Seven months ago I assumed command of the greatest American Legion Post in Germany, Kaiser—slautern Post GR01. GR01 consists of a rich blend of Veterans who support our community in different capacities. Some are retired Servicemen and women, DoD Civilians, Contractors, Reservist and Guardsmen, and finally Active Duty Servicemen and women. I am constantly amazed by the professionalism and dedication of our comrades who support the Kaiserslautern Military Community (KMC). As a patriotic Veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness, we provide services that are deliberately designed to support and aid communities with Veterans. I have had the pleasure of working side by side with many of you providing these services. There are many changes happening within the European Theater as you all know by now. As military units shrink and grow and people come and go, GR01 has been a haven for many comrades to visit.

The KMC is known as the largest US military communities outside of the Continental United States. We have a large pool of intelligent and strong Veterans from which we seek to recruit and sustain our community efforts. Providing Veterans Service is a huge task but a task that GR01 has executed superbly since August 26, 1953. I am absolutely confident that the level of support will not decline. Supporting our programs will require a real team approach; not focused on individuals, but focused on the mission. Over the next few months, we will be focused on our membership drive and any other winter and spring events that we can support. I challenge each of you to remember why you joined the American Legion. What does “For God And Country” mean to you? As military units realign and take their communities through Transformation, we are needed now more than ever. Please commit to helping Kaiserslautern Post GR01 live up to our reputation of outstanding community service; our reputation depends on it. Thank you for what you do each and every day; I am humbled at all that you do!

Happy Holidays!

Commander Demetrius R. White
Membership Chairman’s Corner

I ask, the Annual members to review your Post dues (2013) either by attending the Post meetings held the 1st & 3rd Wednesday each Month, ROB (Rhine Ordnance Barracks) Bldg. 368 or mail your renewal notice with payment with the Post address provided, or Renewal Online at www.legion.org. MEMBERSHIP IS OUR VOICE ON CAPITOL HILL.

If you’re a current Annual member, I encourage you to become a PUFL (Paid Up For Life) member instead of Annual member. The benefits are: NOT paying Annual dues every year, Annual Post dues could INCREASE, not receiving renewal notices from the National Membership Department, continuous years of membership in the Post, receiving the monthly The American Legion magazine, the Post receives dividends from the National Membership Department, and money savings discounts from the membership benefits program. Again, MEMBERSHIP IS OUR VOICE ON CAPITOL HILL.

The American Legion is the LARGEST Veterans Organization representing over 3 million Veterans (Active Duty, separated from Active Duty, Reservists, National Guard, Retirees and their families. The American Legion Washington Office is OUR representatives on Capitol Hill. Veterans Benefits isn’t free. The American Legion Washington Office lobbies to Congress Veterans Benefits. MEMBERSHIP IS STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.

Currently, Kaiserslautern Post GR01 has 94 members. Our target goal is 152 members to maintain as a large Post. The Post met the 2012 – 2013 National and Department Membership Target Dates September 12 (National) and September 8 (Department) at 50% We’re working on October 17 (National) and October 8 (Department), at 55% Post membership. The National Membership Department will mail (December) Renewal Notices to the Post members who haven’t paid their 2013 Post dues. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT.

I encourage, the Annual Post members to renew their Post dues Online Renewal at The American Legion website: www.legion.org It’s quicker to process and don’t receive Renewal Notices from the National Membership Department.

Many thanks to the Post Commander (White), 2nd Vice Commander (Young), Post Adjutant (Leist), and Comrade Chonko for their assistance during the Recruitment/Poppies Drives at the Vogelweh Commissary..

Please inform me of your change of address especially the PUFL members. My email address: wardtrans@yahoo.com and telephone number is: DSN: 486-8451 or 06371-868451.

I ask, your SUPPORT to recruit new members into Kaiserslautern Post GR01. If you need membership applications, please contact me as listed above.

Please be an active member in Kaiserslautern Post GR01. Your participation gives us (Legionnaires) new ideas for the Post. Many thanks for your SERVICE to our Country. FOR GOD AND COUNTRY.

Stephen Ward
1st Vice Commander
Kaiserslautern American Legion Post GR01
The History of Kaiserslautern GR01

Kaiserslautern Post GR 01 was chartered on August 26, 1953 in Paris thereby initiating Post GR01. The post was charted as a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness in the Kaiserslautern Military Community (KMC). The first commander was Michael Luciano 1953-1954. The post has received 10 Post of The Year Awards, and many accolades from Fisher House, 21st Theater Sustainment Command and the Landstuhl, Warrior Transition Unit. Since 2006, the post has sponsored Boy Scout Troop dinners and has had the pleasure of serving over 1,000 wounded military personnel within the KMC.

Kaiserslautern Post GR01’s current Commander, Demetrius Regel White, was initiated May 16, 2012. Commander White’s most recent position was Post GR01’s, Service Officer. The 1st Vice President is Comrade Steve Ward and the 2nd Vice President is Comrade Michael Young. Post GR01 currently has a membership of 155 comrades. Post GR01 is recognized as a USAEUR Private Organization sponsoring several organizations to include the local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

Kaiserslautern Post GR01 volunteers throughout the community by providing public service, as well as, forming coalitions with other private organizations to provide additional community service. Post GR01 also participates in several of the national American Legion recognized programs throughout the year; such as: Boys State, The Oratorical Contest, and Flag Advocacy. Comrade Chris Oneal, the Flags for First Grade program Chair, was the key leader in coordinating and assisting in introducing and explaining the history of the United States (US) Flag to first grade students in the KMC.

Every Fall, members of GR01 conduct Flag Retirements at cemeteries in the KMC by placing US Flags on the grave sites of US Veterans, Teachers, and Families and other US personnel that are buried in the cemeteries. In 2011, Past Commander Michael Young chaired the event and was assisted by Past Commander Chris Sears, Comrade Chris Oneal (Post Adjutant), and Comrade Demetrius White (Post Service Officer). Other organizations such as the Boy Scouts, the Germany Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated, as well as, Post GR01 Comrade family members participated in the event.

On May 17, 2012 Commander White attended Ramstein Crew 21 Parents Night Luau to represent The American Legion Post GR01. At that time, he presented Landstuhl Boy Scout Troop 243 their 2013 Charter. Past Commander Chris Sears who serves as an advisor to the Boy Scouts in the European Theater, was also in attendance.

Saturday, May 19, 2012, Commander White, Comrades Erica Stenson, and Woodrow Erving placed a wreath at the Annual US Kinder Grave ceremony honoring 451 American children. They are children that were buried in the Kaiserslautern city cemetery during the years 1952-1971. The Kinder Grave Memorial Service is held each year on the Saturday following Mother’s Day and is sponsored by the German-American Women’s Club of Kaiserslautern, the Army and Air Force Spouse’s Clubs and other private organizations.

Comrade Michael Young and Comrade James Barnes co-chaired The Kaiserslautern American German Business Club (AGBC) and the Atlantic Academy presentation meeting Thursday, 24 May 2012 in Kaiserslautern. GR01 supports the event by selling food and other refreshments. The 2012 annual theme was "The economic impact of the U.S. military's 60 year presence in the Kaiserslautern region." The year 2012 marks the 60th anniversary of the US military taking over in the Kaiserslautern region from the French. While the facilities have changed over the ensuing decades, more than one million American military and their families have called the Kaiserslautern area home during this time. The impact on the economic structure of the region by this sustained US presence has been tremendous and continues to be, even while many other locations in Germany have been losing their American military presence.

Every Memorial Day and Veterans Day, GR01 attends the Saint Avold Memorial Service in US military cemetery located in Saint Avold, France to place a wreath in honor of fallen Servicemen and women. Immediately following the memorial service, Post GR01 hosts a community cook-out which is open to other American Legion Posts, military Wounded Warriors, private organizations, and family and friends from the community.

As the largest American Legion Post in Germany, Kaiserslautern Post GR01 continues to provide stellar veterans service in the Kaiserslautern Military Community. The Legionnaires of Post GR01 work hard at upholding the national pillars of fostering a strong national security (Defense), taking care of veterans (Veterans), mentoring the youth of our nation (Youth) and promoting patriotism and honor (Patriotism). The Comrades of this organization are recognized throughout the KMC for their many public service initiatives and strong ties with the community. Post GR01 continues to be at the pinnacle of veteran service organizational support.

“For God and Country”
This Year the Kaiserslautern American Legion Post GR01 had the honor to host the National Commander’s Visit and attend the Saint Avold Memorial Ceremony with National Commander Fang A. Wong and the National Team as well as our Department in honoring our fallen in France. While visiting, National Commander Fong took time out of his schedule to stop by and visit with some Soldiers here in the Kaiserslautern Military Community. After the Saint Avold Memorial, Kaiserslautern Post GR01 took time to host them and other members that attended the Memorial in Saint Avold at our Post. A great honor in remembering our Veterans and great food at our post was enjoyed by all.
Flags for First Graders

The Kaiserslautern American Legion Flags for First Graders program is found to be popular among Legionaires and hopefully throughout the Kaiserslautern community.

The program is responsible for educating our first graders in the flag history, respect and protocol”. The first presentation was conducted on 6 Jun at the Vogelweh elementary. The first graders really enjoyed the presentation and the Legionaires as well.

Comrades, 6 June 2012, was our first Flags For First Graders (FFF) presentation and it was great. Thanks to POC Chris O’Neal, Erica Stenson, Past Commander Sears and Past Commander Gray. The kids were very receptive and seemed to really enjoy the presentation. We want to make this an annual event not only at Vogelweh Elementary school but also Kaiserslautern, Ramstein and maybe Baumholder elementary schools. Thanks Comrades for a job well done.!

Early Bird Dinner

On 13 October 2012, the Kaiserslautern American Legion Post GR01 hosted the Early Bird Dinner to thank members of GR01 for their continued membership as well as everything they have done throughout the year for the betterment of the Legion. A great time was had and thanks again Comrades for your continued support and service!
Each year during the fall season in preparation for Veterans Day, the Kaiserslautern Post GR01 of the American Legion conducts Grave Registration throughout the Kaiserslautern Military Community (KMC). The KMC includes the city of Kaiserslautern, Ramstein, and several smaller communities in the area. To register a grave, a US Flag is placed on the graves of US Veterans, their family members, and any other US personnel that are buried in the cemeteries. Detailed information is retained so that the grave can be found in future years. All previous flags are collected and replaced with a new flag. The removed flags are retained and burned during a flag retirement ceremony during Flag Day, 14 June, the following year.

Demetrius R. White, Commander of the Kaiserslautern Post GR01, led the Grave Registration program this year with the assistance of Comrades Michael Young, Joseph Chonko, Robert Leist, David Sears, and Djuan Stenson. They recruited several private organizations and members of the community to participate in the program to honor deceased US Veteran’s and their families. Some of the private organizations include the Boys Scouts of America, the Germany Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., the Germany Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc, the Forty and Eight, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

According to Mr. White, the 2012 Grave Registration started at the Kaiserslautern City Cemetery on October 06, 2012 with more volunteers than the post has had in recent years. The Kappas and the Deltas in the local community brought their families and friends to support this great cause. Partnering in community service has been the key to the program’s success!

The Kaiserslautern Post GR01 would like to thank all participants for their hard work and dedication to our community and our deceased Veterans.

Author: Demetrius R. White
Kaiserslautern GR01 in the Community

This year the Kaiserslautern American Legion Post GR01 went and visited the Wounded Warriors at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center USO to spend some time with our Soldiers and Veterans. Post GR01 was invited by the Kaiserslautern Better Opportunities Serving Single Soldiers (BOSS) Team who hosted the event and put on a fantastic Barbeque! A great time was had by all in attendance!
Living in Germany

LOCAL HISTORY:

Kaiserslautern, Germany: Prehistoric settlement in the area of what is now Kaiserslautern has been traced to at least 800 B.C. Some 2,500-year-old Celtic tombs were uncovered at Miesau, a town about 29 kilometres west of Kaiserslautern. The recovered relics are now in the Museum for Palatinate History at Speyer.

Kaiserslautern received its name from the favorite hunting retreat of Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa who ruled the Holy Roman Empire from 1155 until 1190. The small river Lauter made the old section of Kaiserslautern an island in medieval times. Ruins of Frederick's original castle, built 1152–1160, can still be seen in front of the Rathaus (city hall). A second castle, Nanstein Castle, was built at Landstuhl to guard the western approach to the city. Because of the influence Frederick Barbarossa had on the town, it is nicknamed a "Barbarossa town".

Kaiserslautern is home to just under 100,000 people. In the city and its surrounding district live an additional approximately 50,000 NATO military personnel members (mainly American), and contribute approximately $1 billion annually to the Kaiserslautern economy. The Kaiserslautern US Military Community (KMC) is the largest military community outside the continental United States.
Upcoming Events

To be announced.

Upcoming Issues: