

THE AMERICAN LEGION AT UBON RATCHATHANI, THAILAND



BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBIN OLDS

POST NUMBER TH01

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



JANUARY 2024

POST EMAIL: COMMANDER@AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM

VOL. 7, ISSUE 01

LINKS CONCERNING ISSUES OF GENERAL EXPAT INTEREST IN THAILAND

US DOLLAR TO THAI BAHT EXCHANGE RATE (AS OF 18/01/24)

\$1.00 U.S.D.:35.52 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...

New Year ahead: We have come a long way since our founding and we have more challenges ahead. The fun never stops. We have a large, yet untapped resource that we need to tap to make this Post the best in the Department. That untapped resource is our membership, seventy-nine strong and growing. We have TH01 Legionnaires throughout the Kingdom of Thailand and across the USA. With a network like that, we should be able to tap into a vast repository of their knowledge and experiences. For example, how do they cope with medical situations here in Thailand? How has the VA and FMP been working for them? What tips for immigration visits do they have and what traps to avoid? All these types of questions can be discussed when we do our buddy checks, both formal and informal. Pass the word to other members. Bring them up at the Post meetings so we can capture those ideas and advice in our meeting minutes and post them in our newsletters. As I've said on many other occasions, our decentralized membership is not a weakness.

It's our strength! We have veterans across the globe that are situated to help other veterans. The key to this is communication. In the year ahead, I would like to see more of our members get out and physically meet with other members. It would be a good thing for us to have a social event somewhere in the center of our membership area so we can meet face to face. Our buddy checks are a valuable tool for communication and I remind everyone of our bylaws, particularly **Article 11 (Notices)** *"Every member shall furnish the Post Adjutant with his or her correct address for mailing purposes. If available, members shall also provide a current telephone number and email address."* We really need everyone to give us an avenue to communicate with them, just as we give every veteran several avenues to communicate with the Post. **YOU ARE THE REASON THIS POST EXISTS, so please COMMUNICATE.**

Some significant events coming up soon are:

1. Post Officer Elections: Below is a summary of the Post bylaws for holding Post elections:

Section 1. General

1. Elections will be held annually for all elected offices and executive committee members-at-large.
2. The Post elections will normally be by open election; however, the election may be by ballot if requested. **Election by ballot must be requested and approved by the members at the February Monthly Post meeting.** This will allow sufficient time for preparation of nominations and ballots. If election by ballot is not requested and approved at the February meeting, the Post will hold an open election as described in Section 2 of this article.
3. The election will be held annually at the regular meeting in April of each year.
4. Newly elected officers will take office at the Post Meeting following the election.

Section 2. General Open Election

1. The elected officers and executive committee members shall be nominated from the floor at the meeting preceding the annual election and at the meeting of the annual election.
2. The election shall be by show of hands of members present or members on video conference. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected to the respective office for which they are a candidate.
3. Nominations for officers and executive committee members will be made at the March meeting. Nominations may be made orally at the March meeting including via Google Meet. Members can also email nominations providing they have already gotten the acceptance from the person they are nominating. Nominations will be emailed to the Post email address amerilegion@gmail.com prior to the March meeting. **All nominations will be final at the end of the March meeting.**

Section 3. Election by ballot (IF REQUESTED AND APPROVED AT THE FEBRUARY MEETING)

1. **At least two weeks prior to the April meeting** the adjutant will email ballots to all the Post members in good standing. The email votes must be sent to the Post email address, adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com a

- t least three days prior to the April Post meeting. This is to allow the adjutant time to collect the email ballots and have them ready for tabulation at the Post election.
2. Members must turn in ballots the day of the meeting prior to the start of the meeting.
3. The ballots will be tallied at the April meeting. The completed ballots will be collected and given to the Adjutant. The Commander will appoint a Post Officer and two Members-at-Large who will count the ballots. Results will be announced before the conclusion of the April meeting. Ballots will be kept as a matter of Post records.
4. Any request for recount and or audit of the election will be requested in writing. Any expenses resulted from the requested recount or audit will be the sole responsibility of the requestor.

The Adjutant must certify the elected officers are eligible members in good standing and report the findings to the Department at least 15 days prior to the Department Convention."

2. National Dues: *National has raised its dues \$5.00 per capita, therefore reducing the amount that the Post has for doing its business. The discussion as to raise our Post dues issue will be an agenda item for the January 10th Post meeting. Our deadline to confirm our Post dues is 1 March, so the decision to that matter will be taken at the January meeting.*

3. Membership renewals: *National will allow members to renew for two years at a time beginning July 1st, 2024. This is a good deal all around and I encourage all annual members to do it. Did you know that you can elect to have your dues automatically paid every year. Just supply your credit card and when the time rolls around for renewal, The American Legion will automatically renew your membership. Not bother, no headache - what could be better!*

4. The Federal Voting Assistance Program is now in high gear. If you need assistance registering to vote, please contact our Service Officer, Larry Haynie. We also have Post members that are Civilian Liaison Volunteers with the US Embassy

that can assist you as well. Wayne Wright, John Skabry, and Bruce Templeman.

5. FBAR: This is a reminder for those of you who have assets in a foreign bank totaling \$10,000.00 or more. Annually you must file a Report of Foreign Bank & Financial Accounts. (FBAR) to the US Treasury Department. To assist you, click on the link is provided here and follow the simple instructions: [File Your FBAR](#). If you have any questions or need any assistance, contact Jeff Ludwig our Finance Officer and he can help step you through the process.

6. Tawanchai Foundation: April is the month in which American Legion Post TH01 and VFW Post

10217 donate to the Tawanchai Foundation. Please ask your friends and acquaintances to donate to this worthy cause. Our Finance Officers will provide you with a receipt for your generous donation. You can help change a child's life giving them a chance at brighter future.

We have a lot of ground to cover this year, so please stay safe and healthy.

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 and Finance Officer – For Specific Administrative and Capital Finance Matters
adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com

Post 1st Vice Commander – For all Memberships, Including New Applications and Renewals, Charity Donations, and Historical Matters
1vice@americanlegionthailand.com

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

Post Member-at-Large – For all Online Audio/Visual Matters
meeting@americanlegionthailand.com

Post Communication Center – For all Public Affairs, I.T. Support, and Online Presence Matters: Website, Email, and Social Media Management
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>

THAILAND MOVES TO BAN RECREATIONAL CANNABIS USE, 18 MONTHS AFTER HISTORIC DECRIMINALIZATION

It looks like the recreational use might be going away. This article explains the direction the legislative winds are blowing.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/thailand-moves-to-ban-recreational-cannabis-use-18-months-after-historic-decriminalization/ar-AA1mJWzZ>

POST HOLIDAYS AND EVENTS CALENDAR

01 January

New Year's Day

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New Year%27s Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Year%27s_Day)

10 January

American Legion Post THo1 Membership Monthly Meeting

15 January

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin Luther King Jr. Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther_King_Jr._Day)

POST TH01 OFFICERS 2023 MEMBERSHIP YEAR

COMMANDER – Bruce Templeman
commander@americanlegionthailand.com

1st VICE COMMANDER & HISTORIAN – Ted Potyrala
1vice@americanlegionthailand.com

2nd VICE COMMANDER – John Skabry
2vice@americanlegionthailand.com

ADJUTANT & FINANCE OFFICER – Jeff Ludwig
adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com

SERVICE OFFICER – Larry Haynie
larryjoedog@yahoo.com

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS – Sal Salzarulo
salzy48@hotmail.com

JUDGE ADVOCATE – Paul Ben-Yehuda
renegademarine@icloud.com

CHAPLAIN – Rob Davis
robdavis19@outlook.com

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER – Chris Lampert
comms@americanlegionthailand.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Billy Holland
billybholland@gmail.com

MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Michael Baines
mkbaines1@gmail.com

MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Michael Cook
meeting@americanlegionthailand.com



ADJUTANT'S CORNER...JEFF LUDWIG

Greetings Comrades,

Another new year is upon us filled with new opportunities and challenges. Looking back at the past year, we were highly successful in membership and charity donations. It is this time of year individuals traditionally make New Year's resolutions. While we know our location here in Thailand limits our opportunity to participate in many of the traditional American Legion Programs, it does provide us with opportunities to support the Four Pillar in other ways. In this year's Post resolution, let us challenge ourselves to find ways more ways to support our veterans, youth, and local communities while remaining committed to the Four Pillars of the American Legion.

We are looking forward to the ideas and contributions from our new members. The best way to retain our new members is to get them active in the operation of the Post. There are many opportunities to help our Post. The Post elections are coming up. Members can consider running for an officer position where you can make a direct impact in the success of the Post. In addition, the Post committees are always looking for volunteers to serve on the committees. A Post is only as good as its members. With everyone's help, we can continue making this a great Post committed to helping our fellow members, veterans, and local community.

One of the best ways to learn about the American Legion, its organization, its mission and goals, its history, and its programs is to take the American Legion online Basic Training course. It is free for any member and it only takes a few hours to complete. The knowledge gained will far exceed your time spent. Additionally, 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 and how the Post can use them to help our needy veterans and local community. Just click on this link: [American Legion Basic Training Course](#).

Recently I sent out a Thai address contact Worksheet to all the members residing in Thailand. The Thai Ministry created the worksheet during COVID, The benefit of using the worksheet is that it has the official translations for all the Provinces, Districts and Subdistricts in Thailand. You just need to download the worksheet to either to Google Docs, your PC, Laptop, or tablet. Not sure about phones. It is a drilldown spreadsheet where you start with the province and work back. The only thing lacking is the Postal code. I have found that by Googling the District and Subdistrict you can usually get the correct Postal code. Once I get your information, I can validate and if needed correct your contact information that is on file with the Post and the American Legion. Thank you to all who have replied with their information.

Jeff Ludwig
Adjutant and Finance Officer
American Legion Post TH01

SAFETY MESSAGE

TRAVEL SAFETY TIPS

With millions of people preparing to travel to visit friends and family, and with the majority of holiday travelers driving, here are a few safety tips to take with you on the road:

- **Get your vehicle road-ready:** Check your vehicle fluid levels, battery, tire pressure, and condition, and fill up your gas tank before starting your trip.
- **Plan your route:** Plan your driving route ahead of departing. Check for road construction and road closures along the way in case you need to reroute. If the weather is severe, consider postponing or canceling your travel plans.
- **Buckle up:** Wearing a seatbelt is one of the simplest and most effective ways to stay safe on the road. Remind everyone else in the vehicle to buckle their seatbelts as well.
- **Prepare for emergencies:** Be prepared for an unexpected emergency, such as a car accident, breakdown, flat tire, or medical issue, by keeping a stash of emergency supplies in your vehicle. Supplies should include a flashlight, blanket, extra gloves and hats, a first-aid kit, basic hand tools, a phone charger, snacks, and bottled water.
- **Don't drink and drive:** If you are going to be driving this holiday season, be sure to avoid the spiked eggnog. Never risk the safety of family, friends, or others on the road by drinking and driving.
- **Stay focused on the road:** Distracted driving is one of the leading causes of traffic accidents. Help yourself stay focused on the road at all times by assigning a navigator to handle any GPS device and refraining from talking on the phone or texting while driving. Take a short break every so often to revive your energy and focus, and split up driving responsibilities with others in the vehicle if possible.
- **Drive defensively:** Be aware of what other drivers around you are doing and keep an eye out for drivers who may be operating their vehicle recklessly due to distraction or the influence of alcohol. Give yourself plenty of space between other cars on the road and avoid sudden stops. Don't expect the other guy to stop at stop signs. Be vigilant and expect the unexpected because it will happen. Remember this is Thailand.
- **Go slow and be patient:** It may sound simple, but having a little extra patience while out on the road goes a long way in ensuring that you arrive safely at your destination. This is especially true if you are on one of the busy two lane roads behind one of the large trucks. Pass safely.
- **Watch out for motorbikes.** Unlike in the USA motorbikes are prevalent throughout Thailand. Often the motorbikes are operated by unlicensed youths who have very little knowledge of the rules of the road.



1ST VICE COMMANDER AND HISTORIAN...*TED POTYRALA*

Greetings fellow Legionnaires,

Continuous Membership Awards:

The American Legion is the nation’s largest and most powerful organization of U.S. wartime veterans and their families. Today, it counts 2 million members who support their communities in more than 12,000 posts across the United States and worldwide. Membership is the lifeblood of the American Legion. **Strength in Numbers!**

American Legion members work together to support their local communities, focusing on services classified under the organization’s four pillars:

1. Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
2. National Security
3. Americanism
4. Children & Youth.

Examples include:

- VA volunteers: Millions of community service hours are logged by VA-trained volunteers, and more than \$1.5 million is raised annually to assist VA hospitals in local communities.
- American Legion Baseball: America’s pastime is played out on fields each summer, providing healthy, wholesome activity for young people, some of whom go on to play Major League Baseball.
- Charities: The American Legion Family organizes fundraisers to secure scholarships for children, provide support and comfort for wounded

servicemembers, and distribute emergency aid for victims of natural disasters.

Membership is the life blood of the American Legion. It is what makes this all possible.

This past year we were proud to award 12 of our members the Continuous Membership certificate and Pin. Sincere congratulations to all for their commitment to our Post TH01, to The Department of France and to the American Legion.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>YEARS</u>
Hal Cohen	10
Mark Faralli	5
Loyd Garmany	5
Chris Lampert	5
David Monninger	5
Ron Monninger	5
Marleen Madding	5
Bill Moxham	15
Kirby Raines	5
John Skabry	10
Bruce Templeman	20
Wayne Wright	10

Congratulations to you and many thanks for your support.

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

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Gary Christopherson

John Dustman

Mark Faralli

Jc Molette, Jr.

Richard Montgomery



SERVICE OFFICER...LARRY HAYNIE

Greetings Comrades,

Financial planning is very important for all veterans to ensure your loved ones have the ability and means to care for themselves, in the event of a veterans passing. Developing a planning guide is essential and necessary to assist a spouse or family members in obtaining access to VA disability compensation payments, military pensions, Social Security benefits or any other type of compensation or payments a veteran received while living.

Developing a financial planning guide can be done with the assistance of your Post Service Officer, who can give you access to what forms or documents are needed. Having a financial planning

guide that also involves having your spouse in the planning and construction of the guide, will also greatly benefit your spouse. Should your spouse have to seek help from the Post Service Officer in obtaining her entitled benefits and compensation, a financial planning guide that is complete and up to date, will make that process much easier. Please contact Post Service Officer Larry Haynie for more information and assistance.

Larry Haynie
Service Officer
American Legion Post THo1
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>