

The AMERICAN LEGION

Department of France



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Happy New Year!

Department Officers - 2015 Membership Year

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DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

James Settle

My Fellow Legionaries

I hope all of you had a safe and very Merry, and safe Christmas. And I do hope all of you and your families have a Very happy and prosperous New Year in 2015.

Our membership program has fallen off this year. We are way behind the power curve where membership is concerned. We did not manage to make a %100 percent renewal by 31 December 2014, and in addition we did not make the last two national target dates. Commanders, Adjutants, and Membership Chairman, we have let our members down, by not ensuring timely renewals, hopefully we will turn this around in 2015. As leaders of the largest war-time veterans' organization in the world; we have an obligation to our members and to the organization to keep the American Legion strong. The way we do this is by having a growing and robust membership that allows us to continue to have the lead amongst the veteran's community. We owe our members and our programs our maximum efforts in this endeavor

Our next big event is The Department Oratorical Final which will be held in February 2015 in Stuttgart, hosted by GR01. Now is the time to start preparing for this event. I would really like to see more contestants at this year's event, and more support from the posts. If your area does not have a DoD School offer support/help to a post that does, this worked out just fine the last few years between other post. If you have conducted your post finals please ensure that you provide the name of your contestant to the Department Adjutant, Comrade Rice so he can prepare some of the required paperwork, in advance. Comrade Rice's E-mail address are colwichboy@yahoo.com or Max.Rice@lavatec-laundry.com. A Date, Time, and Location will be published shortly.

The American Legion National Commander Michael D. Helm will be visiting the Department of France from May 29th till June 3rd 2015. If you would like the National Commander to visit your post please let either myself or the Department Adjutant know, we are working on the itinerary, at this time.

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. I encourage and challenge all Commanders, Adjutants, and Membership Chairmen to contact those members who have not renewed for 2015, and have them renew their membership ASAP. If you have any questions on membership do not hesitate to contact me or the Membership Chairman Comrade Brown, at joedan.pascall@googlemail.com. He can answer your questions and resolve any problems you are having with membership.

In closing, I wish all of you a Very Happy and prosperous New Year, in 2015. Please stay safe and watch out for one another during this upcoming year. 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

To all Department of France Officers, Past Department Commanders, Post Commanders and Delegates, Committee Chairpersons and Program Directors...

The Third Department DEC is planned for 21 March 2015 and it will be hosted by GR30 / GR42

The Official Call will be sent out at a later date



Dear Legion Family Members and Friends,

As a new year soon dawns, individuals and organizations will look back and reflect on the highlights of the past 12 months. For individuals, those highlights might be the birth of a child or grandchild, a marriage, promotion or career change.

I hope this year has brought you and your family many moments to cherish for years to come. For our organization, it truly has been a remarkable and historic year of advocacy for those who have served our nation in uniform.

Most notably, The American Legion took the lead nationally when the VA crisis erupted last April. We stood up for the veterans we represent, and the values we stand for, when we called for reforms, including leadership changes at the highest levels of VA. We took that bold step in order to improve access to care, help untangle the benefits backlog and restore trust between veterans and VA.

We did not sit on the sidelines as details of VA mismanagement cropped up at facilities across the nation. The American Legion instituted Veterans Crisis Command Centers (VCCCs) in communities hardest hit by VA errors. At these centers, more than 3,000 veterans received personal assistance with their benefits claims, overdue appointments and many other issues. VA staff joined us in these events, seeing firsthand what it means to tackle a national problem at the local level, face to face.

Beyond our leadership on the VA issue, The American Legion has other success stories from 2014. Among them:

- When Congress approved legislation making future cuts to cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) for military retirees, The American Legion launched an aggressive campaign to have those cuts repealed. U.S. Sen. [Lindsey Graham said the Legion's efforts](#) played a significant role in that move.
- The American Legion also focused support on the needs of the post 9/11 generation of veterans. We have helped secure credentialing changes in all 50 states, which will assist new veterans as they

transition into careers ranging from emergency medicine to truck driving.

- Legionnaires provided comfort, relief and aid to thousands of veterans, military families and communities through our various programs. Your donations helped provide financial boosts to those in need, rehabilitation equipment for wounded servicemembers and scholarship funds for children who lost active-duty military parents in the war on terrorism. Among the success stories: the [Legion Riders raised \\$1 million](#) for the Legacy Scholarship Fund.

There are many reasons to look ahead to 2015 with an expectation of continued progress and impact. Our organization will conduct Veterans Benefit Centers next year on a monthly basis to continue providing boots on the ground, active engagement with VA staff and others, in communities where veterans are still having trouble receiving the assistance they earned through honorable military service.

We will continue to comfort injured servicemembers, provide assistance to families in need, and distribute aid to those recovering from natural disasters. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to support of the Legion program of your choice [at this web page](#).

I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

For God and Country,

American Legion National Commander

DIGITAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN...

As you may be aware, The American Legion has recently embarked on an extensive digital marketing campaign involving internet advertising to stimulate interest in The American Legion, and its programs and services. Part of this campaign directs interested people to a unique landing page that is designed to explain The American Legion, its values and its efforts to help veterans and communities.

This internet landing page has recently been updated, and now includes more information and a dynamic video that concisely explains what The American Legion is all about.

I encourage you to visit the website at: www.thelegionserves.org

This site can be viewed by anyone interested in The American Legion. I encourage you to share this link with your friends and family. This site encourages individuals to join, donate and purchase patriotic merchandise from The American Legion.

While the site offers the opportunity to join online and become a member at the national level, the site can also be used as a recruiting tool at the local level. You can refer someone to the page to see all that we do, and then encourage them to become active at the local level by joining your post.

The purpose of this program is to spread the word about the great things that The American Legion does to help our veterans and to strengthen America. By expanding our reach, we are trying to engage people unfamiliar with The American Legion, and as a result, continue to keep The American Legion a vital part of American life. This digital marketing campaign combined with the Direct Response Television (DRTV) campaign greatly enhances the perception and image of The American Legion.



Doug Haggan... *National Vice Commander/ FODPAL Secretary/ Past Department of France Commander*



THE GREAT NORTHEAST



2015 TAL Weekly Membership Report as of: December 18, 2014

National Position	Department	Goal	2015 Total As of 12/18/14	Percentage	Needed This Point for cutoff 01/21/15	Last Year
12	Delaware	10,875	8,572	78.823	128	-142
13	Vermont	12,978	10,190	78.517%	192	-355
14	Maine	20,500	16,008	78.088%	392	-710
18	Massachusetts	40,143	33,081	77.426%	1,033	-2,393
22	Maryland	55,300	42,512	76.875%	1,728	-1,869
23	Connecticut	21,000	16,115	76.738%	685	-554
26	New Jersey	49,000	37,517	76.565%	1,683	-1,865
27	Rhode Island	5,413	4,143	76.538%	187	-176
36	Pennsylvania	170,000	127,166	74.804%	8,834	-6,126
38	New York	120,000	89,431	74.526%	6,569	-7,434
52	New Hampshire	18,800	13,290	70.691%	1,750	-773
54	France	3,300	2,241	67.909%	399	-52
					23,580	-22,449
					National Deficit	-56,220
					Northeast Region Deficits	-22,449
					Other 4 Region Total Deficit	-33,771

THE NUMBERS DON'T LIE

As you can see the Northeast Region owns better than 1/3 of the National Deficit. I have traveled to a lot of the Departments in the Region and talked to a lot of the Legionnaires throughout the region, and I know the Northeast has the ability, the manpower and the willpower to turn these numbers around, and I know the Northeast Region will lead the way to positive numbers.

National Commanders Fundraising Pin



American Legion National Commander Mike Helm's fundraising goal during his year-long tenure as national commander is to raise \$4 million in Legion family charity program donations. Donations will support The American Legion's six charities: Operation Comfort Warriors, Legacy Scholarship Fund, National Emergency Fund, Child Welfare Foundation, Endowment Fund and Soldier's Wish. Several Auxiliary charities are also a part of Helm's \$4 million fundraising goal, including the Emergency Fund, Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund, Children of Warriors National President's Workshop and American Legion Auxiliary Foundation. Helm is rewarding those who make a donation to American Legion Charities with his "Stay On Course" fundraising pin. Any individual who donates \$100 or more to the funds will receive a pin. Three pins will be awarded to any Legion post, Auxiliary unit, Sons of The American Legion squadron or Legion Riders chapter that donates \$500 or more. To donate to American Legion Charities, visit www.legion.org/donate.

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



Who is Responsible for Getting the Word Out? You!

The Legion Must Not Die on Our Watch! We Owe Growth to Our Predecessors, Current Veterans, and Those to Come

How to Recruit & Retain Members

1. Educate yourself as to the Legion's Missions. Know the purpose of The Americans Legion Four Pillars.
2. Educate yourself on the past and present services to our Veteran's, our Children, our Community, and Nation
3. Form a Membership Recruitment Team
4. Ask Wartime Vets to Join Your Post

Welcome the New Member

1. Find out His/her area of interest and expertise
2. Assign new members to a committee
3. Continue to mentor and teach new members about Legion
4. Elect new member to Post Office

How to Keep Existing Members

1. Create a District/Post Membership Team
2. Train existing members, and new Officers on membership recruiting and retention.
3. Improve Post Appearance
4. Recruit from Available Pools of Veterans
5. Review Expired Member List from www.mylegion.org
6. Keep your Post and Membership in the good eye of the General Public, dress the part at Post Meetings and in Public
7. Importance's of Welcoming & Mentoring New Members

How to Retain Existing Members

1. Ongoing Mentoring Good officers just don't fall from the sky armed with the knowledge necessary to do the job. Like new members, officers who have never been mentored remain as wet behind their ears as they were when they first joined the Legion. If they were never mentored or asked to be on a committee, then the office will either go vacant or be held by someone not fit for the job. In either case, the Post will gradually wither away like an unattended garden.
2. Active & Rewarding Committee Assignments
3. Importance of an Interesting Annual Calendar of Events
4. Advanced planning to encourage attendance at Post meetings and Post functions.



GR79 MEETING AT NEW POST HOME



GR14 POST ADJUTANT HACKWORTH AND COMMANDER JAMES WITH VCAL BROWN



GR79 SECOND VICE MARTIN AND VCAL BROWN AT LOCAL CHRISTMAS FEST



DUAL MEMBERS PUT ON THEIR 40&8 CAPS TO SERVE DINNER TO THE HOMELESS

2015 MEMBERSHIP STANDINGS OF DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE DECEMBER 2015 MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN													2014-2015 NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP TARGET DATES			
#	POST	PUFL	REGULAR	NEW PUFL	TOTAL MEMBERS	ON LINE	NEED	2015 DEPT. GOAL	PERCENT OF 2015 GOAL	NUMBER TRANSMITTE	2014-2015 NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP TARGET DATES					
1	DK 01 Cohenbanen	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	100.00%	1	EARLY BIRD/NEF KICKOFF *SEPTEMBER 11, 2014 50%					
2	FR 01 France	98	185	0	283	55	35	283	87.63%	248	FALL MEETINGS OCTOBER 9, 2014 55%					
3	GC 01 Athens	4	22	0	26	3	19	26	26.92%	7	VETERANS DAY NOVEMBER 14, 2014 65%					
4	IT 01 Rome	2	10	0	12	3	4	12	66.66%	8	PEARL HARBOR DAY *DECEMBER 11, 2014 75%					
5	NL 01 Rotterdam	3	0	0	3	0	0	3	100.00%	3	MID-WINTER JANUARY 15, 2015 80%					
6	PO 01 Portugal	4	16	0	20	8	8	20	60.00%	12	PRESIDENT'S DAY FEBRUARY 12, 2015 85%					
7	BE 02 Flanders Field	7	48	0	55	14	12	55	78.18%	43	LEGION BIRTHDAY MARCH 12, 2015 90%					
8	FR 02 Father Francis Duffy	1	54	0	55	1	18	55	67.27%	37	CHILDREN & YOUTH *APRIL 9, 2015 95%					
9	IR 03 Comm. John Barry	2	20	0	22	0	3	22	86.36%	19	ARMED FORCES DAY MAY 14, 2015 100%					
10	FR 05 Dixieville	13	18	0	31	0	12	31	61.29%	19	DELEGATE STRENGTH 30 DAYS PRIOR TO NATIONAL					
11	IR 03 John F. Kennedy	3	34	0	37	0	17	37	54.05%	20						
12	SP 292 Madrid	7	23	0	30	4	9	30	70.00%	21						
13	GR 01 Kaiserslautern	39	139	0	176	32	0	176	125.0%	221						
14	GR 03 Rhein Neckar	24	61	0	85	15	25	85	70.58%	60						
15	GR 05 Rhein Main	26	38	0	64	10	0	64	104.00%	67						
16	GR 06 Stuttgart	134	149	0	283	33	50	283	82.33%	233	21					
17	GR 07 Riley Lerov Pitts	12	41	0	53	9	22	53	58.49%	31	EARLY BIRD/NEF KICKOFF *SEPTEMBER 03 2014 50%					
18	GR 09 William D. Nelson	26	20	0	46	3	0	46	100.00%	46	45					
	GR02	0	18	0	18	0		18	100.00%	18	VETERANS DAY NOVEMBER 05 2014 65%					
20	GR 13 Dwight D. Eisenhower	27	51	0	78	12	6	78	92.30%	72	62					
21	GR 14 Thomas W. Barnett	30	30	0	60	10	13	60	78.33%	47	MID-WINTER JANUARY 07, 2015 80%					
22	GR 20 Eifel	17	1	0	18	0	1	18	94.44%	17	PRESIDENT'S DAY JANUARY 28 2015 85%					
23	GR 30 Audie Murroh	14	17	0	31	14	9	31	96.77%	30	LEGION BIRTHDAY MARCH 03, 2015 90%					
24	GR 42 Omar Bradley	19	27	0	46	6	6	46	84.78%	39	CHILDREN & YOUTH MARCH 31 2015 95%					
25	GR 45 Vilseck	3	57	0	60	1	56	60	66.00%	4	ARMED FORCES DAY APRIL 29 2015 100%					
26	GR 79 John Wayne	13	37	0	47	0	0	47	106.00%	50	DELEGATE STRENGTH 30 DAYS PRIOR TO NATIONAL					
27											The Department of France membership target dates are key in getting the Transmittals to National on time to meet the National Target Dates. The most important target dates are September, December and April. These are the months that National sends out approval notices to those members who have not received					
28	GR 1982 Ansbach	19	125	0	144	10	61	144	57.63%	83						
29	HQ9999	17	94	0	110	31	44	110	60.00%	66						
30	CH 01 China	198	1050	0	1143	220	0	0	0.00%	0						
	Department Totals for	723	REGULAR 2,577	0	TOTAL 3,300	493		2015 DEPT. GOAL 3300	71.33%	2354						
100% By the 31 DECEMBER 2014																
DK 01													National Goal for Department is 3,300Members			
NL 01																
GR 01																
GR 02																
GR 05																
GR 09																
GR 79																



The final year end push for Paid Up For Life membership has been a great success. Over the last 15 days, 751 American Legion members have converted their annual membership to a PUFL. As of today, Dec 11th -- 18,419 have joined.

Becoming a Paid Up For Life member in The American Legion is easier than ever before. For more information regarding the fund go to www.legion.org/pufl. After providing a name and ID number, the member will receive a cost quote; he or she can pay by credit card or print out a personalized form and mail it in with a check. Those without an ID number can contact Customer Service at 1-800-433-3318 for their personalized offer.



**DEPARTMENT VICE
COMMANDER**
Stephen A. Ward

Greetings, Commander's &
Legionnaires,

As the Department of France Vice Commander, I have been assigned the following Posts: John F. Kennedy Post IR63 Facebook site: www.facebook.com/AmericanLegionIRL Eifel Post GR-20, Riveria Post FR-05, Madrid Post SP-292, and Portugal (Nunv Alvares Pereira) Post PO-01. Doug Haggan (FODPAL Secretary) is asking the Department and Posts to submit pictures and small articles to the FODPAL website: <http://www.legion.org> Click Members FODPAL site listed at Quick Links. FODPAL (Foreign and Outlying Departments and Posts of The American Legion) is asking for special programs & events and Facebook sites. The Department of France Newsletters is posted on the FODPAL website. Click Newsletters. Also, listed in the FODPAL Newsletter site is Lisbon Portugal Post PO01. It's listed in the FODPAL site: www.legion.org Click Members Click FODPAL Click Newsletters.

The dedication ceremony at the Heritage Room (Lisbon U.S. Embassy) was renamed Lance Corporal Joaquina Vaz Rebelo Killed in Action Vietnam. Joaquina Rebelo was born and raised in Portugal until his parents relocated to New Jersey. He graduated from high school afterwards enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. The presentation conducted (12 December 14) by Master Gunnery Sergeant Aaron Smith with the Portugal U.S. Ambassador John Sherman, Maria DeJesus (Cousin of LCPL. Rebelo), Gilbert Wells (Adjutant, Post PO01), Stephen A. Ward (Department Vice Commander), and the embassy staff. The pictures and article of the event were sent to the Department of France Commander (James Settle), Department of France Editor (David Greaux), and Doug Haggan (FODPAL Secretary).

Irish Veterans Charter #1 plans to dedicate (tentative April 17-19, 2015) to the memory of U.S. SEAL Lt. Michael P. Murphy, Medal of Honor, Killed in Action Afghanistan, 2005. His parents from the States plans to bring the MOH at the dedication ceremony. A special evening dinner is planned at the White House Hotel town of Kinsale (West Cork). The Irish Veterans Charter #1 plans to establish Irish Veterans International Research & Heritage Centre in the town of Kinsale, Ireland. Commander Ron Howko (Commodore John Barry Post IR-03) is a guest speaker at the event. For more information of the event, contact Declan Hughes Declan@irishveteans.org or James Sikora james@irishveterans.org

I stress the importance of membership in the Posts, Department, and the National Organization. Membership is our Voice on Capitol Hill. I encourage the Posts to transmit each month to the Department Membership Chairman (Joe Dan Brown). Check out the Online Renewal at: www.legion.org

Commanders & Fellow Legionnaires, many thanks for what you do for your Posts and the communities you serve. The Department of France Commander asks to continue membership and Post Renewals. Retention maintains strong membership within the Posts, Department, and the Organization. The Good Fellow Award must be submitted to the Department of France before the 3rd DEC. It's a Recognition Award to a non-member of the Organization who had demonstrated outstanding service (Volunteer work) to the Legion Post. Please prepare the students for the Oratorical Contest (Department level, February 2015), Boy State and Girl State candidate. With a sad note, the family and I will be departing Germany to the States (8 Feb.15) I have been re-assigned to William Beaumont Army Medical Center (El Paso, Texas). I will greatly miss the Commanders and Comrades (Department of France) and Posts. Happy New Year's to you and your family. God Bless America.

The following are pictures from the Veterans Day Observance Rokycany, Czech Republic. The Department of France Vice Commander (Stephen A. Ward) attended the Veterans Day Observance in the city of Rokycany, Czech Republic. Outside the city of Rokycany is the Demarcation Line where the Russian Army and American Army met during World War II. I received an Award from the Czech Veterans Association during banquet night. In the city square is Czech Scouts attending a ceremony. Wreaths laid at the city hall of Rokycany during the Veterans Day Observance. Since, I'm leaving Germany to the States (8 Feb. 15), next year, a Department of France representative for The American Legion will be at the Veterans Observance in Rokycany.



HERE THE FIRST MEETING ON THE TERRITORY OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THE ARMIES OF THE ANTI-FASCIST COALITION - THE US ARMY, WHICH LIBERATED ROKYCANY ON MONDAY 7. MAY AND THE RED ARMY, WHICH ENTERED BOREK ON WEDNESDAY 9. MAY 1945. IN ETERNAL MEMORY OF OUR LIBERATORS AND IN GRATITUDE FOR ALL THEIR SACRIFICES.



The following is a group pictures at the Lisbon U.S. Embassy Heritage Room dedication ceremony conducted by Gunnery Sergeant Aaron Smith (12 December 14). The Heritage Room was dedicated to Lance Corporal Joaquina Vaz Rebelo Killed In Action Vietnam received the Silver Star for valor. The U.S. Ambassador of Portugal (John A. Sherman of Massachusetts) was present for the ceremony with Maria De Jesus (Cousin of Lcpl. Rebelo), and Stephen A. Ward (Department of France Vice Commander). Also, present at the ceremony was the Portugal Post PO01 Adjutant (Gilbert Wells) World War II Veteran. Pictures taken by: SGT. Elliott (U.S. Marine Detachment, Lisbon U.S. Embassy).



Post Everlasting †

I sadly report the death of Ronald Jordan, a longtime member of Thomas W. Barnett Post GR14.

I regret to inform you that Rev. Paul Freemesser, a Life Member of Paris Post 1 transferred to Post Everlasting. He will be remembered at the post meeting on 17 January 2015.

DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE PAST COMMANDERS CLUB

Congratulations to Casby Logan as being elected PCC President
For the remaining 2015 Membership Year

Who is illegible to join the Department of France Past Commanders Club?

PAST AND PRESENT Department Commanders, Department Vice Commanders At Large,
Department Vice Commanders, Post Commanders, SAL Detachment Commanders, SAL
Squadron Commanders, Auxiliary Department Presidents, Auxiliary Unit Presidents...*so if you
were just voted into office you are illegible to join*

Initial dues for the Past Commanders Club is only \$25.00 which will entitle the new member to a Past
Commanders Club cap, Past Commanders Club pin and membership card

Renewal dues for the Past Commanders Club is only \$10.00

Our next meeting will be on 21 March 2015 at the Third Legion DEC

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE... *David Greaux, PCC Secretary "2015"*

PARIS POST FR01

Ceremony at the Epinal American Cemetery...23 December 2014

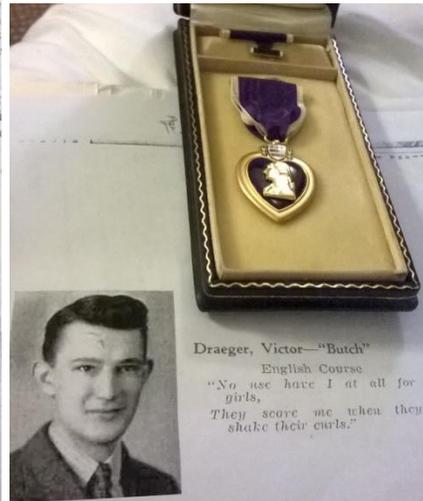


**Pfc. V. Draeger
Killed in France**

Fort Atkinson — (Special) — A telegram was received from the war department by Mrs. Augusta Draeger, 96 North Main street, telling of the death of her son, Pfc. Victor Draeger, age 19. He died Sept. 15 of wounds he had received Sept. 13, while serving with the army in France.

He was born Nov. 20, 1924. A graduate of the local high school in 1942, he was inducted into the army in March, 1943. He was stationed at army camps in North Carolina and Tennessee and went to England May of this year.

Besides his mother he is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Jerome Miller and Mrs. David Ziebel, both of this city.



LEGION LAUNCHES NEW EMPLOYMENT CENTER

The American Legion has launched a new web platform to help those who served in uniform translate military skills to job skills, find employment, start businesses and make successful transitions. Among the key features of The American Legion's Veteran Employment Center are: (1) a Military Skills Translator and Veteran Job Search tool, powered by Military.com; (2) ten custom-produced videos to help veterans start and succeed in business; (3) a listing of American Legion-sponsored or produced veteran career fairs nationwide, with links to registration sites; and (4) links to important forms, sites and agency platforms that help veterans in the career search. For more information, visit the American Legion's Veteran Employment Center webpage at www.legion.org/careers.

For more veteran job news, job postings and transition advice, visit the Military.com [Veteran Jobs Center](http://Military.com).

The American Legion

National High School Oratorical Contest

"A constitutional speech contest"

The American Legion Oratorical Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. Since 1938, the program has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.

Young orators earn some of the most generous college scholarships available to high school students. Over \$138,000 in scholarships can be awarded each year. The overall national contest winner gets an \$18,000 scholarship. Second place takes home \$16,000, and third gets \$14,000. Each department (state) winner who is certified into and participates in the national contest's first round receives a \$1,500 scholarship. Those who advance past the first round receive an additional \$1,500 scholarship. The American Legion's National Organization awards the scholarships, which can be used at any college or university in the United States. High school students under age 20 are eligible.

Speaking subjects must be on some aspect of the U.S. Constitution, with some emphasis on the duties and obligations of citizens to our government. Speeches are eight to 10 minutes long; three- to five-minute speeches on an assigned topic also are part of the contest.

The Prepared Oration

The oration must be on some aspect of the Constitution, with emphasis on a citizen's duties and obligations to our government. The same subject and oration used in the department contest must be used in the national contest.

Contestants may have a copy of their prepared oration while waiting in the first holding room. They may consult the copy until they exit to begin the contest. The copy will then be surrendered to the contest official monitoring the first holding room.

Quotations must always be indicated as such. Where quotations are more than 10 words in length, the author's name must be given in the manuscript and cited orally.

It is acceptable to utilize or incorporate short phrases in a foreign language to develop the argument, establish a point, etc. It should be understood that the vast majority of the prepared oration and/or assigned topic must still be delivered in English. Singing is not permitted and will result in immediate disqualification. The contestant may, however, quote a verse(s) of a song(s) provided proper attribution is made.

Assigned Topics

The assigned topic discourse must not consume less than three (3) minutes or more than five (5) minutes for delivery. The purpose of the assigned topic discourse is to test the speaker's knowledge of the subject, the extent of his or her research, and the ability to discuss the topic as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution.

Assigned Topics for 2015 Oratorical Contest

Amendment 5

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

Amendment 6

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining Witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Amendment 8

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment 19

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Rules and Regulations

Eligibility

Eligible participants must be citizens of or lawful permanent residents of the United States. All contestants must be bona fide students herein described as any student under the age of 20 years on the date of the national contest who is presently enrolled in a high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, private or home school). The curriculum of the school must be considered to be of high school level, commencing with grade 9 and terminating with grade 12. Students must be enrolled in high school or junior high school during the time of participation at any level of The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest. Contestants must either be legally domiciled within or attend an educational institution within the department that they enter competition. Contestants can enter competition through only one department.

High school students that graduate early during the school year are eligible to compete if they are not enrolled in a college, university, trade school or other institution of higher learning at the time of the department finals contest.

The three finalists of the national contest are ineligible for further participation at any level.

Regulations

The use of notes, amplification, lectern or speaker's stand or any manner of prompting is not permitted. Props are not permitted.

Contestants and audience members may not use any form of electronic/digital data gathering, receiving and/or transmitting equipment.

Contestants must deliver their prepared oration in no fewer than eight minutes and no more than 10 minutes. The assigned topic runs no fewer than three minutes and no more than five minutes.

What to wear

Uniforms are not permitted. Appropriate business attire is required for all contestants. Contestants may not wear awards and medals from previous competitions.

National Finals

The 2015 National Finals is April 10-12 in Indianapolis, at the Wyndham Indianapolis West Hotel, 2544 Executive Dr, Indianapolis, IN 46241. Quarterfinal and semifinal contests are scheduled for Saturday, April 11, with the finals scheduled for Sunday, April 12.

All contestants and chaperones will arrive the Friday of the contest weekend. All contestants and chaperones will stay at the official contest hotel.

A mandatory pre-contest orientation session for all contestants will take place the Friday evening of the contest weekend. A banquet honoring all contestants will be Sunday afternoon, following the national championship contest. All contestants and chaperones will depart for home later that afternoon.

State and Local Oratorical Contests

Arrangements for contests leading up to the department finals shall be the responsibility of each American Legion department.

Each department may certify one contestant to the national contest. If for any reason the department finals winner is unable to compete in the national contest, the runner-up may be substituted following approval from the National Americanism Commission. A runner-up accepted into national competition will be entitled to all national awards, entitlements and compensation that the department winner would have received had he or she participated.

Department of France Competition – TBD

Stuttgart Post 6 Competition – Tuesday, 13 Jan. 2015

For more information on the American Legion Oratorical Contest please visit the American Legion National Website at www.legion.org. Post 6 Oratorical Director: Douglas Clemence – refclemence@yahoo.de



The month of December started off with a surprise retirement party for Chris Sims, Associate Superintendent of the Flanders Field American Cemetery. Chris was honored on Wednesday, 03 Dec by friends, colleges and family. He is retiring after 40 years of service. Comrade Bill Matthys graciously provided the champagne for the event. Chris has been a great friend of the Flanders Field Post BE02 over the years and we will miss him



Members of the American Legion Post BE02 served in the US honor Guard at Bastogne, 13 December during the annual "Nuts" parade and ceremony. Our Venture Crew 511 also participated in the activities that day braving the cold and the snow.



The USAG Benelux PAO conducted a Christmas party on Wednesday, 17 December on the community center on Chievres Airbase for a group of Belgian children. Santa made time to come and present the gifts to the children. The American Legion Post BE02 and ARMAF-B contributed to the event by donating some of the Christmas gifts.



On 23 December, Commissioner James (Jim) S. Whitfield, a 70 year member of the American Legion and a Commissioner of the U.S. World War I Commission visited the Flanders Field American Cemetery. Several members of the Flanders Field Post BE02 were able to meet with Jim and speak to him about our programs and projects. He was impressed with our initiation of the Adopt-a-Grave program. Jim also took time to honor our adopted grave of an unknown soldier of WWI.



On Christmas Eve, the Commanders of Flanders Field Post BE02, Paris Post 1 and members of Venture Crew 511 took time to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Treaty of Ghent. The treaty was signed on 24 December, 1814 and ended the War of 1812 between the USA and England.



The officers and members of the Flanders Field Post BE02 would like to wish our Legion comrades a safe and happy New Year.

How to Use Military Discounts While Traveling



M by Heather Sweeney

If military families are experts on anything it's traveling. Whether we're PCS'ing cross-country, taking a road trip to visit family, or sneaking away for a post-deployment vacation, we're always on the go.

Traveling is even more fun when you find great discounts to help you out along the way. Military families also have access to benefits available to them for many of their travel needs.

There are lots of different ways to travel and lots of ways to use military discounts and benefits. What kind of traveler are you?

Travel by Air

One fun way to travel is to fly [Space Available](#) or Space A. Service members, retirees and their families can fill seats on DoD-owned or controlled aircraft that aren't filled by space-required (duty) passengers and cargo.

While this is a great way to find discounted flights, it requires more flexibility and patience than flying on commercial airlines because schedules are subject to change and, as the name implies, seats aren't always available on the flight you want.

Visit [Air Mobility Command](#) for more information on necessary documentation and terminals.

Want to stick with commercial airlines? Some airlines, like [United](#), [Southwest](#) and [US Airways](#) offer discounts to military personnel so make sure to ask about military discounts when booking your flight.

You can even use your military benefits to ease the hassle of layovers in between flights by relaxing at a USO center. USO's offer military families a place to kick back and watch tv, access the Internet, have a snack, let the kids run around in a play area, and even take a nap.

[Click here](#) to locate a USO center. Don't forget your military ID!

Travel by Land

Not a fan of flying? You can find great military discounts when traveling by land as well.

Some families prefer to pack up the car and hit the road, but if you don't want to put extra miles on your personal vehicle or travel requirements leave you longing for a larger vehicle, consider renting a car. You can find great military discounts at [Ace](#), [Alamo](#), [Avis](#), [Budget](#), [Dollar](#), [Penske](#) and [Sixt](#).

Have you always wanted to travel the open road with your family in an RV? No problem. Many MWR facilities rent campers (and you can find [military campgrounds](#) to park that camper as well). [Check with your local MWR office](#) for more details and pricing.

Want to leave the driving to someone else? Hop on a train. [Greyhound](#) and [Amtrak](#) both offer 10% military discounts on rail fare. Amtrak also shows their appreciation for our troops by allowing uniformed service members to the head of the ticket line.

Travel by Sea

Sometimes the best way to travel is by boat. A really big boat.

Cruises are fun and relaxing family vacation options. And cruise lines like [Carnival](#), [Norwegian Cruise Line](#), [Princess Cruises](#), and [Disney Cruise Line](#) all offer military discounts.

No matter what your travel method of choice is, you can always find military discounts as well as military benefits you already have. Safe travels!

Need a place to stay? [Click here](#) to learn more about military discounts on lodging.

-- Heather Sweeney can be reached at Heather.Sweeney@monster.com.

[Click here for a list of more Military.com articles about discounts.](#)

LEGION REMAINS FIRM ON IMMIGRATION

Though applauding some aspects of President Obama's executive order, National Commander Helm reiterates organization's long-standing position on the issue.

Though pleased with some aspects of President Obama's executive order regarding illegal immigration announced this evening, American Legion National Commander Michael Helm reiterated the organization's long-standing position on those who enter into and then reside in the United States illegally.

The president said that two focuses of his executive order would be increased border patrol/enforcement, and the deportation of people who threaten national security – both areas of emphasis applauded by American Legion National Commander Mike Helm.

But Helm said the Legion remains steadfast in asking that those who live in this country do so as legal, naturalized citizens.

“The American Legion opposes illegal immigration and supports legal naturalization for those from foreign lands who wish to become U.S. citizens,” Helm said. “While aspects of the president's executive order are in line with what The American Legion has repeatedly advocated, this order begs this questions: How does it affect future immigration laws, how does it ensure that the current number of illegal immigrants does not increase, and how does it address illegal immigrants who have been in the United States less than five years? And how does this order affect existing laws? Does it now fall on Congress to ratify this? These all are questions that need answered.”

Helm also questioned how immigration officials would enforce a third area of focus in the president's executive order: Getting undocumented immigrants who have lived in

the United States for more than five years and are parents of U.S. citizens or Lawful Permanent Residents to register for, and pass, criminal and national security background checks.

“While this part of the order sounds great in principle, execution is another matter,” Helm said. “How many will be willing – or even know they are required to – come forward and submit to these checks?”

The national commander said that while deporting all illegal immigrants isn't realistic, the threat of deporting individuals or specific groups can be effective. “Deportation of select groups is an option that should be executed,” he said. “Effective deportation and possible incarceration would serve as a deterrent to those considering migrating to the United States illegally in the future.”

Helm noted that more than 300 American Legion posts nationwide offered citizenship programs in 2013, helping immigrants who came to this country legally to prepare for the naturalization process. “The Legion supports regulated legal immigration into the United States so immigrants can be smoothly absorbed in society and the economy,” Helm said. “But it has always believed that a path to citizenship should be a legal one, not one laden with shortcuts that cheapen the road taken for those who followed the correct path.”

For The American Legion's full policy on immigration, go to <http://archive.legion.org/bitstream/handle/123456789/3730/2014N084.pdf?sequence=1>.

Americanism Division *December 12, 2014*

Boy Scouts of America

On Monday, December 15th, Shayne Abrahams, Assistant Director of Youth Activities, is attending the 19th Annual Governor's Luncheon for Scouting at the J.W. Marriott Hotel located in downtown Indianapolis, honoring volunteers and major supporters of the Boy Scouts of America mission.

American Legion Baseball (ALB)

On Wednesday, December 10th, American Legion National Headquarters Executive Director, Jeff Brown, drew the official pairing brackets and game schedules of the 2015 American Legion Baseball World Series. He was assisted by Program Director Mike Buss and Assistant Director Steve Cloud. The brackets and schedules will be posted on the Legion Baseball website.

Operation Comfort Warrior (OCW)

Americanism Troop & Family Support staff will be meeting with the Regimental Command Staff of the USMC Wounded Warrior Regiment on December 16th at Quantico, Virginia, and will also meet with the command staff of the U.S. Army's Warrior Transition Command on December 17th in Alexandria, Virginia, to discuss the future involvement of OCW in their upcoming events for 2015. We will meet specifically to discuss the USMC Warrior Trials and the US Army Warrior trials leading up to the overarching Warrior Games to be hosted in 2015 by the USMC.