



Brig. Gen. Robin Olds

American Legion Thailand Post TH01

Bruce Templeman, Commander Jeff Ludwig, Adjutant

Post meetings held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the
Wing 21 Ubon Royal Thai AB
Driving Range Club house at 10:00 a.m.
All members are encouraged to attend.

Post email address: amerilegionth01@gmail.com



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Commanders Notes

Bruce Templeman

Kudos to our Members at Large, Paul, Kirby, and Wayne, for conducting Buddy Checks and Membership calls. This is no easy task, considering the distance between all our members. It is important to stay connected with our Post family and see where we can help. I thank you all for getting involved and caring. Without our members-at-large keeping their fingers on the pulse of the Post, we would fail in our mission to care for our veterans. I would hope that this year, each member, home and abroad, will take the opportunity to adopt a Wingman. "Wingman" is an Air Force term for having someone that you watch over and he or she watches over you. It is critical to have support in a battle, whether it is physical, mental. Pick a buddy out of the group and keep in close personal contact. All of us go through situations where we could use some encouragement, advice, or simply someone to listen. Having a Legion member as a buddy has the potential to get the right things in the right place at the right time. Do not go it alone.

This past year was a busy one for our committee members. I thank them profusely for actively participating and developing strategies to accomplish our goals. I thank them especially for their dedication to devote more than just a once-a-month effort in keeping the Post active and healthy. Anyone and everyone should feel free to pitch in, whether with ideas, or helping bring those ideas to fruition.

There have been several donations and offers of donations this year to assist in our community efforts. I applaud the generosity of our Post members and look forward to doing more of these activities this coming year.



A Secret Santa donated money to pay the dues of four TH01 members as a Christmas gift. At his direction, those members were selected, and this helped us get our membership numbers up. This was a win for the lucky members, and a win for the Post. We thank Secret Santa for demonstrating the joy of giving this Christmas.

this Christmas.

Our TH01 Media and Communications Committee has requested us to make a constant effort to promote our Facebook Page. When you see a post from our American Legion Post, please **“Like” and “Share”**. It really helps us gain recognition and put our Post message further into the public domain. It will be a small individual effort on your part but pay enormous dividends in free publicity for us.

I look forward to a productive, safe, and cheerful New Year with all of my American Legion buddies. Yours in Service. Bruce



Adjutants Corner

Jeff Ludwig

It is new year and a good time to reflect on the Post and what we can do moving forward. We need your ideas. In January’s Post membership meeting we will be addressing the upcoming year including review of the 2022 budget. To do that we need to plan on the activities for the year. We urge you to attend the January meeting and bring your ideas.

We welcome our new members who joined the Post this last year and encourage you to get involved in the Post—your Post. There are many opportunities for you to help our Post. The Post elections are coming up and you might consider running for an officer position where you can make a direct impact in the success of the Post. Additionally, you can join the various Post committees. A Post is only as good as its

members. With everyone's help, we can continue make this a great Post committed to helping our fellow members, veterans, and local community.

A great way to learn more about the American Legion and what we do is to take the American Legion online Basic Training course. In the course you will learn about the American Legion's organizational structure its mission and goals, its history, and most importantly all the various programs the American Legion has to offer veterans and their families. The best part, the course is free for any member, and it only takes a few hours to complete. The knowledge gained far exceeds your time spent. At the end of the course, you get a certificate and pin recognizing that you successfully completed the course. I cannot stress enough how important this course is. It will teach you about all the programs that the American Legion has to offer and how you and the Post can use them to help our veterans, their families, and our local community. Just click on this link and follow the instructions [American Legion Basic Training Course](#).

FBAR

It is not just time to think about filing with the IRS. US Citizens residing overseas have an additional financial reporting requirement. It is known as the Foreign Bank Account Report (FBAR).

Every year, under the law known as the Bank Secrecy Act, you must report certain foreign financial accounts, such as bank accounts, brokerage accounts and mutual funds, to the Treasury Department and keep certain records of those accounts. You report the accounts by filing a Report of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts (FBAR) on FinCEN Form 114.

Who Must File

A United States person, including a citizen, resident, corporation, partnership, limited liability company, trust, and estate, must file an FBAR to report:

1. a financial interest in or signature or other authority over at least one financial account located outside the United States if
2. the **aggregate** value of those foreign financial accounts exceeded \$10,000 **at any time** during the calendar year reported.

The link to electronically file an FBAR can be found here:

[BSA E-Filing System - Welcome to the BSA E-Filing System \(treas.gov\)](#)

Safety Message:

By now most of you are tired of hearing about COVID-19 and all its variants. If you are planning to travel from the USA to Thailand or vice versa there are some important websites that you need to have in your arsenal. The requirements and restrictions change with the wind. The one thing certain is it will change and often. Compound that with all the news articles and blogs offering advice that may or may not be true. So how do you navigate through all this? There are several essential websites to help you with that.

If you are going to the USA then you need to keep in contact with our American Embassy in Bangkok and consulate in Chiang Mai. The best way to do that is to Enroll in or update your information in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) [US Embassy Step](#). The embassy will alert you to any changes to requirements, restrictions, or safety alerts. The Embassy American Citizens Services Website, <https://th.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/> is also a great website for the latest information.

If you are traveling to Thailand there are several official websites that provide current information. Right now the best site to get the latest official news is the **Entry Thailand** website, <http://entrythailand.go.th/en/index.php>. It provides you with the latest news as well as useful links to other resources. The following excerpt from the US Embassy Citizens Services website provides additional resources, "As *inter-provincial travel restrictions are subject to change, all travelers are strongly encouraged to monitor travel conditions and requirements at the [Tourism Authority of Thailand's](#) website <https://www.tatnews.org/2021/>. General information regarding travel conditions can be found on the U.S. Embassy Consular Section website (see the section entitled "Travel in Thailand" at <https://th.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/covid-19-information/>). Information about restrictions across Thailand can also be found at the Ministry of Public Health's [Department of Disease Control COVID-19 website](#) at: <https://ddc.moph.go.th/viralpneumonia/eng/index.php>."*

The best advice we can give you is to remain flexible.

Activities/Events:

Our Christmas Holiday gathering went very well with good company and outstanding food prepared and served by the cheerful staff at Peppers. Peppers served a premier dinner each person receiving a turkey leg, breast meat, sage stuffing, baked sweet potatoes, buttered green beans, whipped potatoes and gravy, cranberry sauce, and apple or pumpkin pie for dessert. The bakery at Peppers is famous throughout Ubon Ratchathani Province. We really appreciate the efforts of our host and look forward to returning for other special Post TH01 events.



Post Everlasting



An American Legionnaire, Comrade Kenneth Robert Sebring, has left our Post, reporting to Post Everlasting on 27 December 2021. We offer our condolences to his wife, Pawatree. 1st Vice Commander, John Skabry and Commander Templeman went to Korat represent the Post in paying

our respects and to present the US flag. Ken was conscientious about taking care of his family and we pledge our assistance to them as well.

Veteran needs assistance

An Air Force veteran that served at Udon Thani Royal Thai Air Base from 1974-1975 is having his appeal for Agent Orange related illnesses adjudicated by the Veterans Administration. He is looking for veterans who may have served at there at this time. If any of our readers have information to share with him regarding Udon Thani RTAF base, the environmental conditions or personnel assigned there, or information on auxiliary duties assigned, please contact Al Taylor at alandtaylor52@gmail.com

**AMERICAN
LEGION**

Veterans helping veterans.

FROM THE POST HISTORIAN - Theodore "Ted" Potyrala



The Great Escape

Part One

In March of 1944, a mass escape of 76 allied prisoners of war escaped from a German POW camp which was designed by the German Luftwaffe to be escape proof. What they didn't count on was the ingenuity and determination of the prisoners.

The camp was built on yellow sand to make any digging difficult. The huts where they lived was raised above the ground to make it difficult not to be seen under the hut. Microphones were buried nine feet underground to detect any noise from tunneling. The prisoners worked for nearly one year building three tunnels named Tom, Dick and Harry.

Rodger Bushell, a Royal Air Force pilot, led and organized the construction of the tunnels. Starting in the spring of 1943, Bushell along with over 600 prisoners began construction on the tunnels. They had to tunnel over 300 feet to a tree line outside the camps perimeter fence. Inside hut 104 they began building the tunnel named Harry. They hollowed out one of the support columns to conceal movement from the hut to the tunnel. A trap door was installed under a heating stove that was always burning while the tunnel was being worked on to discouraging the guards from getting too close. They dug thirty feet down to get below the buried microphones. While digging, they stripped down to their Long Johns or went naked to prevent the sand from staining their clothes. 100 tons of sand was stuffed in socks and sprinkled in gardens or raked into the soil.



Stalag Luft III POW Camp
Keystone/Hulton Archives/Getty Images

The material they used in the construction was scavenged or stolen. 4,000 wooden bed boards were used for ladders and shoring up the sides of the two foot wide tunnel. 1,700 blankets were stuffed against the walls to muffle the sounds of digging. Over 1,400 powered milk tins, provided by the Red Cross, were converted into digging tools. Lamps were made from pajama cords. The fuel was mutton fat which they skimmed off of the greasy soup they were served.

As the length of the tunnel increased, the oxygen levels began to drop. This, along with the fumes from the lamps caused the men to become sick. To combat this, a crude air pump was fashioned from hockey sticks, knapsacks, and ping pong paddles. An electric wire was stolen and was connected to the camp electrical grid. It ran a string of lights that were strung through the tunnels.

Stay tuned for part two, Preparing and executing the escape.
From the History Channel

January Firsts

January 1, 1863 - The [Emancipation Proclamation](#) by President Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves in the states rebelling against the Union.

January 1, 1892 - Ellis Island in New York Harbor opened. Over 20 million new arrivals to America were processed until its closing in 1954.

January 1, 1979 - China and the U.S. established diplomatic relations, 30 years after the foundation of the People's Republic.

Birthday - American Patriot Paul Revere (1735-1818) was born in Boston, Massachusetts. Best known for his ride on the night of April 18, 1775, warning Americans of British plans to raid Lexington and Concord.

Birthday - Betsy Ross (1752-1836) was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She was a seamstress credited with helping to originate and [sew the Stars and Stripes](#) flag of America in 1776.

