

THE DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE JANUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER

THE AMERICAN LEGION
Department of France

Editor/Publisher
James M. Settle

Department Commander
Joe D. Brown

Adjutant
James M. Settle

National Executive Committeeman
William Marshall

Alternate NECman
Michael Umland

Department Vice-Commander At Large
Liam Kane

The Department of France is not a USAREUR & 7th Army approved private organization.

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 **Oratorical Contest Post**

GR01 - Recreation Center 10 January 2008 1800 hours

GR06 - Post Home 23 January 2008 1800 hours

GR03 - Heidelberg High School 26 January 2008 0900 hours

GR07 - Mannheim High School 26 January 2008 1000 hours

Department Finals- GR06 Stuttgart 23 February 2008 1300 hours

Birthdays

None

Department Commander's Corner



My fellow Legionaries

I wish all of you a healthy and safe 2008. I hope that all of you had a great Christmas and New Year's Events. I had the opportunity to visit many of the post within the Department, over the Holiday Season. I have met with most of the Post Officer's, and Members, and have a good feeling that all is going well with the Post's at this time. On the 22nd of December I along with the Department Adjutant, Comrade Settle, Vice Commander Comrade Hanchak, and Alternate National Executive Committeeman Comrade Umland attended John Wayne Post 79's Christmas Party; I must say the event was a great success, so successful, that the post membership had to set up more tables and chairs to accommodate the guest's that were present for the post yearly Christmas event. In addition Santa was present, and had gifts for all the children. I can safely say all there had a great time. My cap is off to those that organized this super event. Contacted all posts in, Germany, and all Department Officers. Was informed that Comrade Gatchell (GR03) is home and recovering, PDCDR John Miller (GR1982) is home awaiting space in a local German Hospital for further treatment, Comrade Hall (GR03) will be returning to the states for treatment on his eyes, and Comrade Carr (GR79) is recovering from the German Flu. For those of you that do not know I and Manuela were married on the 27th of December at the Rathaus here in Heilbronn, the church wedding will be held on the 10th of May 2008. I spent New Year's Eve and a part of New Year's Day in K-Town visiting fellow Legionaries, friends, and family members. We all had a great time bringing in the New Year. I must agree with the Department Adjutant Comrade Settle, that the Department Officers are not putting enough emphasis on the Newsletter, It's pretty sad when I have to call and request that the inputs be sent out to the editor. We have been doing this now for over six months, we all should know that the inputs are due the last week of the month, and as of next month's Newsletter not later than the 26th of the month. Let's all start supporting this Newsletter. Good news is that GR06, and GR 42 are over the TOP for 2008. 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 Legionnaires,

The rush of the holidays is now behind us, and we've welcomed in another new year. Happy 2008 to all of our Legionnaire readers! As we strive for new beginnings and fresh starts this New Year, make a resolution to help make this the best Department in National. We can do this by building on the foundations of our organization, at the post level, (the grassroots of The American Legion) remember every Post contributes to the Department and I am sure together we can make this Department the BEST of the BEST. Our Membership is down this year, from the same time last year; I challenge all of you to recruit or re-recruit those in your areas. I am not really impressed with the timely submission of the Newsletter inputs, here it is the 6th of January, and the Department Newsletter is still not published. Remember this is not my Newsletter it's yours, so please start to support it and get your inputs in on time, and remember pictures are always accepted, a picture is worth a thousand words. The new suspense date for Newsletter inputs is the 26th of each month this will give me time to work on the Newsletter, and hopefully have it published by the 1st of the month. Those of you that supply inputs to the Department Newsletter please send your input to americanlegion@hotmail.com In closing I wish all of you a GREAT 2008. Remember if you need to contact me I am just an E-mail away pisces@t-online.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

Department NECman's Comments

Robert Ragsdale got in on the ground floor of the Sons of The American Legion. But among his own family, he was last when it came to joining the fledgling organization. Ragsdale's World War I veterans father John P. Ragsdale, started the first SAL squadron in Indianapolis in 1932. Robert was the third member to join. The first two were his older brothers. In honor of Squadron of 133 of Post 133 in Indianapolis, Ragsdale was recognized during the SAL's 75th Convention in Reno. He is the oldest living Charter Member of the organization. Recognized as a distinguished guest Ragsdale received a certificate during the SAL Convention. "This was a celebration of my father for me "he said. He said it was honoring what he and my brothers did.

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

Greetings from Boston Mass. Having a small break here in Bean Town with my Sister and a few members of IR63, Hope you all had a Merry Christmas. My travels in December took me to a number of Posts. In Germany, my main business was to talk to our Department, Commander, J Brown. I visited Lisbon to install the Officers at Portugal Post 1 in Cascais . The Ceremony took place in the Portuguese Naval Academy, and it was followed by a beautiful meal served by members of the Portuguese Navy. It was great to see the Post Commander back after his illness... I returned home to Ireland just in time for IR 63 Christmas Celebrations.

During my stay here in the USA I will meet the Adjutant of Rome Post Lionel and also make contact with former National Commander Jake Comer, before returning home on January 15th. Let us all hope that 2008 will be a great year for our Members their Families, our Posts and the Great Department of France. We all need to make a HUGE EFFORT to keep our Membership up, and to carry out the many programs as set out in our Dept. we must encourage participation in the Oratorical Event and our many Awards both Post and Individual Hopefully we will all enjoy good Health for the next Year but don't forget those Fellow Members who are not as fortunate as those in good health be always alert to serve those in need.

WISHING YOU ALL A PROSPEROUS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

Liam Kane
Vice Commander at Large

Vice Commander Darrel Shannon
GR05, GR09, GR042

Greetings my fellow Legionaries, Auxiliary, and S.A.L. Members
Now that all the Holidays are over, and with the start of a New Year, I am sure that this Year will be a very successful one. Like with the Department Executive Committee Meeting that's coming up on the 15Th of March. GR79 will be hosting this event. We are now in the process of making this the best Department Executive Committee Meeting ever. Wishing all of you a very happy and prosperous New Year and may God Bless. Remember if you need to contact me you can reach me at dg.shannon@missouri.usa.com In closing please keep those who are defending our freedom and their families in your thoughts and in your prayers.

Darrel Shannon
Department Vice Commander

Vice Commander Keith Abernathy
GR01, GR06, GR07 and GR13

December was good to me this year. I got to attend the Christmas Party for Dwight D. Eisenhower Post GR13 in Augsburg. While I was there I presented awards for the Department Commander to three individuals for outstanding service and devotion to their Community, Post, Department and The American Legion. The awards went to the Adjutant, Comrade Aubrey Lee, the Second Vice, Comrade Nathaniel

Wiggins and the Sergeant At Arms, Comrade Robert Burdette. Congratulations to all of you for a job well done. I could not stay as long as I would have liked because of the Christmas Party for our own William D. Nelson Post GR09. We all had a wonderful time at our respective parties with the exception of me. I didn't win a thing at our raffle. My heartfelt congratulations to Kaiserslautern Post GR01 for the performance they put on for the Soldiers on the 14th of December. Other commitments kept me from attending, but, I was told that they had 16 Soldiers and over 40 guests. By Soldiers I mean Wounded Soldiers assigned to Landstuhl Army Hospital. Thank you very much Commander Michael Young and Post GR01.

Keith Abernathy
Department Vice Commander

Vice Commander Frank Hanchak
GR14, GR20, GR45, IR63

Like all of you, I want to insure that my family responsibilities are taken care of before anything else. With that in mind, I resolve to update all my important papers, certificates, and other legal and moral obligations. How about you? Have you updated your WILL recently? I will get mine squared away within the next 30 days. I hope you do too! I also want to insure my family is taken care of, should I answer the Last Roll Call any time soon. I have seen a few Legionnaires who did not take advantage of the wealth of knowledge and experience of our local Post and Department Service Officers. Too often, we keep putting off important stuff. We say we will get around to it soon. But, soon becomes later and it eventually falls off of our "to do" list. If you are not 100% sure that your financial business is updated and correct, PLEASE stop what you are doing (right now) and tell your spouse you want to talk to him/her about their care after you are gone. Diane and I recently purchased a safe. It houses all of our important stuff. I sleep peacefully at night knowing that she has everything she needs to go on should I no longer be at her side. I have been replying to my E-mail that I will begin using my G-mail account (frank.hanchak@gmail.com). That statement has been at the end of my responses for over two months. I still find people not using my G-mail account. Diane and I visited John Wayne Post GR-79 for their Christmas Celebration. It seems they were somewhat overwhelmed with guests. They had to set up a couple more tables to serve these guests. I thought to myself, it would be wonderful to have such "problems". The message I got from this experience is **SUPPORT** your Posts! I hope to see more overflowing functions in the future all through the Department. I hope that every event requires you to set up extra tables. Wouldn't that be WONDERFUL! Diane and Sarah (and Buffy too!), join me in wishing all of you a safe and restful Christmas Season and a Very Happy New Year! After the holidays, let's all get back to work and support the Commanders and members of our home posts! Make every event "standing room only"!

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

Frank J. Hanchak
Vice Commander

Vice Commander Jerry Aman
GR03, GR79, GR1982

NO INPUT FOR THIS MONTH

Contact me at E-mail Address Jerrya503@aol.com or phone number 07307-4492 or 073075752

For God and Country

Jerry Aman
Department Vice Commander
Department Chaplain Ronald Moore

Chaplain's Page January 2008
Special Days/Legion Events: 1st- New Year; 21st Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Christian Religious Days: 1st- Mary, Mother of God; 5th- Twelfth Night; 6th- Epiphany, Three Kings; 7th- Feast of the Nativity (Orth); 18-25th- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity; 25th- Conversion of St. Paul
Jewish Holidays (Year 5768): 22nd- Tu B'shvat
Islamic Holidays: 10th- Muharram (New Year); 19th- Ashura
Please visit the church, temple, synagogue or mosque of your choice.

Post Everlasting reported to January 1st:
Mother-in-law of David Greaux GR-42

Prayers have been offered for his family and friends. Please remember him and those who have passed away in your prayers also.

Prayers for the Sick & Ill:

George Hall, GR-03 (Back in the hospital)
Shawn Asche, IR-
Doug Clemence', GR-06
Nola Maloney, GR-03 and Past Department Commander
Tom Mayock, IR-63
John H. Miller, GR-1982 and Past Department Commander (rehospitalized)
Phil Gatchell, GR-03
Edward Hayes, GR-03
Wife of Post GR03 Comrade Robert Pierce
Kenneth Grasser, GR.09 (now out of the hospital)
Brenda Dearborn, present Historian and past chaplain of Dept of Maine
Harold M. Wild, GR13
Ronald (Ron) Hansen, GR-06 and this year's nominee as Post Legionnaire of the Year
Tom O'Keefe, IR-02
Barry Ryan, IR-02
Marlene Watson, Widow of GR-13 charter member William Watson
Paul Johnson, Dept of Wyoming Chaplain
Joe D. Brown, GR-79 and Department of France Commander

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.

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

Thank you God, we recognize one of your great wonders in that we are here in 2008 and still doing your work within the American Legion Family. Thank you for your many blessings during 2007 and please guide and accompany us again throughout this year also. Please continue to give us strength to watch over our veterans and their families.

“For God and Country”, are words that we all know and believe in. Our nation was built upon the principles of religious freedom and the use of the designation God may mean different entities for other religions. But we recognize the existence and guidance of a Supreme Being in the religions of Christianity, Islam and Judaism (alphabetical order) although each religion may have one or more names for this Supreme Being.

Americanism is not a dirty word, but rather the recognition of what we are and a pride in our country. This is one of the first times in the history of our country where so few have served so many in our military service. The individual serving in the military service today is not a statistic, but rather our comrade in arms. We, the people, need to do all in our power to support those few who do so much.

Politicians and public servants are elected or appointed to serve us, the people. They swear to uphold the constitution, watch out for us as their constituents and to help keep our community/nation strong and safe. Unfortunately they sometimes receive conflicting signals because we again are in a time where a few seem to be louder than the many.

The chaplaincy of The American Legion family is non-sectarian and non-denominational. It is also non-political and may not use its function for internal or external political influence. We are allowed to make general statements however, so I do ask you to inform yourself about the political issues and let your elected officials know where you stand and what you want. And most of all get out and vote to let your voice be heard.

Service to God and Country!

Pastor Ronald Moore,
Dept of France Chaplain
Home: 0049-(0)6196-569027
Mobile: 0049-(0)172-7417812
Email: revronmoore@yahoo.de
Rev. Ronald Moore
Department Chaplain

Boys State John Odom Sr.

I would like to start the New Year with a few words of thanks to those few Post of ours that have each year for the past 10 years

have provided some outstanding young men from their communities, now that we are at the mid way point, we need to start with our post selection of candidates and notifying. The Department of France of their desire to send a boy (s), to Boys' State. At our last DEC each Post that had previously participated in our program were provided a copy of the information, and guide lines for this year's program.

Additional information was published in our Department Newsletter. And in that communication, I asked for the post Commanders to provide names of their POC or Boys State Representatives. As of this date, only one of the five Post have responded, as always, a successful program will depend on timely input, cooperation, and coordination of all needed information. The following information is a statement from National Commander Marty Conatser in the November 2007 Dispatch. “Let's re-energize Boys State” “Two Illinois Legionnaires, Hayes Kennedy and Harold Card, created American Legion Boys State, believing there was a need for American youth to be trained in the workings of their local and state governments. The program paved the way for American Legion Boys Nation, a similar experience at the federal level in Washington. Boys State has spread throughout the nation and enjoyed continuing growth – until recently. In 1996, nearly 25,000 students participated in Boys State in 49 American Legion departments. This year, that number has dipped below 20,000. Some departments have experienced a moderate to steady increase in participants; others have dropped anywhere from 100 to 400 participants. During a recent Boys State National Conference in Indianapolis, program officials cited several reasons for the decline an increase in competing youth activities, fewer participating posts, and applications going out too late in the school year, among others. In my opinion, the most alarming reason given was that as post leader's age, they are failing to mentor younger Legionnaires on the importance of Boys State. One of the keys to any organization's future is the mentoring of younger members who will become the next generation of leaders. American Legion Boys State has been around for 72 years, successfully introducing young Americans to the inner workings of government. Doesn't it deserve the effort necessary to teach younger post members how to sustain and grow the program? Boys State, like every program, has a cost. The current fee per participant ranges anywhere from free (in Delaware) to as much as \$350 in some states. In most cases, these expenses are paid by the sponsoring Legion post, a local business or another community-based organization. I know that the rising cost of living is taking a toll on most of us, but Boys State shouldn't be seen as an expense. Rather, it falls under what I call the value of membership. Look at it as an investment in our nation's future. Since 1996, we've lost 5,000 Boys State participants. How many of those young men were would-be future senators, professional athletes, entrepreneurs, or maybe even president? The lessons learned at Boys State can and often do cultivate a desire to enter public service. Just as important, they educate America's youth about the responsibilities that come with being a citizen of our great country. It's worth our time and our investment to keep this program alive and well.”

Signed: Marty Coaster

NOTE:

The Maryland Boys State that our Department of France sends our Boy's each year, typically begins on Father's Day and runs through the following Saturday. Depart: Sat 14 June 2008 (Flag Day), Return: Sun 22 June 2008.

Eligibility Guidelines were previously provided. And Applications may be obtained through your local American Legion Post Boys State representative or Americanism representative. The Department of France is your sponsoring Department and will provide all the Post, High Schools, and Students and Parents the information required upon request. Please contact Department Boys' State Dir, (Comrade John Odom Sr.) by calling 0174-6935296 or by email: jhlolilbro@aol.com for more information.

John H. Odom, Sr
Boys' State Director Department of France
CMR 418, Box 3111
APO AE 09058
49-(0)174-6935296 or
49-(0)170-1785054 or
49-(0)621-7245742-Home

John Odom Sr.
Department Boys State Director

Service Officer Robert Gray

Hello my fellow comrades,

I hope that you and your loved ones had a very merry Christmas, and a happy new year, as for myself, I finished moving. My new mailing address is **Matenbergerstr. 26A, 66989 Hoheinod**, both o's have the two funny dot's above. My home phone is, **06333-689558**. During the Nov, to Dec, time frame periods, there was 4 cases that were completed, which I'm happy to say. Also there were some people that were in the hospital that I got a change to visit. In the Landstul area. On the 24th of December, Gr01 hosted a Christmas Eve Dinner, and it was great. I also attended the dinner for the troops, Giving by Gr01, and it was awesome there was a large turnout. In closing, again, I wish everyone good luck into the New Year, take care.

Robert Gray
Department Service Officer

Sons of The American Legion David Greaux
NO INPUT FOR THIS MONTH
David Greaux
Detachment Commander

Americanism David Greaux
NO INPUT FOR THIS MONTH
David Greaux
Americanism Chairman

A message from Carl Hackworth

Please keep in mind our General Membership Meetings have been changed from the third Wednesday of the Month to the second Wednesday of the month. Also do not forget that we have our yearly Post Elections on Wednesday the 13th of February 2008

Carl Hackworth
Post Adjutant
GR14

Department Events

Department Commander gets married on the 27th of December 2007



Best wishes to Commander Brown and his bride Manuela

Post Events

GR 42 Christmas Party



GR 79 Christmas Party



GR79 Christmas Party



GR03 Christmas Party



GR03 Christmas Party



GR03 Christmas party



GR03 Christmas party



GR06 Christmas Market Stuttgart



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 Saturday 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
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
Department Adjutant / Editor