

THE AMERICAN LEGION AT UBON RATCHATHANI, THAILAND



BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBIN OLDS

POST NUMBER THo1

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



SEPTEMBER 2023

POST EMAIL: COMMANDER@AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM

VOL. 6, ISSUE 9

[LINKS CONCERNING ISSUES OF GENERAL EXPAT INTEREST IN THAILAND](#)

US DOLLAR TO THAI BAHT EXCHANGE RATE (AS OF 19/08/23)

\$1.00 U.S.D.:34.44 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...

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

We are doing well in our annual membership drive. I appreciate all of you that have renewed your membership in our vibrant and active Post. I ask everyone else to renew, as soon as possible, so that we can reap the rewards from the Department and get on with performing services to our veterans, their families, and our community. I'm proud of our Post and thank all of our members that have taken an active role in our mission to serve.

OPEN POST OFFICER POSITIONS

There are three (3) positions that are vacant in our Post. The positions, while vacant, have not gone unattended, but it is extremely difficult for the other officers to do them in addition to their own duties. I ask for volunteers for the following positions:

- 1. POST CHAPLAIN:** See the following Chaplain description,
- 2. POST SERVICE OFFICER (P.S.O.):** See the following Service Office description, and
- 3. POST MEMBER-AT-LARGE:** See the following Member-at-Large description.

We have a lot to do for our growing membership and other veterans here in Thailand. I encourage everyone to participate in any way, so that we can continue our mission of service. Please, look at these job descriptions and be assured that there will be a gradual transition and training period for each job. We're all in this together.

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

OPEN POST OFFICER POSITIONS

POST CHAPLAIN DESCRIPTION

Key Responsibilities

- 1. Moral and Intellectual Leadership:** The Chaplain must be a person capable of moral and intellectual leadership and one who gives dignity and respect to the office. He or she should be in close touch with the commander and other post officers and should attend all meetings of the post executive committee.
- 2. Ceremonies:** The Chaplain plays an important role in the conduct of meetings, the observance of patriotic occasions, funeral services, and dedication ceremonies. At all these events, the Chaplain is the moral leader.
- 3. Graves Registration and Memorials:** The Chaplain should work with the post historian on grave registration work and inspire the post to decorate veteran graves, especially on Memorial Day. He or she may also officiate at Post members' funerals when requested and serve their bereaved families.
- 4. SOP:** Help develop Standard Operating Procedures
- 5. U.S. Citizen Death:** be familiar with the "Death of a U.S. Citizen" overseas, and
- 6. Remains Repatriation:** Be familiar with the "Disposition and Repatriation of Remains" to the U.S.A.
- 7. Additional Information:** The American Legion Chaplain's Handbook, available online and through department headquarters, offers guidance for the post chaplain and religious emphasis committee.

Skills and Qualifications

1. Strong moral and intellectual leadership,
2. Ability to give dignity and respect to the office,
3. Knowledge of ceremonies and patriotic occasions,
4. Ability to work with the post historian on grave registration work, and
5. Flexibility to officiate at post members' funerals when requested.

Chaplin Files

- 1. V.A. Grave Markers Forms Required:**
- 2. Spreadsheet of Post Everlasting Members:** name, date of passing, location of remains, and contact information of Next of Kin
- 3. Condolence Letter Templates:**
- 4. Overseas Grave Trust Forms Required:**

POST SERVICE OFFICER (P.S.O.) DESCRIPTION

Key Responsibilities

- 1. Veteran Community:** The P.S.O. is responsible for bringing awareness to all veterans and their dependents of the rights and benefits granted to them by law. As the P.S.O.'s reputation grows, so will the value of the organization in the veteran community.
- 2. Expert Services:** The P.S.O. must know how to access and utilize the expert services available

through The American Legion, state and federal government agencies, and local community agencies. The job requires timely submission of information to full-time professionals, so veterans and their dependents are adequately represented.

- 3. Reporting:** The P.S.O.'s report should be a standard part of every meeting. The American Legion maintains a full staff of appeals

representatives in Washington, D.C. and Indianapolis, IN. headquarters offices.

Skills and Qualifications

1. Competent, dedicated, and organized,
2. Ability to bring awareness to veterans and their dependents of their rights and benefits,
3. Knowledge of expert services available through The American Legion, state and federal government agencies, and local community agencies,
4. Ability to submit timely information to full-time professionals, and
5. Flexibility to provide regular reports at meetings.

P.S.O. Files

1. **Electronic Files:** Scans and photos of important documents (birth and death certificates, military I.D., government I.D., driver's license, passport, S.S.A. card, insurance policies, bank statements, pension documents, tax returns, etc.).
2. **Records:** electronic correspondence (emails, secure email traffic, etc.).
3. P.S.O. Spreadsheet(s).
4. P.S.O. Calendar(s).
5. **Physical Documents:** must be scanned, and the originals are returned to the client.
6. **V.A. Claims:** all must be referred to an accredited Veterans Service Officer (V.S.O) (Al Fitchett in Udon Thani or to the Department of France V.S.O).

POST MEMBER-AT-LARGE DESCRIPTION

Key Responsibilities

Members-at-Large serve as the liaison between the Membership and Executive Committees.

The three Members-at-Large attend meetings and serve to get input, provide feedback, and become a spokesperson for the membership. Members-at-Large don't have specific roles, but

as an elected officer, may also serve on multiple committees at the discretion of the Commander. The Buddy Check Program is the ideal way to get views and recommendations from the Post Membership.

Skills and Qualifications

Just a dedication to the Post and its membership.

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

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

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

04 September

Labor Day

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Labor_Day

11 September

Patriot Day

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patriot_Day

13 September

American Legion Post THo1 Membership Monthly Meeting

15 September

National P.O.W./M.I.A. Recognition Day

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_POW/MIA_Recognition_Day

First Day of Hispanic Heritage Month

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Hispanic_Heritage_Month_\(United_States\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Hispanic_Heritage_Month_(United_States))

16 September

Rosh Hashanah

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosh_Hashanah

17 September

Constitution Day (Citizenship Day)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_Day_\(United_States\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_Day_(United_States))

18 September

United States Air Force Birthday

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force

24 September

Gold Star Mother's Day

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Gold_Star_Mothers

25 September

Yom Kippur

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yom_Kippur

POST TH01 OFFICERS 2023 MEMBERSHIP YEAR

COMMANDER – Bruce Templeman
commander@americanlegionthailand.com

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

2nd VICE COMMANDER AND
OUR LEGION RIDERS DIRECTOR – John Skabry
2vice@americanlegionthailand.com

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

SERVICE OFFICER –

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

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

CHAPLAIN –

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER – Chris Lampert
comms@americanlegionthailand.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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

MEMBER-AT-LARGE –

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



ADJUTANT'S CORNER...JEFF LUDWIG

Greetings Comrades,

This Month is the 22nd Anniversary of The Terrorist Attacks on Our Nation that killed 2,996 people. To many of our children, it is just a date in history, but for many of us that will live in our hearts. It's the day we realized that we are vulnerable and are not protected. We have a responsibility not only to ensure that our fellow Americans do not forget this tragedy event, but that we take steps to prevent it from happening again.

I am reminded of our American Legion Preamble, that we recite, every month, preceding our meetings.

"For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

o To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;
o To maintain law and order;
o To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;
o To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars;
o To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to community, state and nation;
o To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;
o To make right the master of might;
o To promote peace and goodwill on earth;
o To safeguard and transmit to Posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;
o To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

To This End We Are Obligated To:

- Secure our Borders,
- Remind our citizens, least they forget,
- Educate our youth,
- Respect and protect the Flag,
- Support law enforcement on preventing riots and looting,
- Lead by example,
- Call out those who wish to destroy our Constitutional Republic,
- Help safeguard our communities,
- Stand up for the principals that founded our Nation, and
- Be a Proud American.



SAFETY MESSAGE...JEFF LUDWIG

NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

National Preparedness Month (N.P.M.) is recognized, each September, to promote family and community disaster and emergency planning, now, and throughout the year. Also, to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies that could happen, at any time. This is evident in the recent tragic fires in Maui, Hawaii. A tragic loss of life, home, and records.

Our Post membership is scattered throughout Thailand and the U.S.A. That being said, our members are exposed to just about a every natural disaster, including hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, monsoon floods, strong winds, fires, and earthquakes, to name the most common Natural disasters. We need to be prepared and know what to do in case of a disaster hitting.

GET PREPARED

- **Emergency Plan:** the [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(F.E.M.A.\)](https://www.fema.gov) encourages planning ahead of all disasters at <https://www.ready.gov>.

You can do this by establishing a meeting place and evacuation route with your family.

According to F.E.M.A., the family meeting place should be familiar and easy to find.

The F.E.M.A. website lists helpful tips on how to start an emergency plan:
<https://www.ready.gov/plan> You can download

and fill out emergency plans for families, pets, property, and more.

- **Disaster Preparedness Kit:** everyone should have a disaster preparedness kit ready, should a disaster strike. Each members' disaster preparedness kit will be based on the threats in their area.
- **Keep Key Important Documents and Medical Information Safe and Easy to Find:** before a disaster, [safeguard critical documents](#). This includes medical records, prescription information, and your uniformed services I.D. card. It's also a good idea to make a list of illnesses, allergies, and prescription bottles for all family members.
- **Be Prepared:** for events like wildfires, floods, and hurricanes can help keep you and your family safe. You can't predict what and when a disaster will occur, but you can predict what you should do before, during, and after an emergency.



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

Greetings fellow Legionnaires,

As of 16 August, we are at 64% towards the Post's 100% goal of seventy-three (73) members. This includes renewals and new members.

So far, 47 members have renewed additionally three members said they will renew and one new member will be joining our Post. That leaves eighteen that have not renewed. We have a good chance of reaching all of Department's goals. If you haven't renewed, please do so. If you need help renewing, contact myself or the Post Adjutant, Jeff Ludwig. If you cannot renew, now, put it in your calendar as a reminder. Any new or transferred members counts towards these goals, so if you know of anyone looking to join a post, let myself or the Post Adjutant, Jeff Ludwig, know. We will send an information letter and an application to them. If you get three or more new members, National will recognize you with the National Commanders Pin and certificate.

Department Has Set Monthly Membership Targets for our Post TH01:

1. September 8 - 50%,
2. October 13 - 55%,
3. November 10 - 65%,
4. December 8 - 75%,
5. January 12 - 80%,

6. February 9 - 85%,
7. March 8 - 90%,
8. April 5 - 95%, and
9. May 3 - 100%.

We have made the September and October targets, and after the meeting in September, we should be at 68.49% and making the November target.

As I have stated in the past, making these goals is important for us, because Department will give the Post some money. Plus, the Post could receive another Honor ribbon. The money is important, because it is one of the few ways of getting needed income for the Post.

Even though the money is important, being there for you is more important. Although we are spread out here and in the U.S.A., we all have the same goal - providing help and support in time of need. That could be V.A. problems or assisting your family when you are gone.

Thank you, for your support.

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

HISTORY ARTICLE(S)

UBON RATCHATHANI CANDLE FESTIVAL



Pic 1: Candle Festival Float 1

One of the biggest festivals held in Ubon Ratchathani is the Candle Festival which is held at the beginning of lent and celebrates two major Buddhist events: Asahna Bucha Day which celebrates the day when Buddha delivered his first sermon at Benares India, and the next day is Khao Phansa which marks the begging of lent. This year, the festival was held July 31 - August 2.

The festival was established during reign of King Rama V. It started off by locals giving the monks small candles and basic needs for their stay in their temples, for a three-month period. Today, what they refer to as candles are floats. Some can be as long as thirty meters (30m) or ninety-eight feet (98ft).



Pic 2: Candle Festival Float 2



Pic 3: Candle Festival Dancers

The sculptures are made from wood or plaster and covered with wax which is carved into elaborate scenes from Buddhist and Hindu Mythology and are paraded through town. The parade terminates at Thung Si

Mueang Park where they are put on display. They represent local temples, districts, or other institutions. They are accompanied by dancers in traditional dress.

This really is something to see. The craftsmanship is mind blowing. Besides the floats and dancers, there are many delicious dishes you can try, too.

I know it's too late for this year, but if you plan on going, next year, reserve a room well in advance.



Pic 4: Mrs. Ann and Adjutant Jeff Ludwig

Read More...

(1) Reference link

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubon_Ratchathani_Candle_Festival

Photos from...

(1) Post adjutant, Jeff Ludwig (pics 1, 2, and 4)

(2) web (pic 3)

POST TH01 ARTICLE

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING



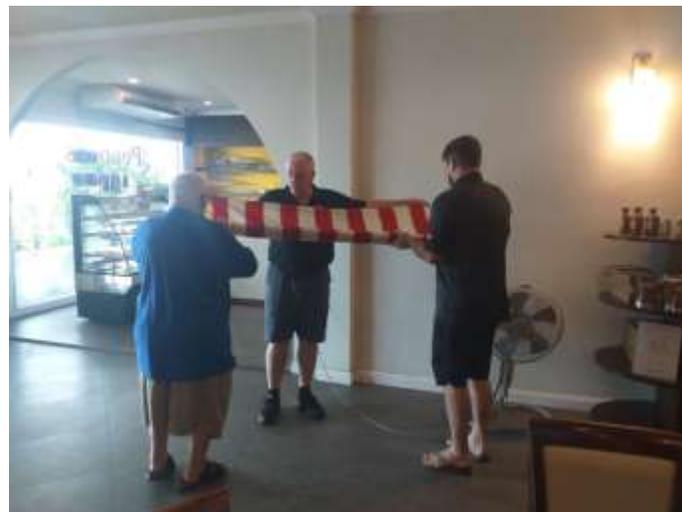
Post Commander, 2nd Vice Commander, and Adjutant

Here are some photos from Post TH01's August monthly membership meeting. The Post holds its monthly membership meeting, the 2nd Wednesday of every month, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (Bangkok Time: U.T.C. +7), at Peppers Restaurant and Bakery (Peppers): <https://goo.gl/maps/UEmFqnhD5ciCHnyH7>.





Pledge of Allegiance



Retiring of the Colors



Post THo1 Monthly Meeting Location

Post THo1 conducts its monthly meetings in hybrid format, so members can join the meeting face-to-face (F2F) at Peppers or online if any of the members cannot make it F2F.

Photos from...

(1) Post 1st Vice Commander, Ted Potyrala



AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS ASSISTANT DIRECTOR...*ROBERT ROSITER*

Fellow Legionnaires and Riders,

American Legion Riders (A.L.R.), Post TH01 is proud to announce The American Legion Legacy Toy Run 2023.

“The 2023 Legacy Run will take place August 20-24, 2023. It will begin at American Legion Post 6 in Kokomo, IN and end at Hendrick Motorsports Campus in Concorde, NC. The Legacy Run will stop at various locations along the route.”

The American Legion Legacy Toy Run 2023 Info., Schedule, and Donations

Read More...

(1) Info. and Schedule link

<https://www.legion.org/riders/legacyrun>

(2) Donations link

<https://www.legion.org/riders/legacyrun/donation>

As the Assistant Director and member of the A.L.R., I personally donated \$100.00 U.S.D.

(3,524.00 TH.B.) to the Legacy Scholarship Fund in honor of the 2023 American Legion Legacy Run. My donation will be acknowledged as **American Legion Riders, Post TH01, Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand.**

Read More...

(1) Legacy Scholarship Fund

<https://www.legion.org/riders/scholarship>

Although American Legion Riders (A.L.R.), Post TH01 members are not able to participate, our spirit rides with everyone in this worthy cause!

Yours in comradeship,

Robert Rositer
Assistant Director
American Legion Riders (A.L.R.)

Paid-up for Life Member
American Legion Post TH01
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Frederick Berg, Sr.

William Chapman

Robert Engborg

Fred Gilbert

Billy Holland

William Moxham

Theodore Potyrala



SERVICE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

Who is your Next of Kin? Did you know that there is a hierarchy that the US Embassy must follow for notifying your family upon your demise?

Thai authorities normally notify the U.S. Embassy when a U.S. citizen dies in Thailand. The American Citizens Services unit contacts the next-of-kin of the deceased as soon as possible. Next-of-kin is established in the following order:

1. legal spouse
2. if no spouse, then all children
3. if no children, then all parents
4. if no parents, then all siblings
5. if no siblings, then all grandparents.

It is the responsibility of the next-of-kin to:

- Pay for mortuary and related expenses.

- If the deceased had a Last Will & Testament, send it to the American Citizens Services unit by email or fax.
- If the deceased did not have a Last Will & Testament but had substantial personal effects and a number of next-of-kin, send notarized [Affidavits of Next-of-Kin](#) (PDF 63KB) to the American Citizens Services unit by email or fax. Next-of-kin in Thailand may have affidavits notarized at the American Citizens Services unit of the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok or the U.S. Consulate General in Chiang Mai free of charge.
- Make arrangements for the disposition of remains and personal effects of the deceased, often with the assistance of a Thai funeral home.

- For Bangkok: Contact: [Contact Form](#)
Fax: +66-2-205-4103

For Chiang Mai: Contact: [Contact Form](#)
Fax: +66-53-234-472

[CLICK THE FOLLOWING LINKS FOR POST TH01...](#)

WEBSITE

<https://americanlegionthailand.com>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/americanlegionthailandposttho1>

Twitter

https://twitter.com/Post_THo1

Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/post_tho1/

YouTube

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

ASEAN Now

<https://aseannow.com/profile/277159-american-legion-post-tho1/>