

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



May 2024

POST EMAIL: COMMANDER@AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM

VOL. 7, ISSUE 05

LINKS CONCERNING ISSUES OF GENERAL EXPAT INTEREST IN THAILAND

US DOLLAR TO THAI BAHT EXCHANGE RATE (AS OF 15/03/24)

\$1.00 USD to 36.57 THB

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

POST HOLIDAYS AND EVENTS

CALENDAR

- May 1 - [First Day of Military Appreciation Month](#)
- May 1 – [Thai Labor Day](#)
- May 1 - [Asian Pacific American Heritage Month](#)
- May 1 - [Jewish American Heritage Month](#)
- May 2 - [National Day of Prayer](#)
- May 6 - [Thai Coronation-Day](#)
- May 10 - [Military Spouse Appreciation Day](#)
- May 12 – [Mother's Day](#)
- May 18 - [Armed Forces Day](#)
- May 27 – [Memorial Day](#)

Acting Post Commander Ted Potyrala



A word from the Commander...

Fellow Legionnaires, April was an exciting month for us. We made the donation to Tawanchai, had a social gathering, and we held the meeting away from Ubon. The donation is always a good time. I wish more of you could attend. When the director, professor, doctors and staff take the time to meet with us, you would see for yourself the appreciation they have.

Because of us going to Khon Kaen, we decided to have our meeting there. It was an opportunity for members that cannot make the trip to Ubon to attend a meeting in person. It also showed us that we can have future meetings at different locations using our Kandao. No matter if we are in Ubon, Khon Kaen, or Korat, the meetings are the same as if we were in Ubon. Unfortunately, for obvious reasons, we cannot take the meetings to the US. I would like to see us travel to other parts of Thailand on a quarterly basis but probably keep Ubon as our base of operations.

We also took advantage of being in Khon Kaen to have a social at the hotel which went well. Members, wives, and friends all had a good time meeting each other and getting to know one another. This was followed the next day at Mark and Thippawan Faralli's home where they had a cookout. Again, another opportunity to get to know one another. They did this all on their own. What great people.

Our post is so different from other posts. Since we are so spread out you may never meet some other members. Getting involved with the post by holding an office or hosting a cookout or even doing something with a local school and having members participate helps bond us together. We may have members that can't travel to meetings so we could take a meeting to them. Camaraderie keeps our post alive.

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POST TH01 OFFICERS 2023 MEMBERSHIP YEAR

Acting COMMANDER – Ted Potyrala
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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Billy Holland
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MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Michael Baines
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MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Michael Cook
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Ted Potyrala - Membership Chair



Our membership keeps on growing. We are now at 88 members. Membership for 2025 will begin in July. As you are aware, members make it possible for our post to exist. We have done some wonderful work whether it is for our members or community. Later I will write about the accomplishment your post has done.

There are four ways to renew:

The first way to renew is the yearly renewal. This can be done by going online at <https://www.legion.org/renew> and clicking "Renew." You only need your Member ID number, your last name, and a credit card. You can also pay your dues in cash (either US dollars or Baht), bank transfer, and USA check. Contact Adjutant Ludwig for further information on the various payment methods.

The second way to renew is opting for the auto renewal. All you have to do is sit back and your membership is automatically renewed.

The third way to renew is to become a Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) member. Depending on your age, this could be expensive.

The fourth way to renew is a new program where the American Legion allows you to renew for three years and the price would be locked in at the current year's rate. National is raising their dues by \$5.00 for the 2025 membership year which starts July 1, 2024. You can avoid that increase by renewing for three years now. You pay upfront for the three years. No one will bother you for three years. That alone makes it worth it. Below is an article from the American Legion explaining more about the three-year program.

“More than 8,000 American Legion members have taken advantage of the new multiyear membership option for renewals and new joins. Ready to lock-in a three-year membership before the national per-capita dues increase goes into effect? It’s easy. Here’s how:

- For renewals, visit legion.org/renew and select the three-year membership option.
- For new joins, visit legion.org/join and select the three-year membership option.

“We have wanted this multiyear option for our members, and now that it’s here, the excitement for it shows in the number of Legionnaires who have taken advantage of it,” National Membership & Post Activities Committee Chairman Matt Jabaut said. “The multiyear membership option saves members from receiving renewal notices every year, and it’s another great benefit to being an American Legion member.”

The American Legion’s national per-capita dues will increase from \$18.50 to \$23.50 starting with the 2025 membership year. The \$5 increase will go into effect July 1, 2024.

Reminders about multiyear membership:

- Multiyear membership sign-up is only available on the national American Legion website (legion.org/renew and legion.org/join). Current or potential members cannot renew or join for a three-year membership at the post level or through MyLegion.org.
- Payment for the three-year membership is upfront.
- There is not a discounted rate with the three-year membership.
- Membership cards will still be sent annually by Legion posts.
- Those who sign up for a multiyear membership will not receive a renewal notice during the time they have signed up for the multiyear membership.”

Adjutants Corner
by Jeff Ludwig



The annual Post elections are almost here. Per our Bylaws, we have two types of elections, ballot election and open election. To have a ballot election members must request it at the February Post Membership meeting. That is to allow time to prepare ballots. In the open elections members who are present at the meeting both in person and online vote for the nominee of their choice. The commander will close the nominations just prior to the election. We would start with the Commander Position and move on down the list. The nominees for a particular position would normally leave the room until the votes are cast. If the nominee is online, we would ask them to step away until the votes are cast. Per Roberts Rules of Order, if there is only one nominee, the Adjutant would declare the nominee elected by acclamation. Members can only hold one elected position.

If you want to learn more on the election process consult the current Post Bylaws and Roberts Rule of Order. If you do not have a copy of the current Post Bylaws contact me and I will send it to you. Below is a list of the elected Positions:

- a. Post Commander
- b. Post 1st Vice Commander
- c. Post 2nd Vice Commander
- d. Post Finance Officer
- e. Post Chaplain
- f. Post Judge Advocate
- g. Sergeants at Arms
- h. Public Affairs Officer
- i. Three Members at Large

If you want to nominate someone and they will accept the nomination, just send me their name and I will add them to the nomination list. I will send an updated list every week up to the elections on May 8, 2024. Again, we strongly encourage you to self-nominate for any position you are interested. We need new ideas and new perspectives to help us grow as a Post. It's up to the Post members what direction we want the Post to go and to grow.

POST SERVICE OFFICER...LARRY HAYNIE



Greetings Comrades,

My Fellow Comrades;

I first arrived at U-Tapao Air Base, Thailand in 1975. Little did I know that my coming to Thailand would change my life forever. As a young Air Force Security Police Dog Handler,

I mostly saw U-Tapao Air Base at night, as I walked a post with my dog. The rain, the heat and the mosquitoes were enough to drive anyone crazy.

I met my first wife on U-Utapao at the NCO Club. She came with a group of other Thai women to watch Thai Boxing and probably look for a prospective American boyfriend. As it were, we both hit it off and were together ever since. 44 years we remained together, until she passed away 5 years ago.

For 33 years my wife followed me all over the world. I had promised my wife that one day I would bring her home. Fourteen years ago, I fulfilled my promise. How many of my fellow veterans have also brought their Thai wives back home, and discovered that living here in Thailand was a life-changing experience for them?

We as Americans live in a whole new world here. We willingly give up many things we were used to in the U.S. We make the sacrifices for the sake of our wives and families; but I believe we are happier for doing so.

Like myself, I hope my fellow veterans have found peace and happiness living in Thailand and remain dedicated to caring for yourself and your family as well. As our Post Service Officer, I am also dedicated to helping my fellow veterans and their families when the need arises.

Larry J Haynie
PSO, TH01-Ubon

Events:

Post Membership meeting at Khon Kaen Thailand

We successfully held our first offsite monthly Post membership meeting on April 10, 2024. The members met at the Tawanchai Foundation Conference room where we held and conducted the meeting. The quality of the video and sound were very good.



Tawanchai Donation Ceremony

On April 10, 2024, American Legion Post TH01 in Thailand along with VFW Post 10217 in Korat Thailand Donated \$1,000 each to the Tawanchai Foundation located in Khon Kaen Thailand.



The Tawanchai Foundation repairs, counsels and supports families with children born with cleft palate, lips and other cranial deformities at **no cost** to the families. This was our third year in supporting them. Last year the VFW joined with us to commit to yearly donations. Kids can be very cruel to others with deformities. What better way to help by giving a child an equal shot at a normal life. This article has also been posted on the American Legion blog titled Legiontown. You can access it by clicking on this link, <https://www.legiontown.org>



Social and Barbeque at Khon Kaen

Last month, April 10 the post headed up to Khon Kean to deliver our donation to the Tawanchai Foundation. The evening before the meeting we had a social gathering at the Steak House at the Kosa Hotel. There were approximately 20 in attendance including wives and friends.



We set up a table in memory of Bruce Templeman and gave a toast to our fallen Commander.



We then proceeded to enjoy the food and many different discussions. It was a great way to meet and learn about each other. We need to do this more often. After our the Tawanchai Foundation donation ceremony, Mark Faralli and his wife Parichat invited us to a cookout at his home. He put out quite a spread and since he was a cook in the Army, the food was excellent. He even provided containers for taking food home. This was a great gesture. This is what the Post is all about. We are members of one big family. Thank you Mark and Parichat for having us over.



Featured Member:
Sal Salzarulo



On 12 April 2024, Comrade Sal Salzarulo was at a temple near Mukdahan Thailand helping serve food to approximately 50 students. The temple held a program for the village children playing games and interaction without the use of cell phones. The goal was trying to get the students from spending an over amount of time playing games on their cell phones. Just of another example of our members getting involved in their local community and youth activities. Thank You Sal.



May Birthdays

- Donald Badtram
- Joseph Cardeiro
- Larry Haynie
- Wayne Jortner
- Stan Line
- David Monninger
- Frank Paolo
- Henry Witmer
- Wayne Wright



Chaplain's Prayer – Post TH01 Chaplain Rob Davis

*O Eternal God,
Who art a shield and buckler to all who put
their trust in thee, bless us, thy servants, and
the Army in which we serve.*

*Lead us and guide us by thy Good Spirit,
strengthen and defend us by thy might, that we
may be to our land a sure defense against every
enemy.*

*Support us in the day of battle, and in the time of peace keep us
safe from all evil: endow us with courage and loyalty, and grant
that in all things we may serve thee and our country without
reproach.*

*Let the light of thy countenance, O God, shine upon our comrades
departed, that they may go on from strength to strength in thy
Heavenly Kingdom.*

*Strengthen us in our resolve to keep faith with all patriots and
comrades-in-arms by fearlessly maintaining our liberties so nobly
won.*

*Grant us thy help, O God, that we, the members of the United
States Army, may valiantly fulfill our role in the Armed Forces of
our country as a sure, strong arm for national defense and a power
for the establishment of a just and lasting peace.*

Amen.

Chaplain (MG) Luther D. Miller



Safety Message: Distracted Driving Awareness

Distracted driving can be hazardous to both you and drivers on the road. We live in a day and age where technology is readily available, even in the car. And technology can often lead to driving while distracted. Understanding the implications of driving facing distractions and vital statistics related to while distracted is essential. That especially true here in Thailand where the traffic laws are rarely enforce, resulting a hazardous road condition. Here it is common to have motorcycles passing on the right and left or going the wrong way on the road. Motorist commonly run stop signs or red lights. If you get distracted while driving in Thailand, it is not a question of if you will have an accident but when. Thai roads are some of the most dangerous in the world. Today we'll look at how common this is in the USA and what steps you can take to help prevent it in your vehicle both in the USA and Thailand.



other
this
while
driving

Distracted driving statistics in the USA

- Distracted driving accounts for more than 3,000 fatalities per year in the USA.
- Most distracted driving accidents are caused by cell phone usage and electronic devices, such as text messaging and utilizing apps on cell phones.
- More than 400,000 serious injuries are caused by distracted driving each year.
- Distracted drivers are nearly six times more likely to cause car crashes than those caused by drunk driving.
- Most distracted drivers are between the ages of 15 – 20 years old.
- More than 80% of drivers admit to driving while distracted. More than a million motor vehicle crashes are caused by distracted driving every year.
- More than 14% of fatal traffic crashes are caused by cell phone use.
- Distracted driving is, by far, one of the most common causes of car accidents.



- Car accidents are rising because of cell phones and other mobile devices while driving.

Fatality statistics linked to distracted driving

Driving while distracted can lead to accidents resulting in severe automobile damage and injuries, and fatal crashes can also occur.

- Each day, nearly 11 teenagers die because of [texting and driving](#).
- Distracted driving contributes to more than 9 percent of driving fatalities.
- Each year, more than 1.35 million deaths occur worldwide while on the road. Distracted driving is the leading contributing factor to this figure.

Distracted driving and everything you need to know about it

Distracted driving is driving while preoccupied with other activities. These activities take away your attention from the road and can be incredibly risky.

There are several types of distracted driving categories, and all are equally dangerous. Let's take a look at some of the various types of distractions that can occur:

Cognitive: These distractions occur when you stop focusing on your driving and start focusing on everything else. This is common when you're exhausted and are, in fact, probably too tired to drive. Emotions tend to play a role in this category as well. Those with a lot on their minds tend to deal with cognitive distractions.

Visual: Visual distractions are distractions that steer your eyes off the road. Kids in the back seat and passengers riding next to you are perfect examples of these driver distractions.

Manual: These distractions occur when you take your hands off the steering wheel for a moment. Examples would be eating, drinking, or using a cell phone to text or find a new song on your playlist.

Auditory: Auditory distractions occur when different sounds distract you. Examples include loud music playing in your car or talking with children or passengers.

Driving behaviors that lead to distracted driving

Driving while preoccupied is far more common than you may think. Most drivers are probably guilty of displaying one of the following behaviors while driving on the road:

- Using handheld devices, like a cell phone or a GPS
- Smoking cigarettes

- Talking with passengers in your car
- Texting while driving
- Social media use while driving
- Grabbing items from the back seat of your car
- Putting makeup on
- Fumbling with music selections
- Drinking or eating while driving
- Talking on the phone

When you're busy focusing on things other than the road, your processing time is slowed, and you may be more apt for a car accident. It's important to eliminate distractions as much as possible to ensure safe travels while on the road.

How to prevent distracted driving

Just because distracted driving seems pretty common doesn't mean you have to partake. It can be easily preventable with a bit of work and dedication. When we work to prevent distracted driving, we potentially save lives out in traffic. When you're driving, be sure to follow these steps for safe driving:

- Try not to multitask while driving.
- Ensure children are properly restrained in car seats and pets are buckled in and not loose.
- Remember always to use your seat belts when driving.
- Don't text while driving. Many handheld cell phones have driving modes installed on phones to limit distractions while driving and to turn devices into hands-free devices.
- Pull over to talk on the phone. Conversations can lead to distractions, so it's best to pull off the road if you need to take a phone call.
- Make sure you set up your GPS before you begin driving. Doing this will limit the times you have to fumble through your GPS when you should be driving with both hands on the wheel.
- Make sure you keep your eyes on the road at all times. Avoid applying makeup, smoking cigarettes, and eating while driving.
- Try not to allow too many passengers in your vehicle at once. Passengers often create distractions for the driver.

REF: <https://www.agilerates.com/advice/auto/distracted-driving-statistics/> WRITTEN BY: Julia Matseikovich;
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