COMMANDER’S MESSAGE

I would first like to thank Mike Walraf, Karen Himmelheber, Wellington Jose and wife Biorca (new Auxiliary member) and Gavin Wainwright for their help with last Saturday’s membership campaign. With their patriotic fervour, they recruited 10 new members to the American Legion.

We stand currently at 86% of last year’s membership. As we continually add new members to our ranks we must also remember our current comrades and encourage them to maintain their membership. To our misfortune, each year we lose a significant number of our members PSC or retirement. We must assist these members when they return back to the states to seek out a new Legion post.

The school year is almost upon us and this means visiting schools and distributing information on our Oratorical Scholarship Contest. I am hoping that we can endeavours to persuade more of the high school students to participate in our program. In addition, we will be hosting the 2016 Department of France’s Oratorical Contest sometime in February.

At lot of effort has been used to prepare for the upcoming Adopter Appreciation Day event. If you can help on that day, please do so. I look forward to seeing everyone there.

SHAPE FEST

The American Legion Post BE02 will be conducting an Information Table / Membership Table at SHAPE Fest on Saturday & Sunday, 3-4 September. If you can help, it would be greatly appreciative. Our major focus is to disseminate information regard the 2016 Oratorical Contest, 2016 Boys State/ Girls State and Voting Assistance.

Let’s Make a Difference in our Community
Independence Day Celebration in Brussels

On the 4th of July, the Flanders Field Legion Riders and Auxiliary chapter provided served traditional American fare in Brussels, bringing a taste of home to U.S. military families and civilians living there. The effort was led by Legion Rider President Paul Dunn and Auxiliary President Ruth Alvarez.

ADOPTER APPRECIATION DAY

The Adopter Appreciation Day is a continuation of our Adopt-a-Grave program. We will need help from as many members as possible to make this event a success. Let me know as soon as possible if you can help. In addition, if you want to participate in the BBQ follow the directions below. We also have activities for the children (face painting, etc).

Our goal is to commemorate the day and give appreciation to our adopters by conducting an American style BBQ. The main entrées will be either Chicken or Ribs and will include an order of Baked Beans, Cole Slaw and greens. The portions are large enough that one plate can be shared by two children. If you wish to reserve a meal for yourself and your family at the American BBQ, please transfer €15,00 to the flowing account: BE85 3775 1152 6406. Ensure you include your name(s) and your choice of either chicken or ribs on the transfer. The deadline for reserving a meal is 10 August. If you are a vegetarian, please contact the American Legion at: flanders.fields.post.be02@gmail.com so that we can accommodate your vegetarian wishes.

Schedule of Ceremony: Saturday, 22 August

09:00 Rehearsal
09:00 (10:30) Start calling of the names of the soldier’s buried at the cemetery
10:50 First call to start ceremony

Second call to start ceremony

Ceremony

1. Introductions & welcome to adopters
2. Introduction of VIPs
3. Chaplains prayer
4. Posting of the colours (USA & Belgian)
5. National Anthems (Belgian then USA)
6. Poem read by Catherine Herman
7. Bagpiper – Amazing Grace
8. Speeches
   (1) Superintendent Arsenault
   (2) Mayor Kurt Vanryckegehm
   (3) Embassy Representative
9. Placing of Flowers at the American Legion Unknown Grave (D-4-22) Representatives from: American Legion / Sons of the American Legion / Auxiliary & the Legion Riders
10. Taps
11. Introduction of New Adopters & Presentation of Certificates of Adoption
12. Conclusion of Ceremony
13. American BBQ at the park

4th of July Celebration

Independence Day Celebration in Brussels
**THE AMERICAN LEGION AS A VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION**

Veterans needing assistance with benefits and programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and other military-related matters, often turn to The American Legion for help. The Post Service Officer (PSO) is often the initial contact between The American Legion and the veteran. The purpose of the PSO is to be an initial point of contact regarding veteran issues by providing veterans in the community where the post is located with basic information and assistance, including referral as directed by the Department Service Officer (DSO).

Given the complexity and broad range of rules that govern VA benefits, it is critically important for the PSO to work with the professional American Legion DSO and ensure any paperwork submitted by the veteran is forwarded to the DSO in a timely manner.

Disability Compensation is a tax free monetary benefit paid to Veterans with disabilities that are the result of a disease or injury incurred or aggravated during active military service. Compensation may also be paid for post-service disabilities that are considered related or secondary to disabilities occurring in service and for disabilities presumed to be related to circumstances of military service, even though they may arise after service. Generally, the degrees of disability specified are also designed to compensate for considerable loss of working time from exacerbations or illnesses.

It is to your advantage to submit your disability compensation claim prior to separation, retirement, or release from active duty or demobilization. Processing times tend to be much shorter for claims submitted pre-discharge than after discharge. Pre-discharge programs provide Servicemembers with the opportunity to file claims for disability compensation up to 180 days prior to separation or retirement from active duty or full-time National Guard or Reserve duty. (Titles 10 and 32)
New Member for the Month of July:

We had 14 new members join during the month of July/August. Let's welcome our newest members:

- Jacob Marlin
- Martin Vannatter
- Daniel Kuhlman
- Derrick Hood
- Radoslaw Russek
- Matt Schroeder
- Tim England
- Keith Houin
- James Burrill
- Timothy S. Bennet
- John W. Lamb
- Kimberly Pittman
- Ashanti Stewart
- William Audretsch

Farewells:

Our friends and comrades have moved back (PSCs) to the United State for new adventures

- Joseph Gross

B-24 LIBERATOR "PALE ALE" CEREMONY

On Saturday, July 25, 2015 at the farm Beauvolers in Dergneau, Belgium, a ceremony was conducted in honor of Lieutenant Ferdinand M. Kjar and his crew of the B-24 Liberator "Pale Ale" who were shot down in Dergneau on February 20, 1945. In attendance at the ceremony were his daughter Joanne and his granddaughters. Flanders Field Post BE02 was represented at a ceremony by Commander Schram.
**UNIFORM CAP**

I was informed that the name “FRANCE” is the only name that can be used on our Legion Cap

To order your American Legion Official Cap, please follow the directions below.

http://emblem.legion.org/uniform_caps/legion.asp

Step 1: Please select your Department: France

Step 2: Please select your style: State

Please select your lining: unlined

Step 3: Please select your crown: Regular or Fort Knox (your choice)

Step 4: Please select your cap size: ______

Step 5: Left-side lettering: FRANCE

Step 6: Please enter your post number: BE02

Step 7: Check here if you want to add right-side lettering: FLANDERS FIELD (this is optional and your choice)

**SUBMIT**

**Flanders Field Post BE02 “Get Out the Vote” Campaign**

Elections are important to our republic and each year local, state and national elections dot the landscape. As Americans, it is our duty and responsibility to exercise this right by casting our ballots and encouraging others to do so as well. It was on this premise that The American Legion’s “Get Out the Vote” program was initiated shortly after the organization’s inception. It remains just as important today as in elections past.

All Legionnaires are encouraged to renew their commitment for continued service to this country by being politically active as individuals. By working together as an organization we can make a difference by promoting an informed populace, participation in our government, and involvement in its electoral process. We cannot forget that in this country, our government is “of the people, by the people and for the people.” It cannot survive as a democratic republic unless the people participate. That is our task.

Flanders Field Post BE02 will be providing assistance to our overseas voters during our membership drives and information tables.

Voting Assistance Officers (VAOs) ensure that citizens covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) understand their voting rights and how to register and vote absentee and provide accurate nonpartisan voting information and assistance. Members of the American can participate as VAOs.

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) provides online training modules that allow for you to complete training at your own pace. The training covers VAO responsibilities, describes the absentee voting process, and the resources available to conduct a successful voting assistance program. The training explains how to complete the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB).

DoD Instruction 1000.04 requires all VAOs to complete either a FVAP/Service-provided workshop or the online training available below. Upon completion VAOs will receive a certificate of completion that should be placed in their VAO continuity folder.

http://www.fvaptraining.com/FVAPTraining/
Donation from SHAPE Harley Club

The members of Flanders Field Post BE02 would like to thank Philip Thornton and the SHAPE Harley Club for their monetary donation to the Orphanage Christmas event scheduled for 16 December at Chiévres Airbase

LINKS

American Legion Post BE02 Website:  
https://sites.google.com/site/americanlegionpostbe02/home

Flanders Field Post BE02 Facebook page:  
www.facebook.com/pages/American-Legion-Flanders-Fields-Post-BE02/152286224925159

American Legion Riders - Flanders Field Chapter BE02 Facebook page:  
https://www.facebook.com/legionridersflandersbe02

Flickr account: (Pictures of Post BE02 events)  
https://www.flickr.com/photos/130086797@N08/sets/

Adopt-a-Grave program’s website:  
http://www.sitemn.gr/adoptagraveflandersfield/HOMECONTACT.php

The American Legion Centennial Celebration  
http://centennial.legion.org/

Event Calendar: August 2015

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<td>27 Back to School Social—BAS</td>
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Important Dates to Remember

Saturday, 22 August: Adopter Appreciation Day at the Flanders Field American Cemetery, 11:00 and American BBQ, 12:00

Saturday/Sunday, 3/4 September: SHAPE Fest

Saturday, 03 October: Retiree Appreciation Day