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Any Department Officer, Committee Chair, Program Director or Post can input material to this newsletter. Input is due the Last week of the month, not later than the 26th of the month for next month’s newsletter.

Department Calendar

Birthdays
US COAST GUARD 04 August
Jerald Bass GR05 07 August
Aubrey Lee GR13 10 August
Teresa Botereo GR07 13 August
Michael Umland GR06 14 August
Stephanie Keys GR01 15 August
Ulla Hale GR79 18 August
Gilbert Wells PO01 31 August

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My fellow Legionaries

I hope that all of you had a great 4th of July. On the 5 of July I attended GR13’s 4th of JULY Party along with Adjutant James Settle All that were there had a great time and brought the Legion closer together, my cap is off to those that organized this event, it was well planned and executed. Commander Horst Schulte and his post members are still working hard to serve the Veterans, the Community, State and Nation; their programs are ongoing, although there are no Military Communities to serve. On the 12th of July I attended GR09’s, Retirement get together event, with Adjutant Settle, Judge Advocate Abernathy, AltNecMan Miller, Vice Commander Aman, and SERGEANT-AT-ARMS Rittenberg. We all and I do mean all of us had a tremendous time at this event, which was well planned and organized by past commander Lindsey. I hope that your 4th of July Celebration where ever you were, was a happy and safe one. I also had the opportunity to attend GR 42 General Membership Meeting; it was a very good meeting. I also had the opportunity to talk with the NEC MAN Marshall, Service Officer Hall, VCAL Kane, Vice Commander Ashe, Vice Commander Aman, and Vice Commander Hanchak we discussed some issues which affect our organization. I believe this year we should be able to work together to make this the best Department at National. While planning your events for the year, don’t forget “REMINDER” The 50% target date is 1 September. In closing I want to say Thank You to all the members of the Department for all you have done to keep the Department of France strong during this trying year. As always, I stress to all of you to take a few moments out of your busy day and say a small prayer for all of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines, that are still in harm’s way that they may return home safely to their loved ones. May God bless you all. If you are having any problems please do not hesitate to contact your Post Officers, Department VC, or myself.

For GOD and Country
Joe D. Brown
Department Commander
From the Department Adjutant:
My Fellow Legiornaries,

I had the opportunity to visit GR13 on the 5th of July to celebrate with them their 4th of July activities. It was a well planned and executed event; I met many new Legionaries, and had the chance to talk to some of the members of GR13. I was really impressed with their commitment to the local Community, and the Legion Programs. On the 12th of July I found myself in Neuln attending a Retiree grill party. The food and drink were plentiful, and I, along with all the others had a wonderful time. A well planned event, thanks to Comrade Lindsey’s support of the event. Time is running out, if you have not sent off for your Absentee Ballot yet. If you have not, here is a site where you can fill out the request on line and either E-mail it to yourself, or print it out sign and date it and send it off to your state. www.votefromabroad.org
Those of you that supply inputs to the Department Newsletter please send your input to americanlegion@hotmail.com. In closing please, remember if you need to contact me I am just an E-mail away pisces@conline.de. Please keep those in harm’s way and their families, not only in your thoughts but your prayers as well.

James M. Settle  
Department Adjutant

NO REPORT FOR THIS MONTH
William Marshall  
Department NECman

Vice Commander’s Corner  
Vice Commander at Large Liam Kane
BE02, DK01, FR01, FR05, IR02, IR03, IT01, GC01, NL01,  
PO01, SP292, CH01

To all members of Dept. France I wish to thank you all for kindness to me and all the Kane’s on the death of our Brother Joe .we will be having a Special Mass on this Saturday and you will be prayed for at same time.

July was quiet but I still managed to met a few people and Posts. I attended Irelands, National Day of Remembrance, and so did members of all 3 Irish Posts. We were featured on live television broadcast and mentioned by name (i.e. Irish Posts of The American Legion).

I met with Department, Commander, Department Adjutant., and Vice Commanders Ashe and Hanchak in Heilbronn at Charlie’s birthday party. I spoke to Vice Commander’s Gray and Aman on the phone. I was in contact with most of my allocated posts during the month and all seemed to be in Holiday mood.

Please don’t forget to get out and collect your renewals the earlier the better.

Liam Kane  
Vice Commander at Large

Vice Commander Shawn Ashe  
GR05, GR06, GR30
Greetings my fellow Legionaries, Auxiliary, and S.A.L. Members
NO INPUT FOR THIS MONTH
Shawn Ashe  
Department Vice Commander

Vice Commander Robert Gray  
GR03, GR07, GR09, GR14
.
First, I would wish everyone safe travels and enjoyment in the summer months. In the month of July, I had the opportunity to visit 3 of my posts. The first being, GR03. in visitingGR03, I was impressed with the loyalty and ability of the legionnaires and how they performed. The next post I visited was GR14, for this post it has spirit inside. At the time of taking over this post as Vice Commander, there was a fellow legiorniary who had underwent a heart operation. The legionnaires name is Carl Hackworth. As at the present time, he’s doing great, he’s is now out of the hospital. I had witnessed to leadership, to caring, and the ability to stand with our fellow legionnaires in time of need. I also had a great opportunity to stop by GR07, and visit their new post. As I stopped by, I saw legionnaires working proudly, to bring up a new post home. My fellow legionnaires the spirit of what America is about is still alive. During the month of August, I realize a lot of you will be on vacation, to include myself, I wish all you again, an enjoyable and safe vacation. I look forward to seeing everyone next month. Take care.

Robert Gray  
Department Vice Commander

Vice Commander Frank Hanchak  
GR01, GR20, GR45
Are we wasting an opportunity?

I had a conversation with a member recently. He summed up a talk with the question: Are we wasting an opportunity?

Let me go back to the beginning of the conversation.

We were talking about all the talent we have as Officers in The Department of France. All of these people have all of this responsibility.

I don’t know the publication numbers of this newsletter. I suspect that there are over 100 Email addresses that directly receive these articles. I also suspect that by the time the Post Commanders and Adjutants forward the Newsletter to the membership, that number can duplicate one hundred fold! Therefore, our policies and communications are theoretically being viewed by thousands of people!

What is our responsibility to these people? And more importantly, are we wasting that opportunity?
Last month, at the Department Convention, I was asked by a member to explain why they should vote for me as opposed to another candidate. I replied; “Vote with your heart”, I don’t know if he voted for me or not. That is not important. What IS important is the lesson I learned from that conversation. As a result, I have a new message: WORK YOUR HEART!

Any candidate for any office will promise many things. The way we will know if we voted for the right person will be if he is actually working his promise! Therefore, I ask all members of the Department of France to Work Your Heart! If you were elected to a position, thank you for working that position. If you were entrusted with a committee, thank you for working that committee. If you are an active member of this Department and working at your Post Home, thank you for working your heart. Let your Department officers know what we need to do to make this a better organization that better serves the membership. Each of us has a talent that can be used to work what is in our hearts. Let’s use that talent!

Don’t forget to register to VOTE! There are only about 120 days till November 4th. Go to http://www.fvap.gov/ for details. Take a moment NOW and go online and get registered and start the process to submit your absentee ballot.

NOTE: New mobile phone, and new Email address!
0171 473 9782 frank.hanchak@gmail.com

Frank J. Hanchak
Vice Commander
GR13, GR42, GR79, GR1982, IR63

NO INPUT FOR THIS MONTH
Contact me at E-mail Address Jerrya503@aol.com or phone number 07307-4492 or 07307-5752
For God and Country
Jerry Aman
Department Vice Commander

Department Chaplain Ronald Moore

Chaplain’s Page August 2008

Special Days/Legion Events: Summer Youth programs and school preparation.
Christian Religious Days: Aug. 1- Lammas / Fast in honor of the Holy Mother (Ortho); Aug. 6- Transfiguration of the Lord (Ortho); Aug. 15- Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Cath)/Dormition of the Theotokos (Ortho); Aug. 29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist
Jewish Holidays (Year 5768): 10th- Tisha B’Av
Islamic Holidays: 18th- Lailat al Bara-ah; 31st- Lailat al Miraj. Please visit the church, temple, synagogue or mosque of your choice.

Post Everlasting reported to July 30th:
John (Jack) Koehane
Brother of Michael Coyne IR-63

Comrade Steve Dean, GR-07
Prayers for the Sick & Ill:
George Hall, GR-03
Shawn Ashe, GR-42
Doug Clemence, GR-06
Nola Maloney, GR-03 and Past Department Commander
John H. Miller, GR-1982 and PDC (new Alt NECman as of August 28, 2009)
Phil Gatchell, GR-03
Edward Hayes, GR-03
Wife of Post GR03 Comrade Robert Pierce
Kenneth Grasser, GR-09
Brenda Dearborn, Dept of Maine present Americanism Chair and past chaplain
Harold M. Wild, GR-13
Ronald (Ron) Hansen, GR-06
Marlene Watson, Widow of GR-13 charter member William Watson
Paul Johnson, Dept of Wyoming 3rd District VC and Past Chaplain
Cindy Hogan, wife of a soldier stationed in Iraq
Donnie Swearengin, GR 09
Larry “Yard Dog” Ewerds, GR-07
Edwin F. Hoffman, GR-13
Robert Downs, GR-79
Brian Charters, IR-63
Michelle Gerdeman, daughter of Comrade John Gerdeman, Sr. GR-07
Harry Hall, GR-42
Rance Cottingham, GR-09
Carl Hackworth, GR-14
Isadore Pink, GR-07
are undergoing, were undergoing or were scheduled for, medical treatment.
No other deaths or other illnesses were reported to me, but we continue to pray for those comrades, family members and friends of the Legion who have passed away or are ill.

Greetings Comrades,
Greetings Sisters and Brothers of the American Legion Family,

August may seem like a quiet month for some, but God always has something for us to do. Our daily lives take quite a bit of energy with school holidays, summer camps and various youth activities, not to mention the energy needed to live our everyday lives.

Sometimes we are at a loss to know whether God really cares for us. Someone will say there is no God, others will prove scientifically how the world came about. For those of us who know God created the world, everything is fine. The founding fathers of our nation knew it. The founders of The American Legion knew it. That faith is uplifting and the knowledge that God is part of our daily lives is priceless. Our Preamble always reaffirms my faith and being with my comrades, brothers and sisters makes me realize how much God has blessed me.
If you feel the need for assurance about God occasionally, that is acceptable and doesn’t make you a bad person or unbeliever. Now you know the reason why I always say go to the church, temple, synagogue or mosque of your choice, where you can meet with others who share your belief in God.

If the above holds true for going to your religious institution, then it also certainly holds true for your affiliation within The American Legion Family. Get together and see how much energy and ideas you can generate. Besides that, you get a chance to get together with a great bunch of people.

I’ll be getting together with a great bunch of people too. I’ll be riding in the 2008 Legacy Run again and hope to see a lot of fellow Legionnaires from last year. I’ll also meet a lot of new ones since this year promises to be bigger than last year. You are in my thoughts and I can always tell you with conviction that God loves you 24/7 and it’s always toll-free to talk to God.

God bless our servicemen and women, as well as their families, no matter where they serve. Please bless and keep safe those who leave Europe to go down range.

Service to God and Country!
Pastor Ronald Moore,  
Dept of France Chaplain  
Home: +49-(0)6196-569026  
Fax: +49-(0)6196-569027  
Mobile: +49-(0)172-7417812  
Email: revronmoore@yahoo.de  
Rev. Ronald Moore  
Department Chaplain

George Hall Department Service Officer  
The Department of France has a long History of very good Services Officers; I hope I can live up to that stranded.

So what would you have me do?  
Check the Department web page for good Information on upcoming events for Retirees and Veterans and the Widow.  
Plan your days on earth and be ready for the end.

Please call me or e-mail, if you need help with DFAS, SSA, VA, TRI CARE,  
Office: 06221-57-8236  
Home: 06223-5475  
Mobile: 0171-937-9871  
e-mail: hallgt@yahoo.com

Yours in Comradeship  
George T. Hall Sr.  
Department Service Officer

Sons of The American Legion Frank Hanchak  
Fellow Sons of The American Legion,  
I thank all Sons of The American Legion who are still serving.  
Don’t forget to mark your calendars for the 2nd Sons of The American Legion Detachment Executive Committee meeting. The meeting will be in Kaiserslautern on Saturday, September 27th. I hope to see many of you there.  
As of this writing, I have visited NO squadrons within this detachment. I hope to visit yours soon. Please contact me and let me know when your next meeting or event will be.  
Thanks to all who serve our Organization and the youth of our community.

Frank J. Hanchak  
Commander,  
Detachment of France  
Sons of The American Legion  

Americanism Carl Hackworth  
NO REPORT FOR THIS MONTH  
Carl Hackworth  
Americanism Chairman

An article from Gilbert Wells (Reported by New York Times)

The New York Times  
nytimes.com  

July 25, 2008  
Editorial  
Wounded Warriors, Empty Promises

The bad news about the Army’s treatment of wounded soldiers keeps coming. The generals keep apologizing and insisting that things are getting better, but they are not. The latest low moment for Army brass came on Tuesday in Washington, where a subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee held a hearing to examine the sorry state of the Army Medical Action Plan. That’s the plan to prevent the kind of systematic neglect and mistreatment exposed by The Washington Post last year at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. After a flurry of apologies, firings, investigations and reports, the Army resolved to streamline and improve case management for wounded soldiers. Under the plan, “warrior transition units” would swiftly deliver excellent care to troops so they could return to duty or be discharged into the veterans’ medical system. Each soldier would be assigned a team to look over his or her care: a physician, a nurse and a squad leader. It all sounded sensible and comprehensive.

It has not worked out so well. Staff members of the House subcommittee who visited numerous warrior transition units June 2007 to February found a significant gap between the Army leadership’s optimistic promises and reality.
Among other things, the Army failed to anticipate a flood of wounded soldiers. Some transition units have been overwhelmed and are thus severely understaffed. At Fort Hood, Tex., last month, staff members found 1,362 patients in a unit authorized for 649 — and more than 350 on a waiting list. Of the total, 311 were identified as being at high risk of drug overdose, suicide or other dangerous behavior. There were 38 nurse case managers when there should have been 74. Some soldiers have had to languish two months to a year before the Army decided what to do with them, far longer than the goal the Army set last year. Under skeptical questioning during a hearing in February, Lt. Gen. Eric Schoomaker, the Army surgeon general, told the subcommittee that “for all intents and purposes, we are entirely staffed at the point we need to be staffed.” He also said: “The Army’s unwavering commitment and a key element of our warrior ethos is that we never leave a soldier behind on the battlefield — or lost in a bureaucracy.” That was thousands of wounded, neglected soldiers ago. There are now about 12,500 soldiers assigned to the warrior transition units — more than twice as many as a year ago. The number is expected to reach 20,000 by this time next year. The nation’s responsibility to care for the wounded from Iraq and Afghanistan will extend for decades. After Tuesday’s hearing, we are left pondering the simple questions asked at the outset by Representative Susan Davis, the California Democrat who is chairwoman of the military personnel subcommittee: Why did the Army fail to adequately staff its warrior transition units? Why did it fail to predict the surge in demand? And why did it take visits from a Congressional subcommittee to prod the Army into recognizing and promising — yet again — to fix the problem?

Gilbert Wells

Portugal PO01 Adjutant

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Information on Legacy Run submitted by Department Chaplain Rev. Ronald Moore

Legacy Run 2008 August 2008

Greetings all of you special folks in The American Legion, Department of France,

We started a little late for this year’s Legacy Run and setting up the AL PE Messenger Service within our department. Knowing that, we have taken steps to get things rolling for next year with the start of our provisional AL PE Service for the Department of France.

Hopefully all Posts received the information package per email that the Department Vices were requested to forward to their Posts. With the installation of the AL PE Messenger system, we can generate interest in the American Legion and possibly increase prospective member interest. Many veterans seem to be fascinated by the idea that The American Legion has a motorcycle program. It changes their idea of an old veteran’s club and makes us into an interesting and vital bunch of folks who are having fun. That’s what we do, so let’s use it to our advantage.

If you have checks you wish to have delivered to the National Commander during the National Convention, please make out your U.S. check to A.L. Legacy Scholarship Fund. I will be participating in the Run from Indy to Phoenix and can receive your checks up until August 5th (your last date to put it in the mail to my attention) at the following address:

Ronald Moore
4030 - 19th St NE
Washington DC 20018

Otherwise, I am sure that you can get the checks to one of the National Convention attendees (Bill Marshall, Joe D Brown, Liam Kane or Gino Cantu and ask them to pass it on to me at the convention.

I’m riding on the Run because it’s fun, it’s for a good cause and it gives the Department of France a lot of visibility because we send someone from the furthest away. I’m proud to wear the patch with Department of France on my vest and happy to let them know the Department of France is one of the best departments of The American Legion. As I mentioned in the July newsletter, I ride for and with you. Thank you in advance for your support and help. For God and Country!

Ronald Moore, Dept of France Chaplain
AL PE Messenger Service Coordinator
Cell Phone from August 5th to October 2nd: 1-202-758-4265
Email: revronmoore@yahoo.de

PONY EXPRESS BADGE - REAL SIZE IS 1 3/8" PIN

PONY EXPRESS MESSENGER
I do hereby swear before God, that during my engagement as a Pony Express Messenger, I will under all circumstances, conduct myself Honestly, and be faithful to my assigned Duties, and no part of my time will be been put to any course to the prejudice of my God.
Please remember, only donation checks will be transported by any messenger. No goods or other mail of any sort can be accepted or delivered by the messengers. All envelopes will be subject to opening and inspection, no exceptions.

Chaplain Rev. Ronald Moore

Information on Tricare

Submitted by Gilbert Wells

TRICARE Overseas Program Maximum Allowable Charges Reductions and Claims Processing Roadblocks

We are at a critical turning point concerning our battle to retain our earned medical benefits. We need all the help we can get to let the service organizations know that you are not happy with what the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) is doing to military retirees and their families living in the Philippine, Panama and eventually most other countries overseas.

The problem is that TMA intends to reduce the maximum allowable charge levels to the point that about 10 to 20 percent of inpatient care costs will be above these levels requiring the beneficiary to pay their co-pay and the amount over the allowed charge. The same will happen with 90% or more of ancillary care. Things like blood tests, x-rays, Ultrasound examinations, MRIs and many others. Our cost share for ancillary services will exceed 56% starting 1 October 2008.

The second problem is TMA, on the recommendation of the DODIG, added multiple road blocks to approving claims submitted by beneficiaries; these road blocks do not apply to providers and defrauders that submit claims, only us. There is now a requirement that you provide a cancelled check, credit card receipt or bank statement showing you withdrew the amount of money spent to pay for your medical care and the date needs to coincide with they payment for the care for withdrawals. Now WPS tells some retirees this is required on all care that exceeds $500 but when they require this seems to be pretty much up to the claims processor. This is in addition to the requirement that an itemized bill and official receipt be submitted; in the U.S. beneficiaries don’t even have to pay the bill or show a receipt to process a claim. For some they are asking that the beneficiary obtain and pay for copies of all their medical records pertaining to their condition and send them to WPS. Even if the provider you see is certified but happens to see you at a different location from the one where he was originally certified the claim will be denied under the premise that the provider is not certified. For example if the provider is certified at his clinic location but happens to see you at the hospital the claim will be denied for non-certification. Some retirees here have tens of thousands of dollars tied up in pending and denied claims and need to find alternate funds to continue their treatment.

This is not right!!!

A number of military service organizations have come together to possible take these issues on for us and they have scheduled a meeting with TMA on 6 August for them to explain the processes. My feeling is they know enough to not buy into TMAs song and dance. However, these organizations haven’t heard from very many people on this issue and some have voiced a concern that maybe this is not a real issue if the very people affected don’t care enough to contact them with their concerns.

So it is imperative that we increase the number of contacts to these organizations. A simple email stating that you do not agree with the TRICARE Management Activity changes to overseas maximum allowable charges and the added roadblocks to claims processing will alert them that you do care.

That can’t take to much time now can it?

To make it even easier I’ve included a number of organizations, with email address, that I know are already on board with these issues. Simply send an email to five or ten of them telling them in one or two paragraphs what you think. Who knows you might save the life of a retiree or family member.

Do it now, don’t put it off!

Air Force Association  grl@afa.org  Attn: Shane Barker

Air Force Sergeants Association  staff@hqafsa.org  Attn: Robert Price

Association of Military Surgeons of the U.S.  Amsus@amsus.org  Attn: Steve Mirick

Association of the United States Army  bloper@ausa.org  Attn: Judy Rudowski

Commissioned Officers Association of the USPHS  jrensberger@coausphs.org  Attn: Judy Rensberger

Chief Warrant and Warrant Officers Association of the USCG  cwoauscg@verizon.net  Attn: Bob Lewis

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States  eangus@eangus.org  Attn: Frank Yoakum

Fleet Reserve Association  BobW@fra.org  Attn: Bob Washington

MOAA Military Officers Association of America  msc@moaa.org  Attn: John Class

National Association of Uniformed Services  rjones@naus.org  Attn: Rick Jones
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association  neraexec@nera.org  Attn: Joanne Elliott

National Guard Association of the United States  nngaus@ngaus.org  Attn: Pete Duffy

National Military Family Association  families@nmfa.org  Attn: Barbara Cohoon

Reserve Officers Association  mhanson@roa.org  Attn: Marshall Hanson

Society of Medical Consultants to the Armed Forces  margo@smcaf.org  Attn: Fred Sanford

The Retired Enlisted Association  treahq@trea.org  Attn: Deirdre Holleman

If you want more information on these issues go to  https://sites.google.com/site/militaryretireesoverseas/

Jim Houtsma
1SG Army (Ret)
Naga City, Bicol

officials, youth and other organizations,” Cmdr. Conatser said. “Whether a post mobilizes ten people or ten thousand, it is important that we reflect on the sacrifices made by thousands of Americans to preserve our liberties.”

In cities or towns where other organizations are already coordinating Freedom Walks, Legionnaires can participate in the event to show their support.

Each post that coordinates a Freedom Walk can be identified on the America Supports You – Freedom Walk website at:  http://www.americasupportsyou.mil/FreedomWalk/

Posts can download a four-page planning guide that lays out details on how to coordinate a walk in their town, obtain media materials and sign up as an event organizer.

“I hope that you will encourage members of your communities to come out for an hour or two and join The American Legion in this growing national tradition,” Conatser concluded.

POST EVENTS

GR13 4th of July Event 5 July 2008
GR13 4th of July Event 5 July 2008

GR09 Retirement Grill Party 12 July 2008

HAPPY 80th BIRTHDAY ROBERT COMMONS GR01
HAPPY 80TH BIRTHDAY ROBERT COMMONS GR01

POST HAPPENINGS

Below is a partial listing of Post and their General Membership Meetings and dates. If you would like to attend a post meeting, please contact the respective Commander and or the Adjutant.

GR01: First Wednesday day of the month at Post Home
GR03: First Thursday of the month Post Home
GR06: Second Wednesday of the month Post Home
GR07: First Tuesday of the month Post Home
GR13: Third Wednesday of the month Post Home
GR14: Second Wednesday of the month Post Home
GR42: Third Sunday of the month Post Home
GR79: Second Saturday of the month Post Home
GR1982: Third Wednesday of the month Post Home
PO01: Third Wednesday of the month Past Com. House
IR03: First Saturday in April, first Sat. in Oct for elections

Editor’s Note:
Please support your Newsletter, send all inputs to the below listed E-mail address. Note new suspense date for Newsletter inputs is the 26th of the month. Remember anyone in the Department can submit inputs to the Department Newsletter. 
americanlegion@hotmail.com
James M. Settle