR 06

KEEP THE SICK IN YOUR PRAYERS:

I talked to the Post Commanders and adjutants from GR 01, GR03, GR06, GR07, GR09, GR30, GR 14, GR42, GR 1982 and GR 20 and we discussed how we can all work together to make this the best Department at National.

“do you know what the value of being a Legionnaire is”, its being able to support your family, your community, your Nation, your post, Veterans, our Veterans, our future Veterans, Our Child Welfare, and Americanism just to mention a few.

Remember if you need to contact me I am just an E-mail or a phone call away, joedan.pascall@googlemail.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.

If you are having any kind of functions, membership meeting, election, ceremonies or any type of fest let your vice commander know when you schedule such events.

VCAL Charlie Joe Brown

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Membership...

The Department 2013 membership standing was at 98%, we lacked 58 members from reaching 100%. Let's kick off the 2014 membership year with submitting transmittals early. Many posts only submitted one transmittal for the entire 2013 membership year.

Let's strive to reach 100% for the 2014 membership year.

Yours in Comradeship, Charlie Joe Brown

2013 TAL Membership Report as of: July 21, 2013

* All-Time-High's				Delegate Strength 7/29/2013	
Department	Department Year-End Goal	2013 Actual Mbsp.	% of Goal	Needed To Meet 100%	
1	TENNESSEE	23.228	24.534	105,623%	-1.306
2	GEORGIA	40.707	41.708	102,459%	-1.001
3	FLORIDA	107.775	109.632	101,723%	-1.857
4	UTAH	7.078	7.181	101,455%	-103
5	NORTH CAROLINA	38.104	38.580	101,249%	-476
6	TEXAS	62.812	63.550	101,175%	-738
7	NEW MEXICO	10.980	11.092	101,020%	-112
8	COLORADO	20.055	20.214	100,793%	-159
9	PHILIPPINES	789	795	100,760%	-6
10	DELAWARE	10.846	10.918	100,664%	-72
11	RHODE ISLAND	5.311	5.346	100,659%	-35
12	ARIZONA	39.325	39.536	100,537%	-211
13	MARYLAND	55.952	55.675	99,505%	277
14	VIRGINIA	45.243	45.009	99,483%	234
15	IDAHO	9.070	9.020	99,449%	50
16	NEW HAMPSHIRE	18.450	18.348	99,447%	102
17	OREGON	18.515	18.390	99,325%	125
18	ARKANSAS	13.592	13.492	99,264%	100
19	CALIFORNIA	94.653	93.807	99,106%	846
20	MICHIGAN	69.808	69.139	99,042%	669
21	NEVADA	7.579	7.499	98,944%	80
22	KENTUCKY	23.580	23.317	98,885%	263
23	MISSOURI	43.621	42.997	98,569%	624
24	WISCONSIN	59.760	58.891	98,546%	869
25	LOUISIANA	22.844	22.504	98,512%	340
26	WASHINGTON	27.402	26.988	98,489%	414
27	CONNECTICUT	20.428	20.109	98,438%	319
28	OHIO	105.550	103.749	98,294%	1.801
29	ALASKA	5.977	5.875	98,293%	102
30	FRANCE	3.013	2.959	98,208%	54
31	DIST OF COL	1.861	1.826	98,119%	35
32	OKLAHOMA	17.962	17.585	97,901%	377
33	WEST VIRGINIA	18.967	18.541	97,754%	426
34	KANSAS	34.559	33.761	97,691%	798
35	INDIANA	89.500	87.356	97,604%	2.144
36	SOUTH CAROLINA	20.727	20.216	97,535%	511
37	NEW YORK	124.258	121.039	97,409%	3.219
38	MAINE	21.200	20.643	97,373%	557
39	MASSACHUSETTS	41.038	39.949	97,346%	1.089
40	NORTH DAKOTA	16.553	16.108	97,312%	445
41	MINNESOTA	86.285	83.886	97,220%	2.399
42	MONTANA	11.603	11.276	97,182%	327
43	IOWA	53.942	52.308	96,971%	1.634
44	PENNSYLVANIA	175.698	170.350	96,956%	5.348
45	WYOMING	6.667	6.454	96,805%	213
46	SOUTH DAKOTA	21.516	20.772	96,542%	744
47	NEW JERSEY	51.143	49.365	96,523%	1.778
48	ILLINOIS	96.072	92.583	96,368%	3.489
49	NEBRASKA	37.232	35.848	96,283%	1.384
50	MISSISSIPPI	16.123	15.491	96,080%	632
51	VERMONT	13.909	13.269	95,399%	640
52	PUERTO RICO	5.048	4.759	94,275%	289
53	ALABAMA	18.767	17.689	94,256%	1.078
54	HAWAII	2.290	2.145	93,668%	145
55	MEXICO	1.089	878	80,624%	211
	Grand Totals	1.996.056	1.964.951	98,442%	31.105



**DEPARTMENT VICE
COMMANDER**
Jerry Aman

Greetings fellow Legionnaires.
During this reporting period I had the opportunity to visit GR 1982 and GR 06, two of the posts assigned to me at the 89th Annual Convention.

On 9 July I attended 1982's General Membership meeting. Although several of the post's members were either working or were "down range" it was soon apparent that the "movers and shakers" were in attendance.

What is impressive is GR 1982's interaction with the local military community and playing a vital role in programs that benefit the community's youth. GR 1982 has some creative methods of generating funds to support Ansbach's Child and Youth funds (Ever try tossing a ping pong ball into a beer mug from a distance?). Whether it is supporting a MWR youth fishing event or a "Kinderfest" in Illesheim, these activities are vital to the welfare of the families of our soldiers and prove that GR 1982 is playing a leading role in developing our young Americans, even when they reside overseas.

Keep up the good work GR 1982.

GR 06

On 10 July I traveled to GR 06 to attend their General Membership meeting and to partake in the elections of the new officers for 2013-14.

After GR 06's brief business meeting VCAL Charley Brown, who happened to be in the area, conducted the elections and I initiated the newly elected officers into their new positions. Most of the previous year's officers chose to serve for another year so the continuity of supporting their programs will remain. GR 06 also supports the greater Stuttgart military community.

For any of you "duffers" out there, GR 06 is hosting a golf tournament on 10 August and if you're interested in participating please contact Post Commander Van Duyn or 1st Vice Clemence for further details.

Jerry Aman
Vice Commander
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**DEPARTMENT VICE
COMMANDER**
Liam Kane

Unfortunately my Phones were down at the deadline (excuse the pun) for the last Newsletter so I am giving two for one.

Returning from Department Convention turned out to be a long drawn out one I was searched in the usual way at check I, then my bag was searched followed by a strip search in a room, nothing was found a little scary. Thanks again to those who served last year and every success to those elected and appointed to serve as Officers etc. this year
It has been a very busy year in Ireland in a way one does not want, we have had a long run of

deaths in all 3 Posts and as we always make sure that our deceased members get a proper American Legion send it means a lot of travelling. IR 63 lost Gerry Vernon in May A longtime member former Service Officer a great Irish Dancer, Teacher and Judge and just a few weeks ago we buried Patrick Dunne a man who served in Korea and always available to help at Post level. IR 02 suffered two huge losses with the deaths of Brendan O' Leary the owner of the Flesk Restaurant in Killarney known for interior featuring hundreds of American Legion Registration Plates, Mike Sheahon from Cork died after fighting his illness for so long, longtime Post Commander and on numerous occasions Advisor to Department Commanders, last week I drove 328 miles round trip with Michael Coyne to be part of Honor Guard of Willie G. Walters Funeral in Derry City in

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northwest Ireland. With an early start 445 am. On another over 20 American Legion were in Royal Kilmainham Hospital grounds to honor the thousands of Irishmen and women who fought and died for Countries all over the World and also on duty with the United Nations, we were invited by our Taoiseach (Leader of Our Government), we just returned to this venue after it some restoration carried out and unfortunately for me my Vice Commanders Cap fell into a part of the Car Park which was still being worked on and it was in a mess with dirt ,cement and muck I together with two of my friends tried to clean even washing it in the Men's room but to no avail, I had collected both that cap and Past NEC cap from the cleaners for cleaning and some repair work the day before so rather than wear a filthy dirty, wet cap or go without a cap while appearing on live National TV I thought that I should wear the other cap as a last resort. I realize now that despite the cap showing PAST NECMAN that what I did was wrong I wish to apologize to everyone in the Department of France for my actions and assure you that it will never happen again ,I have left my cap in my sister's house having explained to her what has transcribed since the event. I wore my V.C. cap to Derry after a costly bill for cleaning see photo of Funeral of Willie Walters. On July 4th I represented The American Legion at the US Ambassador's Residence for his Annual Party.



In July together with Legion members from the 3 Irish Posts we took part in ceremonies to mark the 50th Anniversary of President Kennedy's visit to County Wexford my highlight was the American Legion taking over the Replica of the Vessel from which the Tea was dumped into Boston a truly great occasion.

Our 3 Post Adjutant are busy Michael Noone the Veteran and the 2 new men Sean Richard in IR 02 and John Shanahan in IR 63 all doing good work .John has just had the stitches removed from his knee after surgery having received a new knee. Following the great article in the Legion Magazine we are receiving phone call, e-mails nearly every day wanting to visit our Posts Homes, I meet at least one Legion member each travelling into Dublin oh for a Post Home of our own.

I have touched base with all Posts and will be meeting Paris Post Commander very soon.

We are embarking on a Recruitment drive to try to get our numbers up again one such venture is the US Marines in Dublin even though almost all only renew once as they are posted to other Countries.

Hope you are all enjoying the Summer Weather, looking forward to serving the American Legion at Post and Department Level I am as usual available to help out wherever needed. Liam
Liam Kane .VC Department France

Commander JFK Post IR 63 Dublin Ireland.



DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER *George Hall*

I am now set up at my home for VA, DAFS, SSA, ACG, CA.
The address is AmKirchwald 3, 69251 Gaiberg

Phone H 06223 5475
Phone M 0176 7227 6350
Email hallgt@yahoo.com



DEPARTMENT JUDGE ADVOCATE *George W. Seeburger*

There will be an Internal Affairs meeting on 10 August 2013 because one of our Legionnaires apparently cannot comply with long standing policy as to wearing the Service Cap.

George W. Seeburger
Judge Advocate



DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT *Isolde E. Settle*



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY PROGRAMS

Americanism

The Auxiliary's Americanism program promotes patriotism and responsible citizenship and strives to uphold and promote American ideals and the principles of democracy. The goal of the Auxiliary's Americanism program is to educate every citizen on the fundamentals of American government, the Bill of Rights and the value of active, informed involvement in the home, in the Auxiliary organization and in the community. Most successful Americanism programs are cooperative efforts between an Auxiliary Unit and its community. Contributions donated to the Spirit of Youth Fund by individuals, organizations and members' estates, benefit young people through such programs as the Americanism Youth Conference at Freedom's Foundation and the National President's Scholarship program. The Citizens Flag Alliance is an apolitical, non-partisan confederation of organizations and individuals who wish to protect the United States flag from acts of physical desecration. The Citizens Flag Alliance's goal is to pass a Constitutional amendment prohibiting flag desecration. The American Legion Auxiliary joined this effort in 1994 due to its belief that the flag is unique, deserving proper respect, care and protection.

Auxiliary Emergency Fund

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund is an excellent example of the Auxiliary's dedication to "Women Helping Women." The fund, established in 1969, is supported by contributions from Auxiliary Units and members. It provides temporary emergency financial assistance to Auxiliary members who have exhausted all other personal and community resources. For members who find themselves suddenly single, deserted, divorced, or widowed, with no skills to support themselves or their families, AEF provides immediate aide to help the member acquire new job skills through schooling or job training.

Cavalcade of Memories

Auxiliary members feel an obligation to preserve the history and traditions of their organization. The Cavalcade of Memories was established in 1972 at the Auxiliary's Indianapolis Headquarters to house valuable, historical keepsakes collected and contributed by different Departments throughout the years. Today, more than 80 years' worth of Auxiliary memorabilia is on display in the Cavalcade and throughout National Headquarters.

Children and Youth

The Auxiliary's Children & Youth program provides care and strives to improve conditions for all children. The program works to preserve the integrity of the family unit and takes a realistic approach to the needs of children by considering the physical and spiritual, as well as the emotional and educational aspects, of each situation. The Children & Youth program cooperates with many

other public and private community agencies and organizations and supports essential legislation for children at the national, state, and local levels. In some cases, the program offers direct financial assistance and services to individual children or to the families of veterans. Auxiliary members also contribute to The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, which was established in 1954 to fund special programs and projects, which emphasize preventative solutions to difficult children's issues. Educating members and the general public about these issues is a primary goal of the Auxiliary's Children & Youth program.

Community Service

The Auxiliary's Community Service program is based on the premise that no organization has a right to exist within the community without giving something to that community in return. Community service helps to make our communities better places in which to live. Auxiliary members study community needs, recommend projects, raise funds and donate their time to accomplish their specific objectives. Special attention is given to the selection of each project to ensure that the work of other organizations is not duplicated. Auxiliary Units also provide assistance on Community Service projects sponsored by American Legion Posts and work with other organizations to implement practical, worthwhile projects for the benefit of the community. Some examples include, blood drives, first aid and CPR training, child safety programs, support for women in shelters, donations to shelters for the homeless, tree plantings, recycling programs, and disaster and emergency preparedness programs. Constitution and Bylaws The Auxiliary's Constitution & Bylaws program encourages Auxiliary members to study and understand the organization's formal written policies and procedures, particularly as they relate to the rights and benefits of membership. Members are encouraged to review the Auxiliary Constitution & Bylaws on an annual basis and may submit ideas for review and possible change.

Education

Auxiliary members believe that a solid educational foundation is the cornerstone of American freedom. The Auxiliary's Education program promotes quality education for every child and supports student in their desire to continue their education beyond high school. Auxiliary members work actively with educators and local schools to develop and maintain an educational system that serves the needs of all children at every level. Auxiliary volunteers sponsor and support state and national education legislation; establish new scholarship opportunities for students; alert eligible students to existing scholarship resources; help students identify career opportunities and professional job requirements; and encourage students to plan early for college and apply for scholarship opportunities.

Girls State/ Girls Nation

Girls State is a nonpartisan program that teaches young women responsible citizenship and love for God and Country. Since the inception of the Girls State program in 1937, nearly one million young people have had the opportunity to learn firsthand how their state and local government works. High school girls, having completed their junior year spend an intensive week of study, working together as self-governing citizens at Auxiliary sponsored Girls State programs in every state. They learn how to participate in the functioning of their state's government in preparation for their future roles as responsible adult citizens. Two girls are selected from each Girls State programs to attend Girls Nation, a national government training program. Girls Nation "senators" meet for a week in Washington, D.C., where they run for political office, campaign for the passage of legislation and meet with state Representatives and Senators. Capping off the week of Girls Nation is a meeting with the President of the United States at the White House. Visit their website at www.palmettogirlsstate.net

Junior Activities

Junior Auxiliary membership for girls under the age of 18 is a training ground, which prepares young women for active adult membership. Junior activities and programs reflect and support the work of the Auxiliary and instill the ideals of the organization. The Junior program is an important step in the transition from childhood to responsible adulthood. At age 18, Junior members automatically are eligible for full, active membership.

Leadership

The success of any organization depends largely upon the skill and competence of its leaders. Auxiliary members are vitally concerned with developing present and future leadership within the organization. Comprehensive training courses and materials are offered in every Auxiliary Department and by the National organization. Courses focus on fundamental management and communication skills and outline the basic responsibilities and leadership opportunities, which are available within the many

programs of the Auxiliary. Units and Departments conduct leadership workshops with motivational speakers to increase enthusiasm for all Auxiliary programs.

Legislative

Auxiliary members are encouraged to get involved and stay informed on local and national issues of special interest to the organization. They keep in close contact with their legislative representatives about issues, which concern veterans, young people and entire communities. Auxiliary members know there is strength in numbers. Many beneficial laws have been passed because of Legion and Auxiliary support.

Membership

The Auxiliary's Membership program conducts ongoing recruiting to ensure the future growth and prosperity of the organization. Unit members work diligently to publicize and promote the benefits, objectives and activities of the Auxiliary and seek out those eligible women who might be interested in membership and active involvement in Unit activities. Units, Departments and Divisions vie in friendly competition against one another as they work toward reaching their individual and organizational membership goals.

National Security

The Auxiliary believes in maintaining a strong national defense and endeavors to educate its members on all vital national security issues. In cooperation with The American Legion, Auxiliary members are briefed on a wide range of topics at local and national meetings and through publications and bulletins. Topics include national and civil defense; crime prevention; emergency and disaster preparedness; and environmental protection. The member's clear understanding of the issues helps to lay the groundwork for community-wide mobilization and support of various national security activities. National activities include the annual Awareness Assembly, a legislative forum in Washington, D.C.; POW/MIA Awareness; crime prevention; and local and worldwide support of USO activities.

Past Presidents Parley

Members who have served the Auxiliary as unit, department and/or National Presidents are a valuable resource to the organization. As members of the Past Presidents Parley committee, they put their leadership experience to good use, offering guidance and/or counsel on any activity or problem requiring special support or emphasis. Committee members also maintain a scholarship fund for nurses and contribute to the "Women in Military Service" memorial. The Past Presidents Parley is a primary source of support for hospitalized women veterans.

Poppy

The Poppy Program is the oldest and most widely recognized Auxiliary program. Each year around Memorial Day, Auxiliary volunteers distribute millions of bright red crepe paper poppies in exchange for contributions to assist disabled and hospitalized veterans. The program provides multiple benefits to the veterans and to the community. The hospitalized veterans who make the flowers are able to earn a small wage, which helps to supplement their incomes and makes them feel more self-sufficient. The physical and mental activity provides many therapeutic benefits as well. Donations are used exclusively to assist and support veterans and their families. The poppy also reminds the community of the past sacrifices and continuing needs of our veterans. Auxiliary members endeavor to explain the true meaning of this little flower to all those who receive it. The poppy has become a nationally known and recognized symbol of sacrifice and is worn and used by Auxiliary members to honor the men and women who served and died for their country in all wars.

Public Relations

The Public Relations program works to establish and maintain goodwill within the organization and with the general public and promotes the Auxiliary's many worthwhile programs, events, activities and accomplishments through every available medium. Public Relations perform a dual function. Doing things well and making sure that the public is aware of the efforts and the results ensures continued community support and awareness of Auxiliary programs. Good publicity augments and supports the Auxiliary's recruiting efforts by attracting interested, eligible women and motivating them to become active members. A major communications vehicle is the Auxiliary's quarterly national magazine which is a primary source of information and means of communication between the local unit members and the organization's national leadership.

Veteran's Affairs and Rehabilitation

The Auxiliary's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation program provides service and financial assistance to veterans and their families. Auxiliary members are interested in restoring the veteran and his family to normal function - physically, mentally, socially and vocationally. Members provide emotional support and cheerful companionship while attending to the hospitalized, handicapped and homebound veterans' physical comforts. In a single year, veterans' programs utilized the services of more than 100,000 hospital field and home service volunteers who donated millions of dollars and millions of hours to assist veterans. The Auxiliary's gift shops and holiday parties have become an essential part of the VA program. The Poppy program provides therapy and a means of earning money for handicapped and hospitalized veterans and their families. Members work with legislators and congressmen to pass legislation to increase government benefits and assistance for veterans. Essential equipment and supplies are purchased by caring members to upgrade and facilitate the level of care provided in veterans' facilities. Members furnish job assistance, transportation, food, clothing and medicine to thousands of needy, handicapped and homeless veterans. The Auxiliary plays a necessary and important role in the life of America's veterans.



DETACHMENT COMMANDER *Joshua J. Settle*

Well National Convention is approaching fast. The Detachment NECMan Comrade John Odom Sr. and I will be attending this year's SAL Convention which is in Huston Texas this year. I will be flying on the 22nd of August along with the Department Commander (Dad) Comrade James Settle. I am positive that there will be loads of information to bring back with us. This being my first National convention I am sure I will learn many things, I will take my lead from are very experienced NECMan Comrade Odom Sr.



By now all Squadrons should have their 2014 Membership Cards. I encourage all squadrons to start their Membership renewals NOW. Remember the Detachment has a Membership fund which will allow Squadrons to do a transmittal now and then reimburse the Detachment once the dues are collect from their members.

Its official, thanks to the Commander of JWP79, Comrade Joe Brown Squadron GR79 is reactivating. In addition my understanding is that GR1982, is still very interested in starting a Squadron, and are seeking members at this time. This is very exciting news for the Detachment. The Detachment is prepared to assist in any way it can.

The Detachment is trying to organize a fishing event for the Detachment and its members. The time frame is still open. If you know of a good fishing area, please advise us. We are also ordering a plaque for the Fisher House in Landstul to show the support of the Legion Family to the Fisher House Program.

I still encourage SAL Members in the Detachment that are Dual Members to carry your SAL Cap to events, this will show our support to the Post, Detachment, and the Department.

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Those post desiring to start a squadron, please contact me or the detachment Adjutant and we will help you to get started. Attached to this Newsletter is FAQ sheet for SAL.

In closing I wish all of you a happy and safe summer vacation. Please keep those in harm's way and their families in your prayers.

Joshua J. Settle

Detachment Commander

Phone: 07138-67359

E-Mail: josh.sal@hotmail.com

Independence Day 2013 Celebration in Paris

Photos and Story contributed by Paris Post #1.

The American Legion Paris Post #1 Commander is Mr. Carl W. Hale. Mr. Hale is a Department of the Army Civil Servant employed at the United States Mission to NATO in Brussels, Belgium. He has been a member of the Paris Post #1 since 2004 and has been the elected Commander since 2010. Mr. Hale served in the United States Army for eleven years and two days with five years at SHAPE with the 128th Signal Company and the SACEUR Communications Team for General John Shalikashvili and General George Joulwan.

Mr. Hale led the Independence Day ceremonies in Paris, France. Together with French veteran associations and the Paris 16th District Deputy Mayor, wreaths were laid at the monuments of LaFayette / Washington, Admiral De Grasse and Rochambeau. The Rochambeau Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution also laid a wreath and delivered an Independence Day address.



At the LaFayette / Washington monument at the Place des Etas Unis (Place of the United States) Mr. Hale delivered an Independence Day address reflecting on the French – American alliance which helped secure our Independence and thanking the French / American community for their continued participation in the annual Patriotic ceremonies.

After the morning ceremonies Mr. Hale and the American Legion Paris Post #1 hosted an Independence Day lunch at the Post Home located at 24 Boulevard Diderot. The lunch ended with the presentation of the Legion Medal of Merit awarded to Legion member Mr. Peter Bloch who is a 52-year continuous year member of The American Legion.





The evening ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe included U.S. Army Colonel MacAloon who was previously assigned to the Defense Attache Office in Brussels, Belgium. Colonel MacAloon is now the Defense Attache in Paris, France.



The American Legion celebrates Independence Day

to also remember the sacrifices required to achieve Liberty, Freedom and Security.

Remembering Comrade George Aubrey, Past Commander Paris Post #1...

Every July, the French citizens gather in a small town cemetery outside of Vichy, France, where Comrade George Aubrey is buried to participate in a Patriotic ceremony to honor his contributions towards Peace as a U.S. service member during World War One and with the French Resistance during World War Two. Comrade Aubrey was also a past Commander of the Paris Post #1.



Paris Post #1 Executive Committee member, Comrade Richard Allan, represented the Post during the ceremony. He sang "Amazing Grace" instead of delivering a speech which proved more effective in representing our efforts to always remember those who served for our freedom.

After the ceremony members of the Vichy French - American friendship association, the city hall, and Paris Post #1 representative, Comrade Richard Allen, enjoy lunch together.



Comrade Aubrey's contributions towards liberty and security is mentioned on a Patriotic monument in Paris, France at the Place d'Etas Unis.



Submitted by Carl Hale GR01

NEWS BLAST...

The tourist office of Saint Mere Eglise just released the initial plans for the 2014 memorials and ceremonies honoring the 70th year after the D-Day arrival of Allied Forces liberating France and re-establishing Peace in Europe.

See the below link for the calendar of events which will be frequently updated as more plans are confirmed:

<http://www.sainte-mere-eglise.info/en/70%20th%20%20anniversary%20dday.html>

Submitted by Carl Hale GR01

Retiree Appreciation Day in Wiesbaden for 26 October 2013

Hello Folks, the command is busy planning the **Retiree Appreciation Day in Wiesbaden for 26 October 2013**. Please mark this date on your calendar so it will be well attended. Let's help make it the 'most attended one yet.'

I only know that it is a special day for the retirees and their families. You can get info on retirement rights, benefits & privileges and other subjects. The purpose of the day is to foster good will between active and retired communities.

There will be representatives there from different areas, ie, ID Cards, passports, customs and several offices from the Consulate. They will have speakers also. We will be able to have medical checkups and other medical appointments. (I believe that these will be by appointment on that day.)

We will send details later. Just be sure to mark the date on your calendar. It would be a great day to meet at the dining facility if we have enough requests for it.

If there are enough people coming from Hanau/Budingen that would support a bus, I would be willing to check into it. Of course there would be a small charge. I'm sure we could stop by the commissary before departing Wiesbaden.

Best,

Joyce Schloesser
American Veterans' Center Hanau
06128-489202

Submitted by Carl Hackworth GR14



American Legion Rhein Neckar Post GR03 Annual FREE BBQ



**FREE FREE FREE NO COST FOR ALL FREE FREE FREE
BBQ Party WITH 100 BUCK DOOR PRIZE**

**Open to all Legionnaires, incl. spouses, girlfriends and children
from any Legion Post and all of Department Of France**

On Saturday 17 August 2013 @ 12:00

100 BUCK DOOR PRIZE/100 BUCK DOOR PRIZE/100 BUCK DOOR PRIZE

**At CDRs Ed Sherman's Home @ Heidelberger Str. 9 69207
Sandhausen (Just south of Heidelberg) See strip map attached.**

Menu: hamburgers, hotdogs, baked beans, beer & soft drinks

Attendees are responsible for all the side dishes

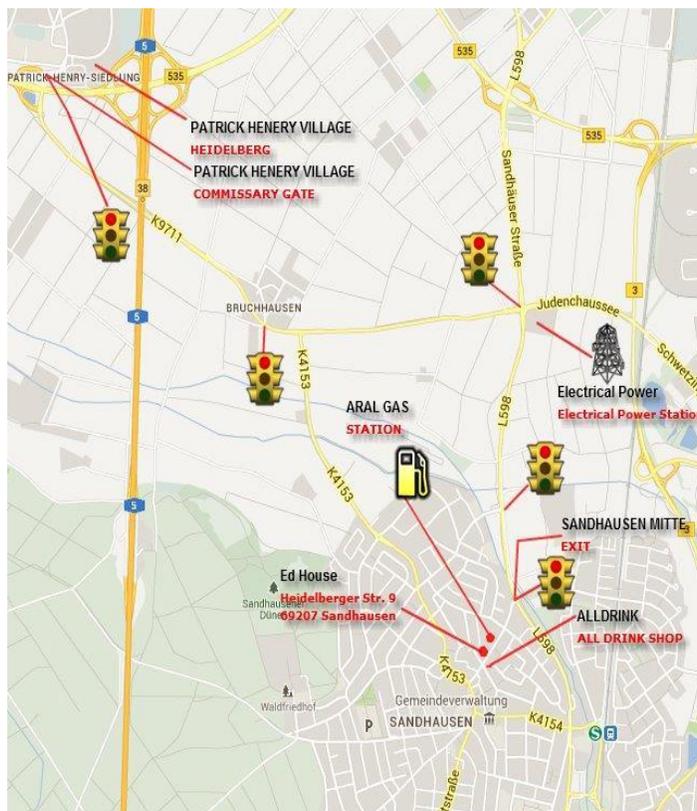
BBQ guest parking. I have permission for all of my quest to park in the Aral Tankstelle (gas station) which is on the north end of my property. All guests have permission to park there on 17 Aug 2013 for **free**. Please park as far away from the gas pumps towards my fence as possible all. Parking is allowed all afternoon and into the evening at **no cost**.

RSVP: Ed Sherman ed.sherman@t-online.de or call 0176-2385-9172

with number of people you are bringing and your side dish by 5 Aug 2013 or anytime before.

Recommended Side Dishes: Potato Salad, Various Chips and Dips, Tossed Salad, Carrot Salad ECT.

Entertainment: Horse Shoes, Ping-Pong table and hot tub - bring your bathing suit/ swim trunks with bath towel.



Help Support Families of Our Fallen Comrades

July – August 2013- Department of France is coordinating donations for the Legacy Scholarship Fund through the Department of France AL PE Messenger Service as follows:

We now have signed up several Posts and messengers since inception of the Department of France A.L. PE Messenger Service. We are still short of the planned 100% department participation.

To date, we have messengers from the following Posts (in alphabetical order):

ALRGR07, GR01, GR03, GR05, GR07, GR09, GR14, GR42, GR79, GR1982 and IR63.

(Why doesn't your Post have messengers?)

Goal is to have all donations moved to any physical Department of France Post by July 31, 2013. The Post will either call me or send an email by evening of July 31st requesting pickup.

I will coordinate to have other donations (Checks drawn on U.S. banks, USD money orders or pledges <keep a copy of your pledges please>) picked up to be moved to the Final Collection Point by August 4th.

I will ensure that a Department of France Messenger delivers all envelopes received from Department of France Posts and messengers to the National Commander during the Convention.

The following is a reminder for Way Stations and messengers (A.L. PE Messenger's Oath):

1) No cash will be moved. Only checks made out to The A.L Legacy Scholarship Fund and drawn on U.S. banks, USD money orders or pledges are to be sent in an open envelope with name of Post and total amount of donations/pledges written on the front of envelope. An envelope that is sent by mail because of time constraints may be sealed. The messenger will open it to check contents before transporting.

2) Again, no cash, packages, sealed letters or other items are to be transported by messengers. All envelopes containing donations/pledges are to be left open or opened by the messenger.

3) Messengers are to ensure that they do not move instruments totaling more than \$10,000 when crossing international borders.

4) Messengers are to deliver any envelopes from Posts with donations/pledges to the Final Collection Point or Chief Messenger personally, either before August 4th or to the Messenger at the National Convention at the beginning of the Convention First Session. The department still receives credit for all amounts received from Department of France Posts. This procedure however gives the Posts a chance to receive recognition for their individual efforts. Donations of \$100 or more receive personal recognition from the National Commander.

Please remember, we do God's Work in caring for our fallen heroes and their children, so let's ride safe and all get where we have to be with no accidents. Ride or drive safe and with God.

Ron "Gypsy" Moore gypsy_moore@yahoo.de
Department of France AL PE Coordinator

Ansbach Post 1982

Box J, APO AE 09250

Estus Smith, Adjutant

Chris Buchanan, Commander

Check us out on Facebook, www.facebook.com/AmericanLegionPost1982
Post meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the post home at 6:00 p.m.

All members and guests are invited to attend.

The Post home is located in the basement of the Katterbach Dining Facility.

Please enter on the side of the dining facility next to Burger King.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AUG 3 rd	Fishing Event and BBQ	0800	Soldiers' Lake
AUG 13 th	Post Meeting	1800	Post Home
AUG 17 th	Community Showcase	1000-1400	Katterbach Gym

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

July was a great month for our post. We raised \$731.00 at the 4th of July fundraiser, but more importantly all the post members who volunteered told me they had a great time and felt the event was a success. We also hosted, escorted and served ice cream to over 30 children who visited Storck Barracks in Illesheim. Thank you to all who volunteered.

Last month I spoke about starting a Legion Auxiliary and Sons of the Legion in Ansbach. To start one we need at least 10 participants in each group who would be interested in joining. The Department Auxiliary president and Sons Commander will come down and explain the details once we identify a date to hold a meeting about it. I would appreciate any feedback you have on this. These two areas would turn our post into a family affair.

In June we donated to Operation Comfort Warrior. This program supports wounded warriors by providing comfort items to them directly or to Warrior Transition Units. July, I touched base with SFC Davenport, the Detachment NCO at the Katterbach Warrior Transition Unit. He is working with National on getting some items that the WTU and the Soldiers here in Ansbach need.

Lastly I want to think all of you who supported me with your thoughts and prayers. Last month I lost three family members and spent most of the month in California and Colorado supporting my own family through an extremely difficult time.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Our annual fishing event is August 3rd. Set up starts at 0700 fishing for the kids starts at 0800. This event is a blast and if you only attend one event a year this is the one to show up to. We will be putting on a free BBQ for the kids and their families. We have been lucky enough to get S&K, a supplier for the Commissary to donate a bunch of food items. We still need dessert and salads for the BBQ if you would like to bring something. This type of event is exactly the thing that our American Legion Post needs to be doing to support our veterans and their families.

Also, on the 17th we will be at the Community Showcase explaining exactly what we do as legion members and how we can help the community. If you would like to volunteer for the showcase let Commander Chris know.

Membership

We will be doing on the spot renewals and signing up new members for the 2014 year at the fishing event on August 3rd. Annual dues are \$30.





HOUSTON TEXAS

Site of the 95th American Legion National Convention

August 23rd to August 29th 2013



If you are planning on attending the National Convention in Houston please e-mail me dhaggan@sbcglobal.net with the following information, the date you will arrive and depart, the person you are sharing a room with if any, and any special room request.

Cutoff for the reservation is 15 July 2013.

Hope to see you in Houston, a good time will be had by all.



FOREIGN AND OUTLYING DEPARTMENTS AND POSTS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

ALASKA • CANADA • FRANCE • HAWAII • MEXICO • PHILIPPINES • PUERTO RICO • CHINA POST

Still Serving America's Veterans... Around the World



Airfare discounts available for convention travel

Legionnaires planning to attend the 2013 National Convention can take advantage of airfare price breaks through Delta, American and United airlines. The discounts are available from Aug. 19-30.

Those wanting to use the discounts can go directly through the airlines. Tickets should be purchased at least 30 days prior to traveling, and discounts vary depending on advance ticketing and booking class with the airlines. Service fees may also apply when making reservations with the airlines. There is typically a \$25 service fee that the airlines charge to make your reservations.

The contact numbers for each airline are:

Delta Airlines – (800) 328-1111 `begin_of_the_skype_highlighting` (800) 328-1111 FREE `end_of_the_skype_highlighting`, File No. NMEX4

American Airlines – (800) 433-1790 `begin_of_the_skype_highlighting` (800) 433-1790 FREE `end_of_the_skype_highlighting`, Index No. 22408

United Airlines – (800) 426-1122 `begin_of_the_skype_highlighting` (800) 426-1122 FREE `end_of_the_skype_highlighting`, Agreement code 721185 and the Z code of ZNSN



FOREIGN AND OUTLYING DEPARTMENTS AND POSTS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

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Still Serving America's Veterans...Around the World



Legion Family Night taking place at Astros game

Minute Maid Park, the home of Major League Baseball's Houston Astros, will be the site of American Legion Family Night Aug. 23 during the upcoming national convention in Houston. American Legion National Commander James E. Koutz will throw out the first pitch of the Astros' game against Toronto Blue Jays. The action begins at 7:10 p.m. Discounted tickets to the game are available online.

I NEED PICTURES...I NEED HISTORY

I have a BIG problem; I have run out of pictures to post on The Department of France Website. I know there are Legionnaires in the Department that have pictures that need to be posted on the Website. We NEED to preserve this part of our Department History.

If you have pictures for me, send me an e-mail, I will send you a link to a photo sharing program called "DROPBOX", when you get it go to "get started" and it will tell you step by step on how to use it. It is a program that National uses and it works great when you want to send a large amount of pictures. It's easy to use, I have

setup a folder called The Department of France, just create a file drag it into the Department folder; send me an e-mail with a short story plus date, the function, and location. I will pull it out of Dropbox and post it on the Website, it's that easy.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at dhaggan@sbcglobal.net

If you have a couple of minutes login into The Department Website and checkout the Photo Gallery.

LET'S PRESERVE OUR DEPARTMENT HISTORY FOR THE FUTURE



FOREIGN AND OUTLYING DEPARTMENTS AND POSTS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

ALASKA • CANADA • FRANCE • HAWAII • MEXICO • PHILIPPINES • PUERTO RICO • CHINA POST

Still Serving America's Veterans...Around the World



Maj. Gen. Darryll Wong, Hawaii National Guard commander, speaks to soldiers and airmen about furloughs in Kapolei, Hawaii.

National Guard soldiers, airmen to be furloughed

More than 1,100 National Guard soldiers and airmen in Hawaii — and thousands in other states — will be living with 20 percent less pay over the next three months as the Defense Department carries out automatic federal budget cuts.

Guard members will be furloughed for one day a week starting Monday, so helicopter pilots and mechanics, pay and finance clerks and others who keep the guard operating will have eight hours less each week to do their jobs.

It's not clear precisely what effects the unprecedented cuts will have. They could, however, make it more difficult for the guard to fly helicopters to help put out wildfires or rush to the scene of natural disasters in trucks.

"Our general sense is that short-term, it's going to be a terrible hardship for those soldiers, airmen and their families. But if it goes on for any length of time, that may have a negative impact on our readiness and our ability to respond," said Hawaii National Guard spokesman Lt. Col. Chuck Anthony.

The military's furloughs were only supposed to involve civilians, but large numbers of National Guard members who wear Army and Air Force uniforms full-time will experience them as well. The National Guard added

military technicians to the furlough list in May, after Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel gave official notice to begin furloughs for civilians.

It's not immediately clear how many uniformed personnel will be affected nationwide.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott said the furloughs, which will affect nearly 1,000 guardsmen in his state, are his biggest concern for this summer's hurricane season.

Some units will be exempt, like the 169th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron responsible for tracking aircraft in the skies above Hawaii. The 199th Fighter Squadron, which protects Hawaii airspace with F-22s, will be somewhat shielded from the effects of the cuts because a large number of active duty airmen work alongside them.

But many others will have to squeeze 40 hours of work into 32 hours, and receive one-fifth less pay.

It could become difficult for mechanics to maintain helicopters and trucks at the same pace, meaning fewer aircraft and vehicles may be available when needed. Guardsmen who plan drills for the part-time soldiers and airmen who train on the weekend might have difficulty getting exercises ready.

"We don't know what will fall by the wayside because we've never had to do this before," Anthony said.

Commanders are trying to help guardsmen cope.

They invited financial and stress management counselors to talk to two groups of soldiers and airmen on Oahu, where the majority of Hawaii's full-time guardsmen work and live. The guard is sending a DVD recording of one of the sessions to guardsmen and women on Kauai, Maui and Hawaii islands.

Maj. Gen. Darryll Wong, the adjutant general, advised more than a hundred gathered on Monday that the budget cuts could last into the new fiscal year starting Oct. 1, but it's not known whether furloughs will continue.

He stressed he was available to help and shared his cellphone number with everyone in the room.

"You never want this to have happened to people under your watch," Wong said.

A financial counselor urged attendees to consider trimming unnecessary expenses like finance charges on credit cards, giving up cable TV and eating out less. He recommended telling children about the pay cuts and explaining why mom and dad can't afford to buy the same things as before.

Guardsmen could think about the good things that could come from furloughs, a family counselor suggested, like having more time to spend with family.

Spc. Christian Pasco, 27, who paints Humvees and other equipment, said he plans to talk to a financial counselor because he needs "somebody to tell me to stop spending my money."

Sgt. 1st Class Soloman Makaneole, a helicopter electrician who just returned from a nine-month deployment to Kosovo, said his family already has been cutting spending by eating out less often and packing lunches. His wife, a civilian Army employee, and mother-in-law, who works for the Navy as a civilian, are also being furloughed.

"A lot of it is common sense. For some people it's a shock because it's probably something new to them. I've been without before, so it's not shocking. I can survive," Makaneole said.

VA Grants Will Expand Transportation in Highly Rural Areas Veterans to Have Easier Access to Health Care

WASHINGTON – Veterans will have improved access to health care under a Department of Veterans Affairs initiative that supports new transportation services for those living in highly rural areas.

VA began accepting applications this month for grants to help state Veterans Service Agencies and Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) operate or contract for transportation services to transport Veterans to VA medical centers and other facilities that provide VA care. A new regulation establishes the program that will administer these grants. Transportation will be provided at no cost to Veterans.

"VA wants to be sure that all Veterans, including those who live in rural and remote areas, can receive the health care they have earned through service to our country," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "State Veterans

Continued from page 22...

Agencies and VSOs will now be able to employ innovative approaches to transportation services for Veterans in our highly rural areas. The end results will include better service and better health care for Veterans.”

VSOs and State Veterans Service Agencies may apply for grants up to \$50,000 to fund transportation of Veterans to and from VA medical centers and other facilities that provide VA care. If specified in the application, the services may be provided under agreements with contractors, such as private bus or van companies.

A highly rural area is defined as a county or counties with a population of fewer than seven persons per square mile. Many highly rural areas are found in the western and southwestern United States but at least half of the states have at least one highly rural area.

One of Secretary Shinseki’s top three priorities is increasing access to VA care and services for Veterans wherever they live. VA is expanding access in a three-pronged effort that includes facilities, programs and technology. Veterans who served in Iraq or Afghanistan are eligible for an extended period of eligibility for health care for 5 years after they have left the service.

For more information, please see the [Federal Register](#).

HOT TOPICS

LEGISLATIVE DIVISION:

On Monday, July 15, Legislative staff attended a training program that covered Congressional Legislative procedures and was hosted by the American League of Lobbyists. The training covered Congress Rules and Procedures: Navigating the Process, Achieving the Result.

On Tuesday, July 16, Legislative staff met with Senate VA Committee members to discuss “Check the Box for Homeless veterans” Legislation. Bill introduced by Sen. Boxer, and supported by TAL resolution, is getting pushback from SVAC.

Legislative staff is testifying on **Wednesday, July 17**, before the HVAC Full Committee Legislative Hearing on budget related testimony. There are three bills being discussed, only one of which TAL will be taking a position on, which is, Advance Appropriations.

On Wednesday, July 17 - HVAC will hold a legislative hearing on the following bills:

•H.R. 813

•H.R. 806

• Draft Discussion Bill - To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to Congress a Future-Years Veterans Program and a quadrennial veterans review, to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a Chief Strategy Officer, and for other purposes. 10:15 A.M.; 334 Cannon

On Wednesday, July 17 - HVAC, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs will markup pending legislation. 2:30 P.M.; 334 Cannon

On Thursday, July 18 - HVAC, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity will markup pending legislation. 10:00 A.M.; 334 Cannon

On Friday, July 19 - HVAC, Subcommittee on Health will hold a hearing entitled “Safety for Survivors: Care and Treatment for Military Sexual Trauma.” 10:00 A.M.; 340 Cannon

Legislative staff met with the Shaw, Bransford, and Roth law firm to discuss SES compensation and bonuses so TAL can get a better understanding of what can be done in cases like Pittsburgh, where the VISN Director continues to receive lavish bonuses and awards despite the fact that his VISN failed to manage the Legionella outbreak effectively, which several veterans died as a result.

Legislative staff will be meeting with the group, The Bipartisan Policy Center, specifically, John Richter, former Chief of Staff for Retired Senator Olympia Snowe, to discuss veteran programs and support, and the possibility of Senator Snowe appearing as a guest speaker during Washington Conference.

Continued from page 23...

Legislative staff will be attending the Center for Second Service Speaker Series. This month's Veteran Leader speaker is Hawaii Representative Tulsi Gabbard.

Legislative staff will be supporting, again this year and for the 5th year in a row, the efforts of the U.S. Veterans Paralympic team to have their funding reauthorized so they can continue to attend the Olympics.

Legislative staff will be attending a meeting to discuss MST that will be hosted by IAVA. TAL will be attending in an information gathering mode only.

Legislative staff will be attending the Department of Washington's State Convention from the 17th through the 21st of July.

Legislative staff will be delivering testimony for the record on **Friday, July 19**, for a hearing to discuss Military Sexual Trauma.

Legislative staff will be swearing in this year's Boys Nation incoming class on **Saturday, July 20**, at Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia.

NATIONAL SECURITY/FOREIGN RELATIONS DIVISION:

Hearings:

On Thursday, July 18, NSFR staff will attend a Congressional hearing on Benghazi entitled "Progress on State Department Accountability?" (Room 2172 of the House Rayburn Office Building). Witnesses include - Raymond D. Maxwell, Foreign Service Officer and Former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Maghreb Affairs; along with the Honorable Ronald E. Neumann, President, American Academy of Diplomacy, (Former Ambassador to Algeria, Bahrain, and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan).

On Thursday, July 18, NSFR staff will attend a Congressional [Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade](#) hearing named: Global al-Qaeda: Affiliates, Objectives, and Future Challenges (House Rayburn Office Building). Witnesses include - Seth Jones, Ph.D., Associate Director, International Security and Defense Policy Center, RAND Corporation; Frederick W. Kagan, Ph.D.; Christopher DeMuth Chair and Director, Critical Threats Project, American Enterprise Institute; and Mr. Thomas Joscelyn, Senior Editor, The Long War Journal.

Other Events:

On Wednesday, July 17, the NSFR Division is hosting the U.S. Army Reserve VSO/MSO Quarterly Meeting. Thirty professionals, each representing a military-service organization and/or veterans-service organization are convening to discuss Reserve component updates along with legislative progress and goals. Major General (ret.) James Snyder, primary advisor to the Chief, Army Reserve within Headquarters, Department of the Army, will be the featured guest speaker. Mr. Snyder's priorities include ensuring Army Reserve mission-oriented concerns are included in the formulation of policy and strategy at the National, Departmental, and Service levels for generating and sustaining Army Reserve force capabilities. Mr. Snyder was initially appointed to Senior Executive Service in November 2008 as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Infrastructure Protection, Department of Homeland Security. Major General Snyder retired from the Army in June 2008 with 36 years of total commissioned service and 25 years active duty as an engineer officer. His last assignment was as Director of Operations, Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, Multi-National Force-Iraq, Baghdad, Iraq.

VA&R DIVISION:

Health Care Policy:

During the week of **July 15**, the VA&R staff is assisting veterans with benefits and claims during the **104th Annual Convention** of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Orlando, Florida.

On Wednesday, July 17, The American Legion will be participating in a VA sponsored webinar for the Fully Developed Claims (FDC) program. The FDC program has been supported by The American Legion as it is currently the quickest way for veterans to process their disability compensation and pension claims. This webinar about the FDC program will give attendees a basic understanding of how to apply for the program and resources they can use to refer veterans to VA and make sure veterans get the disability compensation and pension benefits they earned, in the quickest way possible. FDC's are processed more quickly by VA than traditional claims which benefits veterans and helps reduce the claims backlog.

Continued from page 24...

On Thursday, July 18, VA&R staff will be meeting with Dr. Uchenna S. Uchendu, Chief Officer for the newly established VHA Office of Health Equity to discuss their 2013 and 2014 office goals and priorities, status of the program's progress toward achieving these goals, and the program office's resources (budget, staffing, equipment, etc.). The Office of Health Equity (OHE) champions the advancement of health equity and reduction of health disparities. The office reports to the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health and influences work throughout Veteran health Administration (VHA) since health equity is a cross-cutting issue which demands the attention of every facet of VHA.

On Thursday, July 18, VA&R staff will be meeting with Kevin Mahoney, Executive Director, National Resource Center for Participant Directed Services (NRCPPDS). Mr. Mahoney would like to discuss a recent evaluation of the VD-HCBS program and VA's plans to grow VD-HCBS and VDR programs nationwide.

ECONOMIC DIVISION:

This week, the Economic Division will meet with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (USCC) to discuss the extent to which the Chamber will participate in our National Convention, in terms of providing speakers, panels, and co-hosting the Hiring Event and Employment Workshops. We will discuss the possibility of creating a rewards program for Legion Posts and Local Chambers of Commerce that have worked together over the last few years to try and work together to reduce the veteran's unemployment rate.

This week, the Economic Division will meet with Congressman Fitzpatrick's staff regarding possible changes to the Fairness to Veteran's Act, which would permit automatic enrollment of veteran-owned small business within State set aside contracts for construction projects that are derived from the budget of the Department of Transportation.

This week, the Economic Division will meet with USCC and Texas Veterans Commission to conduct planning for the Legion's Hiring Event during the National Convention.

On Wednesday, July 10, the Economic Division will meet with representatives from Edward Jones to discuss their new veterans hiring initiatives. This financial/investment company has been voted one of the top 100 companies to work for by Fortune Magazine and has made the list 14 years in a row. Their training curriculum has been accredited by the Department of Veterans' Affairs for GI Bill usage. Edward Jones wants to leverage The American Legion's outreach to the veteran population to see if there is a way we can work together to bring more veterans into the Financial/Investment sector, where veterans historically have not been well represented in.

On Thursday, July 18, the Economic Division is meeting with Katie Bailey, Director, Governmental Affairs (Minority), Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, to discuss prior to a hearing on July 23 titled "The 90/10 Rule: Improving Educational Outcomes for Military and Veteran Students", The American Legion's position on education policy and legislation. Currently, the VA and DOD educational benefits count towards the 10 percent of revenue that must come from non-Department of Education sources. Current proposal's would count VA and DOD educational benefits on the 90 percent rather than the 10 percent side.

On Thursday, July 18, the Economic Division is meeting with Senator Carper (DE), Chair, Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee, to discuss prior to a hearing on July 23 titled "The 90/10 Rule: Improving Educational Outcomes for Military and Veteran Students", The American Legion's position on education policy and legislation. Currently, the VA and DOD educational benefits count towards the 10 percent of revenue that must come from non-Department of Education sources. Senator Carper's proposal would count VA and DOD educational benefits on the 90 percent rather than the 10 percent side.

On Thursday, July 18, the Economic Division is presenting at the first-ever National Association of State Workforce (NASWA) Veterans Conference. The Conference is scheduled for July 17-19, 2013, at the Washington Court Hotel. The VSO panel is scheduled for Thursday afternoon from 3:30pm to 5:00pm in the Grand Ballroom. The majority of the participants are state workforce agency veterans coordinators – there are a few state workforce agency administrators (Governor appointees) attending, as well as some employers (primarily HR types). There will also be staff from the Departments of Labor, Defense and Veterans Affairs.

This week work continues on our hiring events in New Jersey, New York, Texas, and Virginia.

Daniel S. Wheeler
National Adjutant

NATIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSION

TOPIC 1: ECONOMY

Interest rates will remain low well into the future, notwithstanding periodic outbreaks of market anxiety and speculation that the Federal Reserve is nearing a shift in its ultra-easy-money policy. The only thing that changed with Chairman Ben Bernanke's recent comments is the acknowledgement that the Fed can now at least foresee a time when it will begin to scale back its massive quantitative easing program. But there's no reason to anticipate that the Fed will do so precipitously. Instead, it will gradually reduce the net amount of mortgage-backed securities and Treasuries it is now purchasing each month and eventually quit replacing maturing bonds. And there's even less reason to anticipate an increase in the federal funds rate -- at a historic low between zero and 0.25 percent since December 2008. It isn't likely to climb until late 2014 or into 2015.

The slowdown in economic growth -- to around a 1.5 percent annual pace in the second and third quarters, from 2.5 percent in the first quarter -- will keep the Fed on hold for some time. So will the virtual absence of any inflation pressure. As long as economic growth labors at a sub-2 percent growth rate and job markets are still not consistently generating 200,000 or more additional jobs a month, the Fed will conclude that stimulus needs to continue. Indeed, Bernanke and his colleagues continue to hold out the prospect that the Fed could increase purchases rather than reduce them.

The upward creep in long-term rates bears watching, however. A strengthening housing sector, together with continuing modest monthly job gains, is drawing attention to the possibility of future inflation. Rates for 30-year mortgages topped 4 percent this month for the first time in a year, and 10-year Treasury rates have ticked above 2 percent. But much of the pressure seems to be coming from apprehension about the Fed scaling back its bond purchases rather than from any fundamental pickup in economic activity. No big hike in long rates is on the horizon, and 10-year Treasury notes will end the year up slightly, at around 2.5 percent, while 30-year mortgages will settle around 4.25 percent.

And interest rates could be affected by some wild cards that remain in the deck. Washington politicians temporarily set aside partisan feuding over raising the debt limit earlier this year, and the slowly improving economy, and concomitant increased tax revenues, mean the next debt limit crisis won't arise until October or November. But it's a sure bet that political maneuvering on the issue of the debt limit will resume by fall, once again fanning concerns about a possible U.S. Treasury default. The last time politicians' failure to act threatened to take the country into default -- in 2011 -- Standard & Poor's lowered its AAA rating on Treasuries. That move had a minimal effect on interest rates. But if the two remaining ratings agencies, Moody's and Fitch, are moved to lower their ratings this time, that won't be the case. A deadlock on negotiations over raising the debt limit would push long-term rates up by at least half a percentage point.

Table A-5. Employment status of the civilian population 18 years and over by veteran status, period of service, and sex (not seasonally adjusted).¹

HOUSEHOLD**DATA****Table A-5. Employment status of the civilian population 18 years and over by veteran status, period of service, and sex, not seasonally adjusted**

[Numbers in thousands]

Employment status, veteran status, and period of service	Total		Men		Women	
	June 2012	June 2013	June 2012	June 2013	June 2012	June 2013
Gulf War-era II veterans						
Unemployed	196	160	166	125	30	36
Unemployment rate	9.5	7.2	9.4	6.8	10.1	8.9

National unemployment rate is 7.5 percent (June 2013). Gulf War II veterans unemployment rate is 7.2 percent.² Currently, the unemployment rate for Gulf War II women veterans is 8.9 percent (down from this time last year of 10.1 percent).

TOPIC 2: EDUCATION

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012 Common Population Survey, the jobless rate for veterans from ages 18 to 24 was 30 percent, nearly double the jobless rate for their civilian counterparts in the same age group. Part of the disparity is due to a lack of common standards for military service credentialing programs, inconsistent state laws, and a lack of understanding by colleges, training schools, and the business sector about translating military experience, skills and training into preparation for equivalent private sector occupations.

While on active duty, veterans attend some of the finest technical and professional training schools in the world. Many of their skills require some type of license or certificate to pursue a career in the civilian workforce. In many cases, this license or certificate requires schooling, which is comparable to that already completed at armed forces training institutions. Unfortunately, too often agencies that issue the license or certificate do not recognize the military training or experience already completed.

As an example, a qualified combat medic who treated gunshot wounds in Iraq or Afghanistan cannot be certified as an emergency medical technician in the nation's cities without additional (and often redundant) schooling. In 1997, The American Legion conducted a study and found 105 professions, with direct application to civilian careers, for which the military services provide training and for which a credential of some kind is required in civilian life.

The American Legion, in collaboration with the Department of Defense (DOD), has undertaken an initiative to address this challenge to ease the transition into the civilian workforce for veterans and their families. The initiative's aim is to help service members receive licensure and academic credit for military education, training and experience.

Cooperation among The American Legion, state governments, private sector employers, institutions of higher learning and the federal government is essential to effect the necessary changes in policies and practices to fully recognize the education, training, and experience provided to transitioning veterans.

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As of January 2013, The American Legion in collaboration with DOD began this endeavor of addressing military credentialing barriers affecting service members, veterans, and their spouses at the state level through state legislation. These states include:

- **Arizona:** On April 10, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of [H.B. 2076](#) – which passed unanimously in the state’s senate. H.B. 2076 will allow medical training obtained in the military to count as the civilian equivalent for training required to become a Licensed Professional Nurse. The bill also will streamline the process of obtaining a temporary nursing license for veterans.
- **Georgia:** On April 5, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of [House Bill 188](#), the Veterans Licensure Bill, which creates a special committee that is charged with giving special consideration to veterans’ licensing applications on an ad-hoc basis.

Per the new law, which took effect in July, a committee will be created to determine whether waivers should be provided to veterans based on their military skills, training, and testing. This process will include applications for licenses in electronic contracting, plumbing, air conditioning certification, residential-light contracting, and utility foremanship. The committee can also grant certification to military spouses who hold licenses in these five areas in different states.

- **Idaho:** On April 1, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would expedite licenses for qualified spouses of members of the military.
- **Indiana:** On April 2, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would streamline the ability for veterans to earn emergency medical services licenses. The state has already signed the Military Skills Test Waiver for the Commercial Driver’s License and passed spousal licensing legislation.
- **Kansas:** American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would broadly streamline the ability for veterans to earn state licenses, including licenses for emergency medical services and nursing. The state has already signed the Military Skills Test Waiver for the Commercial Driver’s License and passed spousal licensing legislation.
- **Kentucky:** On March 19, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would streamline the ability for veterans to earn emergency medical services licenses and Commercial Driver’s Licenses. The state has already passed spousal licensing legislation.
- **Maryland:** On April 3, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of the [Veterans Full Employment Act of 2013](#), which allows military training, education, and experience to help veterans qualify for occupational and professional licenses. Additionally, the measure requires public colleges and universities to develop policies to award academic credit for relevant military training and education. It also creates an expedited licensing procedure for veterans and military spouses who hold professional licenses in other states.
- **Mississippi:** On March 18, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would broadly streamline the ability for veterans to earn state licenses, including Commercial Driver’s Licenses and licenses for emergency medical services and nursing. The bill also streamlines the process for military spouses who seek to transfer their licenses from

Continued from page 28...

- other states when they move to Mississippi. For military spouses, the bill covers all occupational and educational professions.
- **Montana:** On March 20, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would provide members of the Reserve the ability to extend their licensing deadline while serving on active-duty. The state has already passed spousal licensing legislation.
- **New Mexico:** On March 26, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would broadly streamline the ability for veterans to earn state licenses, including licenses for emergency medical services and nursing. The bill also streamlines the process for military spouses who seek to transfer their licenses from other states when they move to New Mexico. For military spouses, the bill covers all regulated occupations, with the exception of attorneys and teachers.
- **North Dakota:** American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would grant a teaching license to an applicant who holds a regular teaching license or certification in another state, provided the individual meets certain requirements.
- **Ohio:** On June 11, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, and Governor Kasich's office, successfully advocated for the passage of [executive order](#) intended to make a military veteran's service time more of a benefit when entering the civilian workforce. The executive order will direct all state-run boards, commissions, and departments issuing occupational licenses to take into account a veteran's military education, skills training, and service time when determining equivalency for licensing requirements. The chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents and university presidents must determine how to award more college credit tied to military service and do so when appropriate.
- **South Dakota:** On March 16, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would broadly streamline the ability for veterans to earn state licenses, including licenses for nursing. The state has already signed the Military Skills Test Waiver for the Commercial Driver's License. The bill also streamlines the process for military spouses who seek to transfer their licenses from other states when they move to South Dakota. For military spouses, the bill covers all occupations covered under Title 36, including teachers.
- **Tennessee:** American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would broadly streamline the ability for veterans to earn state licenses, including Commercial Driver's Licenses and licenses for emergency medical services and nursing. The state has already passed spousal licensing legislation.
- **Utah:** On March 26, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would broadly streamline the ability for veterans to earn state licenses, including Commercial Driver's Licenses and licenses for emergency medical services and nursing. The state has already passed spousal licensing legislation.
- **Wyoming:** On March 13, American Legion representatives, in collaboration with DOD, successfully advocated for the passage of state legislation that would broadly streamline the ability for veterans to earn state licenses, including Commercial Driver's Licenses and licenses for emergency medical services and nursing. The bill also streamlines the process for military spouses who seek to transfer their licenses from other states when they move to Wyoming. For military spouses, the bill covers all occupations, except attorneys and professions with prescriptive drug authority.

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TOPIC 3: MEETINGS

On Monday July 1, Economic Division staff met with the representatives from the Small Business Administration (SBA) to discuss the FY 2012 Small Business Scorecard for the federal government. Overall the federal government nearly met its 23 percent goals for small business setasides with 22.25 percent achieved garnering a 'B' grade from the Small Business Administration. For Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses the federal goal is 3 percent, the government has actually exceeded this for FY12 with 3.03 percent or \$12.3 billion going towards the veteran owned small business industrial base.

On Tuesday and Friday July 2 and 5, the Economic Division staff met with the representatives from the Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Veterans' Business Development, SBA Regional Office in Texas and Syracuse University to discuss the progression of the 2-day For HEROES Entrepreneurial Course that will be piloted at our National Convention. Discussion continued regarding legal matters, logistics, data collection and capabilities.

TOPIC 4: VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

The U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service today announced the award of 121 grants, totaling almost \$29 million, to provide more than 14,000 veterans across the nation with job training, job placement, housing and other services. The grants were awarded through the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP).

"Military service members and their families have been asked to make tremendous sacrifices for this nation. Although homelessness among veterans has fallen, too many of our heroes cannot find jobs or homes," said acting Secretary of Labor Seth D. Harris. "These grants will provide those who have served our nation with the means to find meaningful civilian employment and chart new directions for their lives."

The HVRP grants will help homeless veterans reintegrate into society and the labor force while providing effective services aimed at addressing the complex challenges that homeless veterans often confront. The services provided by grantees will include job placement, on-the-job training, career counseling, life skills and money management mentoring, as well as help in finding housing.

The 121 HVRP grants to assist homeless veterans total \$28,722,299. The grants include: 20 one-year awards with three option years, totaling \$5,190,656; 11 one-year awards with no option years, totaling \$2,290,858; 67 second-year awards, totaling \$15,857,643; and 23 third-year awards of \$5,383,142. VETS estimates the funding will help approximately 14,361 veterans. Option-year funding decisions are determined by factors such as available congressional appropriations and the performance of grantees. HVRP is the only federal program that focuses exclusively on employment of homeless veterans.

Funds were awarded on a competitive basis to state and local workforce investment boards, local public agencies and nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and community organizations. These organizations are familiar with the areas and populations to be served and have demonstrated that they can administer effective programs to help veterans.

TOPIC 5: 95TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION, HOUSTON, TEXAS

EMPLOYMENT

THE AMERICAN LEGION'S NATIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSION SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THE HIRING OUR HEROES TRANSITION & BENEFITS CAREER FAIR

The American Legion will be hosting a Hiring Event on August 27 from 10am-2pm in the George R. Brown Convention Center. The original capacity for this event was set at 60 employers, but due to the volume of initial response, we have decided to move the venue to a larger space. Thus far we have not set a definitive cap on the event as we do not want to put ourselves in a position to turn away any employer that can potentially hire a veteran. Some companies that have already signed on include GE, Direct Energy, Boeing and Home Depot. Veteran Employment Representatives from the Texas Veterans Commission have already started working with jobseekers to match resumes with vacant positions listed by the attending employers, while contacting the employers to set-up interviews during the Hiring Event. Our goal is to create a site where employers can interview veteran jobseekers that are ready to be hired.

EMPLOYMENT, EMPOWERMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUMMIT

The American Legion's National Economic Commission is working with the Small Business Administration (SBA), Department of Labor (DOL), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Defense (DOD), Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (USCC) and major companies such as General Electric (GE), Home Depot, Humana, SAP and Sallie Mae with veteran-hiring programs to provide information and opportunities free of charge to veterans in transition.

The events includes:

- The Hiring Our Heroes Transition & Benefits Career Fair hosted by The American Legion and USCC, August 27th from 10am-2pm in Room 342, 3rd Floor, George R. Brown Convention Center, in Houston. The Career Fair is open to veterans, active-duty military, National Guard and Reserve members, and spouses.
- A two-day Women's Small Business Development Workshop with SBA from August 26-27, at the Hilton Americas Houston Hotel. The session is specifically designed to help women veterans identify opportunities, write business plans, and launch their new enterprises.
- An Employment Transition Workshop is planned on August 26-27, at the Hilton Americas Houston Hotel, featuring expert insights from such companies as GE, First Command Bank, SAP, Sallie Mae and Nexstar. These companies will provide information and opportunities for training in a variety of career areas to include job openings at their respective companies.
- The first American Legion Empowering Conference on August 26-27 at the Hilton Americas Houston Hotel. The Conference will provide veterans with information they need to obtain gainful employment in a variety of industries as well as discuss relevant benefits that veterans have earned through their military service. Also, this two-day Conference will provide veterans and spouses with empowerment strategies to reach and control their own destinies, and enhance their abilities to affect positive change in their lives/communities.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION WORKSHOP

The American Legion will be hosting a multiple Employment and Transition Workshops from August 26-27. These sessions are geared towards assisting service members in transition, along with veterans and their spouses to obtain employment in the private sector or aid them in changing careers. The presentations will range from resume writing to financial planning to scholarship and training opportunities for possible job placement within their companies. Presenters for this event will include representatives from GE, First Command Bank, SAP, Sallie Mae and Nexstar. The Resume Writing and Interview Workshop will be held in conjunction with the Hiring Event on the 26th as to be utilized to its maximum potential.

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TOPIC 6: CAREER FAIR

On Wednesday, June 5, a Hiring our Heroes Hiring Event was held in Buffalo, New York. This event was sponsored and hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (USCC), with The American Legion Department of

New York, Department of Labor, Department of Veterans Affairs, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves (ESGR), and the Local Chamber of Commerce. This hiring event fielded 70 employers and a total of 444 jobseekers came out to this event. Overall there were 1078 resumes accepted, 284 interviews conducted, 5

tentative job offers and 6 ‘on the spot’ hires. This event was highly successful and well attended. Special thanks goes to the USCC for their role in planning this event, USCC staff for conducting the employment workshops and mock interviews for veterans and spouses, along with the Department of New York whose hard work and planning for this event ensured that it was a success. Lastly we thank LTC Tyron, SSG Hutcheson and Peter Pilc from the New York National Guard for all the support they gave us during the event and for the use of the Connecticut Street Armory.

Joseph C. Sharpe, Jr., Director
Economic Division
202.861.2700 ext. 2989
Week Ending: 7/5/13

National Security / Foreign Relations Division Week in Review Week ending 7/12/2013

1. Gen. Amos: ‘Dust hasn’t settled’ on Sequester’s Threat to Pacific Pivot

Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James Amos said Thursday that the “dust hasn’t settled” yet in the Pentagon as it determines how automatic budget cuts under sequestration would affect the Pentagon’s pivot toward the Asia-Pacific region.

The Asia-Pacific rebalance was a key component to the Pentagon’s new defense strategy unveiled last year, but military officials have warned it could be scuttled if the \$500 billion in sequestration cuts over the next decade are not reversed.

Amos said that the “cold reality of sequestration is settled in at the Pentagon” as it conducts a major review of its strategy and budget. But the department hasn’t figured out yet how much of the new Asia focus might go out the window should the sequester remain on the books.

“It’s yet to be seen how much of the Asia-Pacific strategy, which is really where the focus is, how much is going to be affordable when all the dust settles,” Amos said at a forum Thursday hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

At the forum, Amos and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert both discussed the future of the Navy and Marine Corps living in a world of uncertainty surrounding the budget. Audio and video link from the event can be found here: <http://csis.org/event/military-strategy-forum-admiral-jonathan-w-greenert-and-general-james-f-amos>

2. Defense Budget: DoD Furloughs

More than 650,000 civilian workers in the Defense Department will be taking their first of 11 furlough days this week. The Pentagon’s 11 weeks of furloughs kick in on Monday, which result in a 20-percent-

Continued from page 32...

weekly pay cut through September for 680,000 of the Pentagon's roughly 800,000 civilian employees. Between now and the end of September, most civilian employees not in war zones or otherwise exempt will take one unpaid day off per week, or two per pay period. Military personnel are exempt from sequester and not subject to furloughs.

The Pentagon is expected to submit to SASC as early as this week an alternative spending plan for the next fiscal year that takes into account sequestration. As with furloughs, defense hawks are counting on the painful trade-offs laid out in the plan to boost the anti-sequester movement.

The Senate could have an opening this month to take up the annual National Defense Authorization Act, which has a 51-year record of passing Congress. The bill was one of the last items on the Senate's agenda last year, and SASC Chairman Carl Levin says he doesn't want to cut it close again this year.

3. Illegal Immigration

On Friday, staff briefed attendees at the Department of Virginia on the Legion position on border security and illegal immigration at their annual convention. A downloadable PDF brochure on the subject can be found on the Legion website: <http://www.legion.org/documents/pdf/illegalimmigration.pdf>

The White House and some of its allies on Wednesday expressed deepening gloom over the prospects that President Obama will sign a comprehensive immigration bill this year.

While the leadership of the Republican-controlled House deliberated in a closed-door session on how to handle the hot-button legislation, White House Press Secretary Jay Carney signaled that passing the measure through the House could be difficult.

Democrats on the Hill, eager to pass comprehensive reform, also telegraphed a message of skepticism on Wednesday. A senior Democratic aide said, "things have clearly unraveled in the past couple of days," even though some lawmakers had been "slightly cautiously optimistic" about passing a comprehensive bill.

4. Obama Considers Total Withdrawal from Afghanistan

via Mark Mazzetti and Matthew Rosenberg of The New York Times: "Increasingly frustrated by his dealings with President Hamid Karzai, President Obama is giving serious consideration to speeding up the withdrawal of United States forces from Afghanistan and to a 'zero option' that would leave no American troops there after next year, according to American and European officials. ... His relationship with Mr. Karzai has been slowly unraveling, and reached a new low after an effort last month by the United States to begin peace talks with the Taliban in Qatar." <http://nyti.ms/11wS4dq>

5. Missile Defense

Four top defense hawks are urging Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel to conduct another test of the ground-based midcourse defense system, apparently worried that last week's failed intercept test over the Pacific could sap U.S. enthusiasm for missile-defense spending. "Funding cuts have touched every facet of the GMD program, including its maintenance," HASC Chairman Buck McKeon and Rep. Mike Rogers (Ala.) and Sens. Jim Inhofe and Jeff Sessions said in a letter yesterday to Hagel.

For the four Republicans, the third intercept test failure in a row is only reason to boost spending on missile defense, in order to fix the troubled program. But opponents are certain to use the latest failed test to make the opposite argument: that it's time to stop investing so much in a faulty endeavor. The big question is whether last week's test will have an impact on the GOP-led effort to fund a new missile-defense site on the East Coast - which could cost \$3 billion between now and 2018.

Read the letter here: <http://1.usa.gov/1btUQBZ>

6. Jury Selection in Ft. Hood Trial

The courthouse at Fort Hood "has been transformed into a fortress," according to Angela K. Brown of The Associated Press, as jury selection begins in the trial of Maj. Nidal Hasan, accused of killing 13 people at the base in 2009. "Just two years after a bomb attack was thwarted in Killeen," Brown writes, "some military law experts say the community may once again be a target by supporters of Hasan, an American-born Muslim who has tried to justify the deadly rampage as protecting Taliban leaders in Afghanistan." <http://bit.ly/16kiOtU>

7. Hearings and Other Events

On Tuesday the Center for Strategic and International Studies held an event on the 10th anniversary of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) which was implemented by the Bush Administration to improve

global efforts to interdict shipments of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their dual-use components. <http://csis.org/event/10th-anniversary-proliferation-security-initiative>

The **Senate Judiciary Committee** held a hearing Tuesday to consider the nomination of James Comey, the former Bush Administration lawyer who's been tapped to serve as FBI director. And the **Senate Foreign Relations Committee** held a hearing on Thursday to consider several nominations,

including that of Victoria Nuland, nominated to be assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs.

The **House Homeland Security Committee's** Oversight and Management Efficiency subcommittee will hold a hearing on Iran, also Tuesday. The **House Armed Services Committee** and **House Committee on Veterans' Affairs** will hold a joint hearing on Wednesday on Pentagon and VA collaboration. And the **House Homeland Security Committee** will hold a hearing, also Wednesday, on attacks on the homeland, from Fort Hood to Boston.

<http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/hearings>

<http://homeland.house.gov/legislation/hearings>

8. POW/MIA Update

Recently accounted for

- **Sgt. 1st Class William Robinson**, U.S. Army, Company L, 3rd Battalion, 31st Regimental Combat Team, was lost on Dec. 12, 1950, near Hagaru-ri, North Korea. He was accounted for on June 17, 2013. He will be buried with full military honors on Aug. 7, 2013, in Indiantown Gap, Pa.
- **Sgt. Clement Thibodeaux Jr.**, U.S. Army, Company L, 3rd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, was lost on Nov. 28, 1950, near the Ch'ongch'on River, North Korea. He was accounted for June 13, 2013. He will be buried with full military honors in Church Point, La.
- **Cpl. Glydon E. Moyer**, U.S. Army, Battery D, 15th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion, was lost on Dec. 2, 1950, near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. He was accounted for on June 13, 2013. He will be buried with full military honors on July 25, 2013, in Luray, Va.
- **Army Master Sgt. Olen B. Williams**, 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT) was lost in late 1950 south of a bridge across the P'ungnyuri River, near a small village in Sinhung-ni, North Korea. His remains were accounted for in 2012.

A complete listing of recently account-for service members can be found on the DPMO [Recently Accounted-For page](#).

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Pentagon report calls MIA work 'acutely dysfunctional'

'The Pentagon's effort to account for tens of thousands of Americans missing in action from foreign wars is so inept, mismanaged and wasteful that it risks descending from 'dysfunction to total failure,' according to an internal study suppressed by military officials. Largely beyond the public spotlight, the decades-old pursuit of bones and other MIA evidence is sluggish, often duplicative and subjected to too little scientific rigor, the report says.' <http://bit.ly/155SwMy>

John Stovall

Director, National Security / Foreign Relations Division

202-263-2984

VA Health Care Facilities Named to 2013 "Most Wired" Hospitals List

WASHINGTON (July 22, 2013) - The Department of Veterans Affairs, representing 152 VA medical centers, was recently named to the [2013 "Most Wired" hospitals list](#). The list, which is released by *Hospitals & Health Networks*, in partnership with McKesson, the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME) and the American Hospital Association (AHA), is the result of a national survey aimed at ranking hospitals that are leveraging health information technology (HIT) in new and innovative ways.

"At VA, we are committed to expanding access to high quality care for our Nation's Veterans," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "As the nation's largest health network, VA is continuously working to improve and enhance our understanding of which technologies best meet the needs of our Veteran patients."

Over the past year, VA has provided Veterans and VA health care teams with 21st century health care through the use of new and innovative technology. Some examples are:

- [telehealth](#) being used in Veterans homes as an adjunct to traditional face-to-face care;
- recent VA [Blue Button](#) enhancements that allow improved access to critical patient medical information;
- deployment of asset tracking devices;
- the use of technology to better link specialty care providers to primary care physicians in rural areas.

The survey, which was conducted between Jan. 15, 2013 and March 15, 2013, polled 1,713 hospitals and health systems nationwide to answer questions regarding their information technology (IT) initiatives. Overall, roughly 30 percent of all U.S. hospitals were surveyed.

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"VA is honored to have its integrated health care system on the 'Most Wired' hospitals list for the first time ever," said Dr. Robert Petzel, Undersecretary for Health in the Department of Veterans Affairs. "VA is dedicated to providing Veteran patients with the best experience possible. Integrating health IT into our everyday processes throughout our vast health care system has helped us to accomplish that goal. This recognition and this year's 10th anniversary of the introduction of VA's Personal Health Record, [My HealtheVet](#), indicate we've made great strides in accomplishing our goals, and we're eager to build on this progress."

With this designation, for the first time, all VA medical centers nationwide were named to the 2013 "Most Wired" list. The location of VA medical centers can be found here: <http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp>.

The full list of 2013's "Most Wired" hospitals and the entire report can be found in the July H&HN cover story detailing results, available at www.hhnmag.com.

For more information, contact VA Media Relations or visit www.va.gov.

VA Announces \$300 Million in New Grants to Help End Veterans' Homelessness Initiative Targets 120,000 Homeless and At-Risk Vets and Families

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced today the award of nearly \$300 million in grants that will help approximately 120,000 homeless and at-risk Veterans and their families. The grants have been awarded to 319 community agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

"With these grants, we are strengthening our partnership with community non-profits across the country to provide Veterans and their families with hope, a home, and a future," said Shinseki. "The work of Supportive Services for Veteran Families program grantees has already helped us prevent and end homelessness among tens of thousands of homeless Veterans and their families, but as long as a single Veteran lives on our streets, we have work to do."

Under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program, VA is awarding grants to private non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives that provide services to very low-income Veteran families living in -- or transitioning to -- permanent housing. The SSVF program supports VA's efforts to prevent at-risk Veterans from becoming homeless and rapidly re-house those who have recently fallen into homelessness.

Thanks to the SSVF grants, those community organizations will provide a range of services that promote housing stability and play a key role in connecting Veterans and their family members to VA services such as mental health care and other benefits. Community-based groups can offer temporary financial assistance on behalf of Veterans for rent payments, utility payments, security deposits and moving costs.

This is the third year SSVF grants have helped Veterans and their families find or remain in their homes. Last year, VA provided about \$100 million to assist approximately 50,000 Veterans and family members.

In 2009, President Obama and Secretary Shinseki announced the federal government's goal to end Veterans' homelessness in 2015. The grants are intended to help accomplish that goal. According to the 2012 Point-in-Time Estimates of Homelessness, homelessness among Veterans has declined 17.2 percent since 2009.

Through the homeless Veterans initiative, VA committed over \$1 billion in fiscal year 2013 to strengthen programs that prevent and end homelessness among Veterans. VA provides a range of services to homeless Veterans, including health care, job training, and education.

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More information about VA's homeless programs is available at www.va.gov/homeless.

Details about the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program are online at www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp

VA Acquires More Than 247 Acres to Continue Memorial Benefits for Veterans

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently acquired 247.4 acres of land in Morovis, Puerto Rico, to prevent the loss of burial benefits to Puerto Rico's Veterans when the Puerto Rico National Cemetery, located in Bayamón, closes to new casketed interments sometime in 2022.

“Veterans in Puerto Rico have earned the right to burial in a national shrine,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “We are committed to replacing Puerto Rico National Cemetery so that Veterans will continue to have a final resting place and lasting tribute to their service and sacrifice for years to come.”

VA closed on the Morovis property, located off PR Route 137, in March for approximately \$7.6 million. The replacement site is located about 28 miles from the existing cemetery. There is no possibility for expansion adjacent to the original cemetery because the property is surrounded by commercial and residential development.

Puerto Rico National Cemetery became a national cemetery on July 12, 1948. The cemetery serves approximately 107,480 Veterans in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Situated on 108.2 acres, of which 99 have been developed, the cemetery accommodates casketed and cremated remains. More than 1,700 burials were conducted in fiscal year 2012.

Puerto Rico National Cemetery is the only national cemetery located outside of the United States. More than 56,000 Veterans and family members are interred there.

Veterans with a discharge issued under conditions other than dishonorable, their spouses and eligible dependent children can be buried in a VA national cemetery. Also eligible are military personnel who die on active duty, their spouses and eligible dependents. Other burial benefits available for all eligible Veterans, regardless of whether they are buried in a national cemetery or a private cemetery, include a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and a government headstone or marker. Families of eligible decedents may also order a memorial headstone or marker when remains are not available for interment.

In the midst of the largest expansion since the Civil War, VA operates 131 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico and 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites. More than 3.8 million Americans, including Veterans of every war and conflict, are buried in VA's national cemeteries.

Information on VA burial benefits can be obtained from national cemetery offices, from the Internet at www.cem.va.gov or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at 800-827-1000. To make burial arrangements at the time of need at the Puerto Rico National Cemetery, call 787-798-8400 or 8413, Monday thru Friday, between the hours of 7:30 am to 4:00 pm.

To make burial arrangements at any other open VA national cemetery, call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 800-535-1117, 7 days a week, between the hours of 7:00 am to 6:30 pm CDT. For more information on Puerto Rico National Cemetery, call the cemetery office at 787-798-8400.

Post-9/11 GI Bill Celebrates Fourth Anniversary

Nearly 1 Million Veterans, Service members and Families Benefit

WASHINGTON – Thursday, August 1, marks the fourth anniversary of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. VA has issued approximately \$30 billion in Post 9/11 GI-Bill benefit payments since its inception in August 2009 and helped nearly 1 million Servicemembers, Veterans, and their families pursue their education.

“The Post-9/11 GI Bill has helped many of our Nation’s Veterans pursue their education and successfully transition to civilian life,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “We’re proud that the Department of Veterans Affairs can administer this important benefit that makes such a big difference in the lives of nearly a million Veterans and their families.”

The Post-9/11 GI Bill is the most extensive educational assistance program since the Serviceman’s Readjustment Act of 1944, more commonly known as the GI Bill, was signed into law.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides comprehensive educational support through tuition, books and housing allowance to people with at least 90 days of total service after September 10, 2001, or people discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days.

Approved training under the Post-9/11 GI Bill includes graduate and undergraduate degrees, vocational and technical training, on-the-job training, flight training, correspondence training, licensing and national testing programs, entrepreneurship training, and tutorial assistance.

VA is now processing benefit payments for currently enrolled students in an average of seven days, largely as a result of VA’s ongoing transformation to electronic claims processing. The delivery of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits has been automated and processing time cut in half through implementation of VA’s Long Term Solution, an end-to-end claims processing system that uses rules-based, industry-standard technologies.

“Since the end of World War II, GI Bill programs have shaped and changed the lives of Veterans, Servicemembers, their families and their survivors by helping them reach their educational and employment goals,” said Allison A. Hickey, Under Secretary for Benefits. “That is still true today.”

In April 2012, President Obama signed Executive Order 13607 which established the Principles of Excellence, offering guidelines that promote student success under the program and ensure accurate information about institutions and their courses. Over 6,000 educational and training institutions have agreed to comply with these principles.

“The Principles of Excellence, further strengthened by Public Law 112-249, provide future student Veterans with greater consumer education” said Michael Dakduk, executive director of Student Veterans of America. “It is extremely important to have the right tools and information before making a decision on a post-secondary credential, degree program, or institution of higher learning.”

VA is working with schools, community organizations and other partners to ensure beneficiaries have all the information they need to use their education benefits, including:

- Education plans for all military and Veteran education beneficiaries;
- A designated point of contact for academic and financial advice at each school; and
- An end to fraudulent and aggressive recruiting techniques and misrepresentation.

This summer, VA is launching new tools to help beneficiaries learn more about their vocational aptitudes and select an education institution.

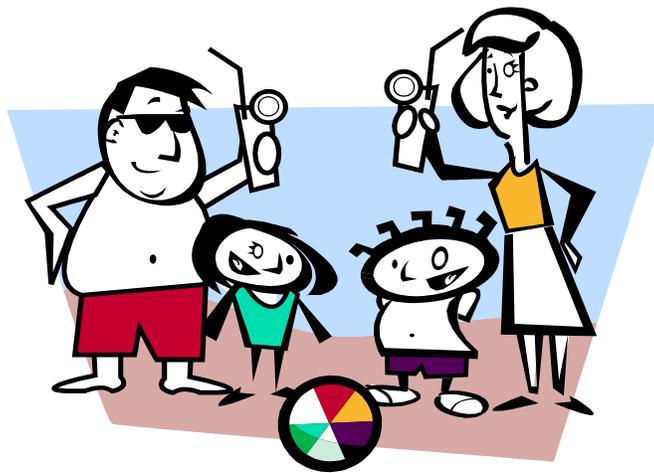
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- The 'Factors to Consider When Choosing a School' guide offers future students steps to take when researching, choosing, and attending a school.
- CareerScope® is a free, new tool featured on <http://www.gibill.va.gov> that measures a student's aptitude and interests through a self-administered online test, identifying potential career paths.
- The new GI Bill® Comparison Tool allows students to research and compare schools, including key indicators like average student loan debt and graduation rates.

"We will continue to work hard to improve VA's benefits delivery process for Post-9/11 GI Bill beneficiaries and to ensure that Veterans and their families have the tools they need to choose the right education institution to help them build a foundation for the future," Hickey added.

For more information on the Post-9/11 GI Bill and other Veteran education programs, visit <http://www.gibill.va.gov>.

IT IS VACATION TIME AGAIN...



ENJOY AND BE SAFE!