

# THE AMERICAN LEGION AT UBON RATCHATHANI, THAILAND



BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBIN OLDS

POST NUMBER TH01

POST MEETING: 2<sup>ND</sup> WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH, AT 10:00 A.M.  
POST LOCATION: PEPPERS RESTAURANT AND BAKERY



DECEMBER 2023

POST EMAIL: [COMMANDER@AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM](mailto:COMMANDER@AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM)

VOL. 6, ISSUE 10

## LINKS CONCERNING ISSUES OF GENERAL EXPAT INTEREST IN THAILAND

US DOLLAR TO THAI BAHT EXCHANGE RATE (AS OF 30/12/23)

**\$1.00 U.S.D.:34.26 TH.B.**

<https://www.x-rates.com/calculator/?from=USD&to=THB&amount=1>



## POST COMMANDER'S COMMENTS...*BRUCE TEMPLEMAN*

A word from the Commander...

The year is finally drawing to a close. Happy Holidays to all and may the New Year bring us closer together.

I would like to recognize all of the new Comrades that have joined us this year. I welcome you all and want you to make the most of our association by communicating with each other for mutual benefit.

**Baines, Michael**  
**Ben-Yehuda, Paul**  
**Brown, Hoyet L**  
**Davis, Rob**  
**Haynie, Eric**  
**Heimler, Thomas**  
**Moxham, Bill**  
**Zamarripa, Jesus**

**Barker, Robin**  
**Bielawski, Stanley**  
**Cook, Mike**  
**Glover, Kevin**  
**Haynie, Larry**  
**Jortner, Wayne**  
**Pater, Tony**

This is a testament to the hard work that all of the members have done to get the word out about our Post and to the leadership of our membership

chair, 1st Vice Commander Ted Potyrala. We are growing by leaps and bounds, connecting the US military veteran community all across the Kingdom of Thailand. I would hope that each of our new members will look to find their place in serving as a Post Officer to lead us into a more prosperous future.

Our purpose is to honor our veterans, serve our veterans, and recruit our veterans to help with the work we do. Many hands make light work and fresh approaches to old problems will serve us well.

I bid farewell to Comrade Loyd Garmany and his wife Janny. They left for the USA on 13 November to start their new life in Fresno, California where Loyd has a sister. Loyd will be better served by the VA hospital there. As a US Marine mortarman during the Vietnam War, he certainly deserves it. He is still our Comrade and I wish him well. We will keep in touch. Semper Fi..

I will take this opportunity to introduce our new Post Service Officer, Larry Haynie. Larry

volunteered to take on this position from his home in Sukothai and we should stand ready to assist him if he should ask. He may need one of us to run a local errand or look in on a veteran living near us. He has worked as a Post Service Officer in the past and will serve us well. .Our service to veterans is a major feature of our organization so we must all participate to the extent that we can.

The Post Executive Committee has elected an interim Chaplain, Rob Davis. He will be managing the Graves Registration and Memorials Program as well as overseeing the Overseas Graves Trust program. Honoring our fallen warriors is the mark of a truly great military organization.I thank him for taking on this important post.

**"When we have achievements that are based on theirs; We remember them. For as long as we live, they too will live, for they are now a part of us as, We remember them.."** - An excerpt from "We Remember Them" by Sylvan Kamens and Rabbi Jack Reimer

The Remembrance Day ceremony went well. Our group was well received and I met several interesting people, one who was a Thai soldier that served with the US troops in the Korean conflict. He is truly someone that has a story to be told. This brings to mind that Post THo1 members must make time to interview with Comrade Billy Holland and tell your story. We are history in the making.

This coming year will be a fulfilling one for all those that wish to participate. If you can't participate physically, you can still participate by attending meetings online and by sending us comments, ideas, and encouragement via email. We're all one team. Let's move forward!

Bruce A. Templeman  
Commander  
American Legion Post THo1  
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand

## USEFUL INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

### NEW POST THo1 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](mailto:commander@americanlegionthailand.com)

**Post Adjutant and Finance Officer – For Specific Administrative and Capital Finance Matters**  
[adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com)

**Post 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander – For all Memberships, Including New Applications and Renewals, Charity Donations, and Historical Matters**  
[1vice@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:1vice@americanlegionthailand.com)

**Post 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander – For all Events and Activities, Marketing, Sponsorship, and Our Legion Riders Matters**  
[2vice@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:2vice@americanlegionthailand.com)

**Communication Center – For all Public Affairs, I.T. Support, and Online Presence Matters: Website, Email, and Social Media Management**  
**[comms@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto: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.”

**<https://phuket-go.com/phuket-news/national-news/here-are-the-rules-about-vaping-in-thailand/>**

### **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.”

**<https://th.usembassy.gov/message-for-u-s-citizens-in-thailand-june-22-2022/>**

### **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?”

**<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/jan/10/consuming-cannabis-in-thailand-what-tourists-need-to-know-marijuana-weed-rules>**

## POST HOLIDAYS AND EVENTS CALENDAR

05 December

**King Bhumibol's Birthday/Father's Day (Thailand)**  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhumibol\\_Adulyadej](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhumibol_Adulyadej)

10 December

**Constitution Day (Thailand)**  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution\\_of\\_Thailand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Thailand)

11 December

**Substitution Day for Constitution Day (Thailand)**  
<https://www.thailandnow.in.th/event/thailands-constitution-day/>

13 December

**United States National Guard Birthday**  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_Guard\\_\(United\\_States\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Guard_(United_States))

20 December

**American Legion Post TH01 Membership Monthly Meeting**

24 December

**Christmas Eve**  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas\\_Eve](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_Eve)

25 December

**Christmas Day**  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas>

29 December

**New Year Special Public Holiday (Thailand)**  
<https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2670388>

31 December

**New Year's Eve**  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Year%27s\\_Eve](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Year%27s_Eve)

## POST TH01 OFFICERS 2023 MEMBERSHIP YEAR

COMMANDER – Bruce Templeman  
[commander@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:commander@americanlegionthailand.com)

1<sup>st</sup> VICE COMMANDER & HISTORIAN – Ted Potyrala  
[1vice@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:1vice@americanlegionthailand.com)

2<sup>nd</sup> VICE COMMANDER – John Skabry  
[2vice@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:2vice@americanlegionthailand.com)

ADJUTANT & FINANCE OFFICER – Jeff Ludwig  
[adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com)

SERVICE OFFICER – Larry Haynie  
[larryjoedog@yahoo.com](mailto:larryjoedog@yahoo.com)

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS – Sal Salzarulo  
[salzy48@hotmail.com](mailto:salzy48@hotmail.com)

JUDGE ADVOCATE – Paul Ben-Yehuda  
[renegademarine@icloud.com](mailto:renegademarine@icloud.com)

CHAPLAIN – Rob Davis  
[robdavis19@outlook.com](mailto:robdavis19@outlook.com)

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER – Chris Lampert  
[comms@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:comms@americanlegionthailand.com)

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Billy Holland  
[billybholland@gmail.com](mailto:billybholland@gmail.com)

MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Michael Baines  
[mkbaines1@gmail.com](mailto:mkbaines1@gmail.com)

MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Michael Cook  
[mcook4464@gmail.com](mailto:mcook4464@gmail.com)



## ADJUTANT'S CORNER...JEFF LUDWIG

Greetings Comrades,

First, let wish you all a very merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year. What a memorable year it has been. We faced many challenges. One of our continuing challenges was trying to improve the quality of our video conferencing. Many of you join our meetings virtually. So it has been a challenge to improve on the quality. Fortunately, one new member Mike Cook took up the challenge and found a robust all in one video conferencing system that vastly improved the quality of our video conferencing. We tested it at the November Membership meeting. Now we are sending our results to you our members to approve or disapprove of purchasing the system.

This year we looked for ways to increase our contribution with the Tawanchai Foundation. We were able to partner with the Korat VFW Post 10217 doubling the contribution to that worthy cause.

Our membership program archived a new high when we took most of the Department membership awards. Here are a few we achieved this past year: First Post to achieve 100% Department Goal, Small Post Over the Top Winner TH01, Post Target Date Award TH01, and 100 Membership Chairman Award TH01, The Membership committee and Committee Chairperson Ted Potyrala worked tirelessly to make it happen. Thank you for your great efforts. Through their efforts we gained new members who will undoubtedly contribute to the Post and push us to the next level.

The coming year promises to present new challenges that I am confident we can meet and overcome. Strength in Numbers.

It is the end of the year and a great time to validate your contact information that we have on record. During a recent Buddy Check we discovered members with outdated contact information. We really need to ensure we have your current contact information so if there is an emergency, we can contact you or a family member. Also, it is a good idea to have an alternate contact person. In the coming weeks I will try to contact each of you to validate your contact information. It would help if you can validate your information and let me know if it is correct or provide me with the current address, email, and phone number. During an emergency is not the time to correct contact information.

Jeff Ludwig  
Adjutant and Finance Officer  
American Legion Post TH01  
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand

## SAFETY MESSAGE

### HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS: THE 12 DAYS OF SAFETY

The holidays are a joyful time to spend with family and friends, but a careless mistake could put a real damper on your festivities. Here are 12 safety tips to keep in mind this holiday season.

#### **1. Never leave a burning candle unattended**

On the first day of safety, we remind you to extinguish any lit candles when you leave the room, your house, or go to sleep. According to an NFPA study, candles start more than half of all home decoration structure fires, and most of those fires occur in December.

#### **2. Turn off tree lights, decorations, and portable space heaters when away or asleep**

Did you know that local fire departments respond to more than 50,000 fires involving heating equipment and more than 700 caused by decorations each year? Be sure to unplug all of your lights, decorations, and portable space heaters when not in the same room.

#### **3. Never throw wrapping paper in the fire**

On the third day of safety, remember to never toss wrapping paper into the fireplace. Doing so could result in a flash fire because wrapping paper can ignite suddenly and burn intensely.

#### **4. Only use outdoor and indoor lights as indicated on their packaging**

On the fourth day of safety, we remind you to only use lights tested for safety by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. Lights for both indoor and outdoor usage must meet different standards that testing laboratories can verify. Before using, be sure to **check each set of lights** – whether new or old – for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. Throw out damaged sets and do not use electric lights on a metallic tree. Check outdoor lights for labels showing the lights have been

certified for outdoor use, and only plug them into a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI)-protected receptacle or a portable GFCI.

#### **5. Don't overload circuits, extension cords, or electrical sockets**

Overloading circuits, extension cords, or electrical sockets could cause a fire. Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.

#### **6. Never leave cooking or baking unattended**

Most people don't realize that cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and that, as reported by the NFPA, unattended cooking equipment is a factor in one-third of reported home cooking fires and half of the associated deaths. Be especially careful when you're using the stove or cooktop and while frying foods. Always stay in the kitchen—even if you're baking or roasting—and set a timer to remind yourself to check on cooking food.

#### **7. Keep holiday plants away from pets**

On the seventh day of safety, we remind you to keep festive holiday plants including poinsettias, mistletoe and holly out of pets' reach. Ingesting any of these may cause a range of symptoms, while usually mild, ranging from stomach upset to low blood pressure.

#### **8. Check your smoke detector battery**

On the eighth day of safety, we remind you that smoke detectors should be tested regularly and the batteries replaced at least once or twice a year. Mark your calendar to check your alarm during the

holidays. A working smoke alarm cuts your risk of home fire death in half.

**9. Celebrate small and don't drink and drive**

This year, planning a virtual holiday celebration or celebrating only with members of your own household poses the lowest risk of spreading COVID-19. If you do plan an in-person celebration, remember to wear a mask, maintain a distance of 6 feet, and wash hands frequently. If you do plan a small gathering, there are other safety concerns to keep in mind – including that every year hundreds of people die in drunk driving accidents during the holiday season. If you plan to drink alcohol, make sure you have a designated driver to get you and your loved ones home safe and sound. Or, consider using rideshare app.

**10. Choose a fire-resistant artificial tree and be sure to water a natural tree daily**

On average, more than 200 house fires are caused by Christmas trees each year. To prevent this from happening to you, we remind you on the tenth day of safety to exercise caution when placing, decorating, and maintaining either kind of tree. Position your tree at least three feet away from a

heat source and remember to keep natural trees hydrated.

**11. Maintain woodburning fireplaces and chimneys**

Nothing is cozier than relaxing by the fire, but it's especially important to have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional. Also, keep anything that can burn at least three-feet away from the fireplace, and maintain a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.

**12. Travel safely and don't overshare on social media**

Social media is a great way to share what you and your family are doing for the holidays. However, if you are leaving your home for an extended period of time, we remind you on the twelfth day of safety not to put your plans or pictures on social media until after you return. You could be unintentionally inviting thieves to break into your house while you're away. Also, keep in mind any federal and local guidelines for COVID-19 when making holiday travel arrangements this year.

*Read More...*

*(1) Reference link*

<https://blog.msasafety.com/the-twelve-days-of-safety/>





## 1<sup>ST</sup> VICE COMMANDER AND HISTORIAN...*TED POTYRALA*

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Greetings fellow Legionnaires,

As December 31 approaches, which is the end date for us to reach 100% membership, we are just two renewals or new members from reaching this goal.

You may ask, why is it so important for us to reach this goal? The answer is our post will receive \$3.00 per member. That is \$219.00 that can be used for any programs we may want to support. As you know, being here in Thailand we are very limited in the ways that we can generate funds. For those of you in the US that might not understand why that is, it is because of immigration rules.

You can be the one to get us to 100% or even beyond. If you have not renewed, please take a few minutes and renew. It is easy and our Adjutant Jeff Ludwig is more than willing to help you if you need it.

Ted Potyrala  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, Historian, and  
Membership Committee Chairman  
American Legion Post TH01  
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand

### HISTORY ARTICLE(S)



**B-52 Bomber**

Vietnam, December 1972 marked what many believed in the beginning of the end of US involvement in Vietnam.

Ongoing peace talks with North Vietnam were halted by North Vietnam. President Nixon called on the North to get back to the negotiating table but they refused. So began "Operation Linebacker" ordered by President Nixon to attempt to get the North back to the table.

"Operation Linebacker" lasted 11 days involving many US Aircraft but the B-52s played a large part of the operation. The B-52s came out of Guam. Altogether, there were 729 various aircraft used. 15,000 tons of bombs were dropped on targets such as airfields (10), structures (1,600), railways (500) and 80% of electrical generating plants. The losses for the US were 15 B-52s destroyed, 35 aircrew killed and approximately 40 aircrew captured.

In January 1973, peace talks resumed.

*Photo(s) from...*

*(1) U.S. Air Force*



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

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Daniel Fraley

Douglas Stuart

Brian Walters



### SERVICE OFFICER...LARRY HAYNIE

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Greetings Comrades,

I would like to remind you again that FBU Manila is encouraging the use of their Inquiry Form on their website as opposed to emailing requests to them. I have sent many emails to them in the past and can attest to the speed and efficiency of this new web-based inquiry link. If you have to contact them, this link is the easiest way to get a quick response:

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

Last month I stated that military retirees can have DFAS send an allotment to your Thai bank. The money will be deducted from your military pay and sent directly to your Thai bank on the same day as your military pay is sent. You eliminate the wire transfer fees and get the normal exchange rate from the receiving bank. **I DO NOT KNOW IF THIS WORKS WITH ANY OTHER BANK EXCEPT BANGKOK BANK LTD.** If you find that other Thai banks accept this or charge fees, please let me know.

**Be prepared.** It's the motto of the Boy Scouts and sage advice to everyone at every age. As we get older, our responsibilities grow, and we need to be prepared for many more situations than when we were young. Have your will and powers of attorney designated. Fill out the document "**What My Family Should Know**" from 1 of the following links and safeguard it with a person

you trust. Register yourself in the "**Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP), A Service of the Bureau of Consular Affairs, US State Department**" from 1 of the following links and designate your next of kin as well as an executor to your estate. The US Embassy is a critical player in the process of notifying your family of your death, incapacitation, or incarceration. STEP is the first place they look to get information in which to assist you. Make it easier to help you and your family.

**1. What My Family Should Know**

- English Version:

<https://americanlegionthailand.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/1-1-What-My-Family-Needs-to-Know-English-11-03-23.pdf>

- Thai Version:

<https://americanlegionthailand.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/1-2-What-My-Family-Needs-to-Know-Thai-11-03-23.pdf>

**2. Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)**

- US State Department: <https://step.state.gov>

Larry Haynie  
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/americanlegionthailandposttho1>

**YouTube**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC74pEhMUgz5KmGcs7RMEXyA>