A word from the Commander...

I welcome our newest new members: Eric Haynie, Larry Haynie, Tony Pater, Mike Baines, William Moxham, and Stan Bielawski. By joining our Post, this past month, you pushed the Post to exceed the Department membership goals and are now part of a lively and active Post. I encourage you all to share your experience and insight towards our programs and reaching our Post goals. While we are spread out among the many provinces of Thailand, we needn't be out of touch with each other. Join our committees to the extent that you can. Most committees meet via video conference once or twice a month. Think outside of the box and let's take care of the business at hand. Let's keep our growing network of veterans strong.

I. STATE OF THE POST

A. Elections
Nominations for Post Officer positions will be accepted up until the vote, which will occur at the next Post general meeting, on April 12, 2023. I encourage everyone to look at contributing as a Post officer. The Post cannot do without your participation. We can look forward to having another strong team of officers going into this new year and doing meaningful things for the veterans and community.

B. Activities Committee
We have been super-active and have accomplished many things. We raised and donated money for the Tawanchai Foundation, donated funds and participated in the Ubon Flood Relief operation, provided assistance to widows of veterans and other Americans, and participated in Wing 21 Children's Day and Ubon Remembrance Day. We also held Independence Day and Thanksgiving parties with our families and comrades. I hope that we can keep up this pace and bring in new members to help.

C. Communications Committee
In the last year and a half, our communications outlets have grown from a high-quality newsletter and Facebook page to add a new Post website, as well as Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube pages. We also added a Google Business Profile (formerly, Google My Business) and an official Google Maps pin, so our Post is locatable in all search engines. Additionally, we setup a Google Suite account for the Post, allowing us to obtain unique email addresses to distribute official Post information accurately and quickly, alleviating having to use personal emails for Post business. We have reached many people through these channels, and they will grow exponentially, over the next few years, due in no small part to the efforts of our committee members and the webmasters, Chris Lampert and Joe Reedy.
D. American Legion Riders (ALR)
Our Post ALR completed its 2nd annual charity event: the Chiang Mai Toy Ride, where they recruited 2 new riders.

E. Membership Committee
We have the best membership stats in the Department, this year. We gained 5 members in February, reaching the goal of 102%

F. Finance
Our audits are error-free, and we had a seamless change of financial institutions. We now have a primary and an alternate finance officer that is keeping us in the black.

G. Adjutant
Kudos to our hard-working adjutant for keeping the Post reports, records, and meeting minutes up to date and organized. Post Adjutant, Jeff Ludwig, is a very capable and organized person and invaluable to the success of our Post. We owe him our gratitude and thanks for the many years he has devoted to seeing that we run properly. I thank him, profusely.

H. Graves and Memorials
We sadly say farewell to our departed comrade, Tony Francois. Tony was with the Post from the beginning and eventually moved from Ubon to Pattaya, where he continued to be a member of our Post. His death in Pattaya, on March 8, was unexpected, and we appreciate Post TH02 for rendering immediate support to his family and us. RIP, Comrade.

As befitting a fallen comrade, we are planning to hold a ceremony for the charter member, Richard Lee Montgomery, this Memorial Day, at the temple where his remains are interred. Due to the Covid-19 medical protocols, Lee's family and the Post were not permitted to hold a proper funeral ceremony for him, and we intend to make up for it now. I would like all available members to report in uniform for his funeral detail at 1000 hours on May 29, 2023. At this memorial event, we will present a bronze grave marker and affix it to his grave. The location will be Wat Ban Sadao in Yasothon. I will send out this message again in May to confirm with everyone.

II. GOALS
A. Fundraising
We must be creative in our fundraising efforts to be able to assist the community, veterans, and their families. Most of our funds come from membership dues, the 50/50 raffle at our meetings, and personal donations. Please, consider donating to our Relief Fund, and ask your friends to donate as well. Give us your ideas on how we can raise funds for our mission.

We are making the Tawanchai Foundation our signature recipient of sponsorship, in partnership with VFW Post 10217. It is a very worthwhile organization and a major factor for good in the Thai community. Our present Post TH01 goal is to donate $1,000 each year. Please, donate generously and come out to represent the Post at the presentation ceremony, on April 20, 2023, in Khon Kaen.

B. Buddy Checks
While brainstorming with our Legion Riders President, it seems like an interesting and fun joint project could be done with the Legion Riders and the Post members-at-large. I’m talking about buddy checks. Many of our outlying members are getting phone calls and emails from us but many have never seen our Post comrades face-to-face. I would like to have the ALR and Members-at-Large study the feasibility of creating a ride to visit these members and have a friendly visit with them. The ALR could check to make sure that our Post members are doing well and to let them know that they’re valuable to us and the community. What’s more, the outlying members might be able to refer a few prospective members in their area. Why waste a trip? Doing a Buddy Check, Legion Ride, and membership drive all at once seems like something very productive and fun that we can do to raise esprit de corps.

I’m excited to be a part of this Post and looking forward to a new and challenging year.

III. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER
A. Taxes
Tax Season is upon us, and we are reminded to not only file our tax forms, but those living overseas must file our FBAR as well (https://bsaefiling.fincen.treas.gov/main.html). For those that need help, please contact the Commander or Adjutant for assistance. The deadline for those members living in Thailand is June 15, 2023.

If you think that you don’t need to file a tax form, remember that certain government issues could complicate your life if you don’t. For one, if you are applying for a spouse to go to the US and a statement of support is needed, you may need to provide the past three years of tax returns as evidence. Also, many remember that the initial payments for Covid-19 relief were issued by information on tax returns filed for the previous year.

Bruce A. Templeman
Commander
American Legion Post TH01
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand
USEFUL INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

NEW POST TH01 EMAILS

Post officers will cease using personal email addresses to conduct the business of the Post. Thank you, for helping us grow and become more organizationally efficient. Help the Post out by updating your email address books with the following addresses:

Post Commander – For General Matters
commander@americanlegionthailand.com

Post Adjutant – For Specific Administrative Matters
adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com

Post 1st Vice Commander – For all Membership Matters, Including New Applications & Renewals
1vice@americanlegionthailand.com

Post 2nd Vice Commander – For all Events & Activities, Marketing, and Sponsorship Matters
2vice@americanlegionthailand.com

Post Judge Advocate – For all Communications, Website, and Social Media Technical Support Matters
comms@americanlegionthailand.com

HERE ARE THE RULES ABOUT VAPING IN THAILAND

“The Thai Government introduced a ban on electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes or ‘vaping’), shisha smoking, and electronic shishas in 2014, for “health reasons and to discourage young people from starting to smoke”. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is reminding visitors to the country about this ban, which is part of the Tobacco Control Law, and the law prohibiting smoking in public areas.”


MESSAGE FOR U.S. CITIZENS IN THAILAND (22 JUNE 2022)
RECREATIONAL USE OF MARIJUANA IN PUBLIC IS ILLEGAL IN THAILAND

“Thailand made marijuana legal for medical purposes on June 9, 2022. However, according to a health directive announced in the Royal Gazette on June 14, anyone smoking cannabis and hemp in public for recreational purposes shall face imprisonment of up to three months or a fine of up to 25,000 baht if they cause a public nuisance or pose health hazards to others.”


CONSUMING CANNABIS IN THAILAND: WHAT TOURISTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MARIJUANA RULES

“After easing the ban on the recreational drug, Thailand has created a ‘weed Wild West’ with confusing rules. So, what are tourists allowed to do?”

HOLIDAYS & EVENTS CALENDAR

01 April
April Fools’ Day
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/April_Fools%27_Day

02 April
Palm Sunday
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palm_Sunday

05-12 April
Passover
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passover

06 April
Chakri Memorial Day (Thailand)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chakri_dynasty

07 April
Good Friday
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Good_Friday

09 April
Easter Sunday
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easter

10 April
Easter Monday
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easter_Monday

12 April
American Legion Post TH01 Membership Monthly Meeting

13-17 April
Songkran (Thailand)

18 April
Tax Day
Greetings Comrades,

The American Legion declares April as Youth and Children Month. The leadership encourages all members to embrace and support this theme by promoting youth and children programs in our Post and local communities. We can show our commitment by supporting and donating to the Tawanchai Foundation. The Tawanchai Foundation provides corrective surgery for children with cleft lips and palates. This month, we will travel to Khon Kaen to donate to this worthy cause. We encourage all who can join us in presenting the Post donation. This month is also a great time to visit small schools and orphanages in your area and see how we can help them, like providing needed school supplies to disadvantage children. Bring your ideas to our Activities Chairman, John Skabry.

April is also time for electing the Post officers for the coming year. Nominations are open and will remain open until the April meeting. I strongly encourage you to self-nominate yourself for any position that interests you. Contact me, anytime, and let me know what position(s) interest you. In addition to the officer positions, we have several committees that need members. Let me know what committees you are interested in serving on. We need your new ideas and perspectives. You can help the Post grow and meet the changes presented in the 4 pillars of the American legion.

I am almost complete in validating members’ addresses. A big thank you, to those who have replied with their current address. If your address is correct, you should be getting your Legion magazine, each month. If you are not getting your magazine, contact me, and we can go over your address on file and make any necessary changes.

Finally, I would sadly like to bid farewell to Tony Francois, who recently transferred to Post Everlasting. We will miss you, big guy.

Jeff Ludwig
Adjutant & Finance Officer
American Legion Post TH01
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand
This month, I would like to talk tire safety. I did this article a few years back, but it is worth revisiting. Back then, one of our members had a single severe car accident when a tire blew out, and his car left the road.

I was fortunate not to suffer the same fate. While I was at the gas station, I decided to check the air in my tires. As I was adding air to my front tire, I picked at the tread and, to my surprise, a chunk of the tread came off. The rubber was dry-rotted. I decided to check all the tires and was shocked to find all 4 tires were seriously defective. The two rear tires had rubber separating inside the tread groove, and the front tires were varying degrees of dry rot. I had plenty of tread still on the tires which is why I didn't examine them as closely as I should have. I was fortunate that I discovered my tires' condition in time. I immediately went to the tire store and purchased 4 new tires.

What happened is not all that rare. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in the year 2017, there were a total of 738 fatalities in tire-related accidents in the USA, and that figure is expected to climb, in the coming years. Most could have been prevented if the tires were inspected and replaced.

Many of you follow these easy T.I.R.E. tips: tread depth, inflation pressure, rotation, and education.

1. Regularly check the tire tread depth. Tread depth refers to the amount of tread on a tire, which can impact handling, traction, and stopping distance, especially on wet roads. Most new car tires start with 11/32 inches of tread. If your tires don't have at least 2/32 inches, it's time to replace them. Use the "penny test" by sticking a penny upside-down in a tread groove. If Lincoln's entire head is visible, your tread is worn beyond the legal minimum requirement, and it's time to replace your tires.

2. Check your tire inflation pressure at least once a month to make sure they are at the appropriate inflation pressure. Low tire pressure leads to decreased steering and braking control, poor gas mileage, excessive tire wear, and the possibility of tire failure. Temperature changes affect tire pressure. For every 10 degrees of temperature change, tire air pressure changes 1 PSI (pound per square inch).

3. To increase tread life and smooth out your ride, tire rotation 6,000 miles or earlier should be done if irregular or uneven wear develops.

4. You have done your safety check, and you are safe to go because you just purchased new tires. Well, not, necessarily. Did you know that tires can expire before ever hitting the road? Well, they can! When you get new tires, a quick education on the tire products you are buying can not only save lives, but it can help make sure you comply with tire laws.

According to Tire Safety Group (TSG), tires expire in six years. That is six years from the date of manufacture. Older tires are substantially more likely to fail than newer ones. This is because tires are made mostly of rubber, and rubber degrades with age. Sunlight, heat, ice, and general wear and tear can accelerate the breakdown of a tire. Once a tire begins to breakdown, it becomes more likely to fail in the form of tread separation, often at highway speeds, when the failure is most likely to cause catastrophic injuries or death.

Tires age dangerously because of a chemical process commonly referred to as oxidation, which simply means that as the tire components are exposed to oxygen, the oxygen particles cause the flexible components of a tire to harden and become brittle. Over time, the tire will simply fall apart under normal stress, just like an old rubber
band. Because this process occurs naturally, it does not matter if a tire is being used, stored as a spare, or simply waiting on a store shelf for an unsuspecting consumer.

Tire aging is a “hidden hazard,” because most consumers don’t know that tires expire in six years. A 2006 survey showed that only 4% of consumers are aware that tires become more dangerous as they age. Also, it is difficult for most consumers to tell how old a tire is without deciphering an 11-digit code that is imprinted on the side of the tire. Fortunately, you can crack the code on the side of a tire to determine a tire’s actual age. Federal rules mandate that the tire’s D.O.T. code be branded or etched on the side of each tire. For most tires, the D.O.T. number is typically 11 digits. If the tire has only 10 digits, the tire was manufactured before the year 2000.

**In the USA.** A current D.O.T. number looks like this for a tire made in the USA in the fifth week of 2011 – the D.O.T. 11-digit number Deciphered:

```
DOT ATIL2 UMWA 0511
```

The date code follows the 'WWYY' format, with the first two numbers representing the week of manufacture, and the last two numbers indicating the year:

```
WEEK OF MANUFACTURE
YEAR OF MANUFACTURE
```

**In Thailand.** The date code follows the 'WWYY' format, with the first two numbers representing the week of manufacture, and the last two numbers indicating the year:

```
WEEK OF MANUFACTURE
YEAR OF MANUFACTURE
```

Stay educated on your tires, and what you need to do to keep them safe. Drivers unsure of the condition of their tires should consult the experts at your local tire shop. Inspect your spare, and make sure it is in good condition.

The date code follows the 'WWYY' format, with the first two numbers representing the week of manufacture, and the last two numbers indicating the year.
Greetings fellow legionnaires,

Some of you that are federal or state retirees drawing Social Security have found that the payments you are receiving from Social Security don't quite come to what you thought you might be entitled to. If you are also receiving other benefits from a federal or state retirement, as you know, your benefits for Social Security are very low.

There is a bill introduced in congress that would eliminate this provision. The bill is looking to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

This bill repeals the government pension offset provisions that reduce Social Security benefits for individuals who receive other benefits, such as a pension from a state or local government. It also eliminates the government pension offset, which in various instances reduces Social Security benefits for spouses, widows, and widowers who also receive government pensions of their own.

The bill eliminates the windfall elimination provision, which in some instances reduces Social Security benefits for individuals who also receive a pension or disability benefit from an employer that did not withhold Social Security taxes, too.

The bill, HR 82, was introduced in congress by Congressman Garret Graves from Louisiana’s 6th congressional district. It has 197 co-sponsors. If passed, it will become effected after December 2021.

I'm thinking this bill does not have a good chance of passing, but you never know. If this affects you, write your congressman and let him or her know about it.

Ted Potyrala
1st Vice Commander, Historian, and Membership Committee Chairman
America Legion Post TH01
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand
April is the American Legion Youth and Children month. It is the fourth pillar of the American Legion. Last year, Post TH01 took this to heart by adopting the Tawanchai Foundation for Cleft Lip, Cleft Palate, and Craniofacial Deformities (TFC). TFC is dedicated to helping families with children born with a cleft lip, cleft palate, and other congenital deformities of the face and head.

A few meetings ago, we set a goal of raising 45,000 baht ($1,307) for this year's donation. Our friends from the VFW Post 10217 in Korat have generously donated 35,000 baht ($1,000). This is a separate donation from ours. The two donations combined equal 80,000 baht ($2,323). I am very pleased. Any donations above our goal of 45,000 baht will go towards next year's donation.

These families have no money and no insurance. Without the TFC, this is how these children would grow up.

Tawanchai Foundation does not charge a single satang (dime) for their healthcare services and always provides treatment, counseling, transportation, and follow-up care through 21 years of age. Fixing these deformities gives these children a shot at a normal life.

Americans are a caring people, and so are the citizens of other countries. We have received donations from Canadians and Europeans across multiple countries, so please find it in your heart to help these children. Every little bit helps more than you realize.

[LOOK AT THIS PHOTO]

These children were born with a deformity that puts them at a great disadvantage in life. These are relatively mild compared to somewhere their cleft goes through their lip and onto their palate. In the US, this can be easily treated, but this isn't the US.

1. IN THE US, DONATIONS CAN BE SENT TO

A. POST TH01 BANKING INFO.
1. Financial Institution: First Command Bank
2. Account Name: American Legion Thailand Post TH01
3. Account Number: 557-9-818
5. SWIFT Code: NONE

Because of Thai banking regulations, we cannot have an organizational bank account in Thailand. Several options are available for donating in Thailand. First, you can bring your donation to our next Post monthly membership meeting or give it to someone that is coming to the meeting. Second, you can give or send us a bank draft from a Thai bank made out to our commander, Bruce Templeman. Third, you can always donate directly to the Tawanchai Foundation. The Post’s mailing address and TFC banking information are below.
II. IN THAILAND, DONATIONS CAN BE SENT TO

A. POST MAILING ADDRESS
American Legion Post TH01
Wanarom Post Office
P.O. Box 41
Ubon Ratchathani 34003 Thailand

B. TAWANCHAI FOUNDATION BANKING INFO.
1. Financial Institution: Siam Commercial Bank
2. Account Name: Tawanchai Foundation
3. Account Number: 551-4-12873-0
4. Routing Number: 1220-3767-6
5. SWIFT Code: KASITHBK

If you choose to donate directly to Tawanchai, let the Post Commander, Bruce Templeman, Adjutant/Finance Officer, Jeff Ludwig, or I know, so we can track the number of donations from our Post. Each of you will be given a certificate for your taxes.

If you would like to learn more about the Tawanchai Foundation, you can go to https://www.tawanchai-foundation.org and translate it into English. You can read all about the foundation and the healthcare services they provide.

Excerpts from…

Photos from the Tawanchai Foundation and AL Post TH01
HISTORY ARTICLE

BATAAN DEATH MARCH

Shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Japanese began their invasion of the Philippines. The American and Filipino defenders fought off the Japanese, but when Manila fell, they were forced to retreat to the Bataan Peninsula.

Despite a lack of air and naval support, they put up a good fight, but by April 9, suffering from disease and a lack of food to the point of starvation, Major General Edward King, Jr. was forced to surrender approximately 75,000 troops.

The Japanese soldiers were not known for showing kindness, and the American and Filipino prisoners found out quickly that this was true. There was an order put out by the Japanese War Ministry that stated, “Whether they are destroyed individually or in a group, and whether it is accomplished using bombings, poisonous smoke, poison, drownings, or decapitation, dispose of them as the situation dictates. It is the aim of not to allow the escape of a single one, to annihilate them all, and not to leave any trace.” That kind of says it all.

These men were in terrible shape, to begin with. They were rounded up into groups of 100 and were forced marched 65 miles to a POW camp. It took 5 days for a group to complete. Along the way, there were random beatings, starvation, and a lack of water, shelter, or basic first aid supplies. If they stumbled and fell, they were most likely to be bayoneted. Many soldiers carried the ones that couldn’t walk.

The Department of Veteran Affairs estimates that 650 Americans and 16,500 Filipinos were killed during and after the march.

General Douglas MacArthur, who promised to return to the Philippines, made good on his promise and returned to recapture the Bataan Peninsula.

After the war, an American military tribunal tried Lieutenant General Homma Masaharu, commander of the Japanese invasion forces in the Philippines. He was held responsible for the death march, a war crime, and was executed by firing squad, on April 3, 1946.

Major General Edward King, Jr. was the Commanding General of Filipino-American Forces. He was ordered by MacArthur and Wainwright to not surrender but took full responsibility and surrendered. He was held as a POW for three and a half years, being mistreated because of his rank. After the war, MacArthur and Wainwright both expected him to be courts martialed for disobeying an order, but when he returned home, he and the other POWs were treated as heroes.

Excerpts from...
https://www.history.com
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Photos from the web
APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Robert Brill
Bruce Bull
Gerald Churchill
William Rutherford
Salvatore Salzarulo
Edward Sostack

SERVICE OFFICER’S MESSAGE

Greetings Comrades,

FBU Manila has an online inquiry form that they would like everyone to use rather than send them an email. I can attest to the efficiency and speed with which the staff at FBU has answered my inquiries. I suggest everyone use this instead of costly phone calls and unanswered emails. I suggest that all Americans in Thailand take the time to ask FBU Manila to help review their benefits and find out how living overseas will benefit your family.

MAKE SURE TO BOOKMARK THIS LINK IN YOUR WEB BROWSER:

https://ph.usembassy.gov/services/fbu-inquiry-form/

Service Officer
American Legion Post TH01
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand
CLICK THE FOLLOWING LINKS FOR POST TH01…

**WEBSITE**
https://americanlegionthailand.com

**Facebook**
https://www.facebook.com/americanlegionthailandpostth01

**Twitter**
https://twitter.com/Post_TH01

**Instagram**
https://www.instagram.com/post_th01/

**YouTube**
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC74pEhMUqz5KmGcs7RMEXyA

**ASEAN Now**
https://aseannow.com/profile/277159-american-legion-post-th01/