THE AMERICAN LEGION
Department of France

Editor/Publisher
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Joe D. Brown

Adjutant
James M. Settle

National Executive Committeeman
William Marshall

Alternate NECman
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Department Vice-Commander At Large
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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
17 May Armed Forces Day
25 May Saint Avold Memorial Day Ceremony
26 May Memorial Day
18-22 June Department Convention
31 May -10 June National Commanders Visit

Birthdays
1 May W. Marshall GR42
7 May J. Dennis GR30

Department Commander’s Corner

My fellow Legionaries
On the 5th of April Visited the walking wounded, and the Fisher House along with GR01 Commander Young. It was incredible, what the Fisher House does for the Families is outstanding. 1300 we returned to the post home were they conducted their yearly election, conducted by Adjutant Fleming and initiation. Conducted by VC Abernathy, the new Post Commander is Comrade David Mendez, and the Post adjutant remains the same Comrade Fleming. I wish all the newly elected the best of luck. 19 April Awards Committee Meeting here in Heilbronn, the committee was professional conducted, however I must remark, that I was not impressed with the lack of Award packets turned-in from the posts. I would like to thank those posts that did turn in packets, those of you that did not turn in packets you are doing your members a disservice, and this will only end up hurting your post and membership. At the Department level, we would like to know those members that are doing a good job and helping the post succeed their goal for that year. 20 April I visited GR42, along with VCAL Kane for GR42 annual Elections (Legion, Auxiliary, and S.A.L.) It was a nice turn out for all three Legion Families, and the new Commander for GR42 is Comrade Hanchak, adjutant remains the same Comrade Greaux, and GR 42’s newest member (J. (Charley) Brown) was elected to the Service Officer position. On the 26th of April there was a 40 & 8 meeting here in Heilbronn. I had the opportunity to talk to certain Post Officers, and discussed Legion business; I would like to congratulate Comrade Odom for his election to Grande Chef De Gare for 40&8. On the 27th of April I attended the Bowling tournament at GR42 along with VCAL Kane it was well planned and executed and all there had a great time at trying to bowl. Don’t forget we will be in Saint Avold on the 25th of May for Memorial Day Ceremony, if you have not ordered your wreath yet please contact Comrade Marshall to place your order. If you are planning to stop by GR01 for their annual BBQ, please contact them so they know. On the 31st of May the National Commander (Marty Conatser) will be in Germany, this has been discussed many times, I have to date still not received which post would like to host the National Commander while he is here. Please let me know by the 17th of May if you want to have the National Commander visit your post, if I do not receive any input I and the NECMan will make a decision where he will be going. Once again this is your Newsletter not mine; we still have the same problem that we have had this entire year, late inputs, or no inputs at all. Remember anyone can make a input to this Newsletter, and pictures are always welcomed. 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
On the 19th of April the Department held its annual Awards Committee Meeting. I along with the Department Commander were very disappointed, in the lack of awards submitted by the posts. There was only several post that actually submitted awards, for their members. Post Commanders and Adjutants, I feel you are doing your members a disservice, by not submitting awards on those members that are deserving. Those members of yours that go that extra mile, to assist in the overall successfulness of the post, by overlooking them you are hurting your post.

The Department Convention (18-22 June 2008) is coming up fast, if you are planning to attend, and have not made your reservations please contact the Convention Chairman Comrade Greaux for your room reservations. If you have recently held Post Elections, and have not sent me the Officer Certification Report, please do so ASAP. I am in the process of updating the Post Mailing List and need the information. If you are planning to attend the National Convention, be advised cutoff date for room reservations is July 10th 2008. Those of you that supply inputs to the Department Newsletter please send your input to "mailto:americanlegion@hotmail.com"

In closing please remember if you need to contact me I am just an E-mail away "mailto: 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

William Marshall
Department NECman

On August 5th 2007, the House of Representatives Passed H.R.3222, the fiscal 2008 Defense appropriations bill. The final vote for passage was 395-13. The measure would provide $459.6 billion for DoD programs for the upcoming year - $39.7 billion more than was enacted for the current year but 3.5 billion less than requested by the president. The measure does not include funding for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, which will be considered a separate bill after Congress returns from its summer recess. Some of the major accounts funded by the House bill include

$8.5 billion for ballistic missile defense
$6.6 billion for continued research and development and procurement of 12 F-35s, the Joint Strike Fighter
$3.1 billion for 20 F-22 fighter planes
$3.09 billion for the purchase of one Virginia – class submarine
$2.8 billion for construction and advanced procurement of two DD-1000 next generation destroyers
1.4 billion for the Army’s program to destroy chemical agents and munitions
$946 million for DoD counter-drug activities and to fight narco terrorism
$558 million for chemical and biological defense programs; and $398 million for DoD’s Former Soviet Union Threat reduction account

The House also added funding to various programs necessary to meet the immediate needs of the U.S. forces fighting the war on terrorism.
am proud to say that their New Commander is Jennifer Ewers. She is replacing Ed Botero and I'm sure she'll do an outstanding job. On Saturday the 5th of April I was in Kaiserslautern at GR01 for their election. Again I'm Proud to announce that David Mendez is the new Commander; replacing Mike Young again I'm looking forward, to an outstanding job. On Saturday the 19th of April I was in Heilbronn attending the Department Awards Committee. Sorry, you'll have to wait until the Convention in June to find out who got what awards. On Saturday the 19th of April, Augsburg Post GR13 held their election and their Officers remain the same. I am going to take this time to congratulate all of the newly elected Officers and I know that all you will succeed in your new endeavors. I'll see you at the Convention.

Keith Abernathy
Department Vice Commander

Vice Commander Frank Hanchak
GR14, GR20, GR45, IR63

I usually begin writing my monthly article as soon as the last Department Newsletter is published. I then edit it at my leisure and have a finished product ready in time for the next month. I fear I have failed this month as I am writing this past the due date...

I don't want to waste time telling you how busy I have been this past month. I'll just say that the time I have spent with Post Activities has been more than usual this month. I know those who are members of Omar Bradley Post GR-42 know that I have spent more time with them than in front of the computer screen. Progress is progress no matter where you find it; and I have made progress at the post.

But that isn't important!

What is important is that we are coming to the end of another Legion Year. Now is the time (don't wait till the caucus) to look back on the accomplishments of your Department Officers and Chairpersons. Each year, I am pleased with most of your choices but I am disappointed with others. Take the time now to evaluate the service that we (The Department) have provided for you (The Posts). Are you happy with the service you are getting? Are your Department Officers visiting on a regular basis? Do they at least call? ARE WE DOING THE JOB YOU ELECTED US TO DO?

If so, then I thank you for your support and hope we can continue our service to you. If not, then I hope you will voice your opinion and elect people who will serve you better in the future.

I want to mention the “AMERICAN STORIES” program. I intended to talk about it and show a video at the 2nd DEC this past March. Unfortunately, Department Commander Brown ran out of time and I did not make my presentation. I then attempted to travel to some posts and show them the presentation at their Post meetings. I only attended three posts and made this presentation. I hope that I will have the opportunity to show this presentation at the Department Convention in June. It is a great program and should have better support than it is getting. I take partial responsibility for not getting this information out to the posts. Perhaps I will be able to share this program with you in the near future. If I haven’t called and

As this is the month of May, I hope all of us take a moment to remember our fallen heroes on Memorial Day. I will be joining my post on Monday, May 26th to visit and decorate graves of fallen veterans with my fellow post members. See you at the gravesite!

"mailto:frank.hanchak@gmail.com"
(M) 0171-473-9782

NOTE: New mobile phone, and new Email address!
0171 473 9782  "mailto: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 "mailto: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
May 2008
National Special Days: 1st - Loyalty and Law Day; 4th - National Day of Prayer; 8th - V-E Day 1945; 11th - Mother’s Day; 20th - Armed Forces Day; 26th - Memorial Day
Legion Events: Memorial Day at St Avold; Poppy Day
Christian Religious Days: 1st - Ascension Day (Most Christians); 11th - Pentecost (most Christians); 18th - Trinity Sunday (most Christians); 22nd - Corpus Christi (Cath); Sacred Heart of Jesus (Cath)

Jewish Holidays (Year 5768): 2nd - Yom HaSho’ah; 3rd - Yom HaAtma’ut; 23rd - Lag B’Omer

Islamic Holidays: None that I know of.
Please visit the church, temple, synagogue or mosque of your choice.

Post Everlasting reported to April 29th:

Tom O’Keefe, IR02 (March 19th)
Mother of Comrade David Garcia, GR01
Daughter of Comrade Charles Haimovitz, GR06

Prayers have been offered for their families and friends. Please remember them and those who have passed away in your prayers also.

Prayers for the Sick & Ill:
I have to thank you for putting up with me. Every month you get to read a few words that I put together. I guess I think a lot more about our family and the veterans we serve and never can bring all of those words to paper because I can only write a few words to inspire you for the whole month. I thank God that He has placed so many dedicated people in this family of ours and given them the strength to do Good Works in His and the name of The American Legion. I know however that you aren’t waiting to read my words before going out to do something important to help in the support of our veterans. All of you are involved in the Legion, Department, Post and Community as well as being involved at home. I therefore also have to thank you for your service from the bottom of my heart. I’m proud to be a member of The American Legion, Department of France and part of this great family.

We need to pray for our country and that our public leaders will recognize their duty to such a great Nation and its citizens. It is difficult to lay personal preferences aside in order to represent the voices and wishes of their constituency, but that is something that they have sworn to do. I’m sure their past performance can be seen in the statistics. The democratic process of voting for our Commander-in-Chief, Senators, Congressmen and other public servants is an important bulwark of our country. This is all founded in the Constitution and its Amendments. Funny how many people seem to think we need to change our Constitution rather than follow the course our forefathers set.

Our forefathers put God in first place. The American Legion followed that principle also in the set up of our Constitution. I love those words, “For God and Country” and they are something we can build on and follow. Let those principles be forever holy.

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: 0049-(0)6196-569027
Mobile: 0049-(0)172-7417812
Email: "mailto:revronmoore@yahoo.de"

Service Officer Robert Gray
Hello my fellow comrades,
Hello my fellow comrades, again, I wish everyone good health and in good spirits. First, and for most, lets not forget the Internal Revenue Service, Stimulus payment package, which will start payment in May. There is another program, which is, Army Combat-Related Special Compensation, or, (CRSC). This can be found on the web site. There were some changes made, that may affect you. There were some VA Claims that were completed, with outstanding results. I want to thank my Post Service Officers for their support, and the willingness to work in the community. I would like the Post Commands to E-mail me the names of their Post service officer’s as soon as possible to “mailto:RLG052@yahoo.com”. There is a project that were working on in Landstuhl Medical center, and that with Hospice care for retirees, however, will talk about this at a later date. I’m letting everyone know at this time, I’m running again for Department Service Officer, and looking forward for your support, it was an honor working with my fellow comrades take care.

Robert Gray
Department Service Officer

Sons of The American Legion David Greaux
MAY 17, 2008 IS NATIONAL VETERANS ASSISTANCE DAY for the Sons of The American Legion. Remember that we need to do something that day to let our veterans, active servicemen & their families know we appreciate the sacrifices they have made for our freedoms. Get everyone involved in your squadron and in your community.

The inaugural National Veterans Assistance Day is Saturday, May 17, 2008, and Commander Giehll has asked all 1500 Squadrons and our 320,000 members to participate.

George Hall, GR-03
Shawn Ashe, GR-42
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
Phil Getchell, GR-03
Edward Hayes, GR-03
Wife of Post GR03 Comrade Robert Pierce
Kenneth Grasser, GR.09
Brenda Dearborn, present Historian and past chaplain of Dept of Maine
Harold M. Wild, GR-13
Ronald (Ron) Hansen, GR-06
Tom O’Keefe, IR-02
Marlene Watson, Widow of GR-13 charter member William Watson
Paul Johnson, Dept of Wyoming 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

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 Brothers and Sisters of the American Legion Family,

I have to thank you for putting up with me. Every month you get to read a few words that I put together. I guess I think a lot more about our family and the veterans we serve and never can bring all of those words to paper because I can only write a few words to inspire you for the whole month. I thank God that He has placed so many dedicated people in this family of ours and given them the strength to do Good Works in His and the name of The American Legion. I know however that you aren’t waiting to read my words before going out to do something important to help in the support of our veterans. All of you are involved in the Legion, Department, Post and Community as well as being involved at home. I therefore also have to thank you for your service from the bottom of my heart. I’m proud to be a member of The American Legion, Department of France and part of this great family.

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National Veteran’s Assistance Day May 17, 2008

Selected guidelines

1) Must be an active duty person, Veteran and or their families.
2) A person or persons may be selected by your local Squadron and may be a member of your local Post.
3) Assistance can be anything that the selected individuals choose; i.e., spring cleaning, taking them to the store or other errands, doing an oil change on his car.
4) You could take them and their family to lunch or dinner to say “THANKS for your SERVICE”.
5) Maybe your Squadron can throw a luncheon for their Post members, and invite other Veterans from your Community (may bring in new Legion Family members)

For the first year, let’s keep it simple and as the program grows we can become more creative. As “Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage” we must always give our utmost support for those that have SERVED our COUNTRY.

“mailto:davidgreaux@aol.com”
David Greaux
Detachment Commander

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

Department Convention Chairman David Greaux

DEPARTMENT 84th ANNUAL CONVENTION 2008
HOSTED BY OMAR BRADLEY POST GR42
18-22 June 2008 / Sankt Englmar, APART HOTEL Predigtstuhl
A lot of members either forgot or did not have time to register for convention at the third DEC. If you plan on attending please send me an e-mail with names and length of stay.

IMPORTANT CHANGE TO CONVENTION PACKET:
Please do not send any correspondence or payment for convention 2008 to Lee Preston as indicated in the convention package sent out. Since then Lee Preston has been called back into the military and is presently serving a tour in Iraq.

For those who plan to travel by train, once you get to Staubling (closest bigger town) you may call the hotel 09965-981 and request for them to send a taxi. The cost is approximately €25.00 one way. It is cheaper then jumping in any cab at the train station.

NOTE: If you are sending anything to me via snail mail or e-mail concerning the convention I must receive it by June 13th.

Complete Convention Package Consist Of:
5 days - 4 nights
Breakfast / Dinner Buffet…to include Banquet on Saturday Evening
One convention coin per registered guest

Children 0-14 receive per day one FREE entrance ticket to Family World (hotel family center)

Complete Package - single room € 280.00 per person
Complete Package - double room € 210.00 per person
Children 12 years and older € 190.00 per child
Children 3 to 11 years old € 50.00 per child

Convention Chairman 2008
David Greaux
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E-Mail: “mailto:davidgreaux@aol.com”
David Greaux
Convention Chairman

A message from Lionel Morais IT01 (Re-run from last month for general information purposes)

After talking with Department Commander “Charley” Brown, it was suggested that I go further in suggesting a “corner” in each newsletter devoted to the possible interests of members of the Department that may be collectors, whether it be coins, stamps, sports cards, etc.. In addition I have license plates of Post IT01. Any interested Post in the Department, that has same, can contact me about trading plates. I only have the Worms Post #7 plate at this point. If interested, my email address is: “mailto:elainespts@aol.com”

Lionel Morais
IT01 Adjutant

Article submit by Gilbert Wells

US military health insurance fraud continues in RP--retirees

By Teresa Cerojano
Associated Press
MONCADA, Philippines--The clinic where Dr. Alberto Marzan allegedly played his role in a $100 million (€64.12 million) swindle of the US military's health insurance program sits abandoned, along with the adjacent family home. But a legacy remains, with a US Navy retiree saying scams are still rife even after a federal judge "http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/nation/view/20080425-132735/Philippines-to-investigate-100M-health-insurance-fraud" ordered a Philippines company to pay back the money it skimmed. Health Visions Corp., which pleaded guilty to mail fraud, was ordered to liquidate all assets within 10 months and give the proceeds to the US government.

Federal prosecutors say the company bilked the military's Tricare program out of $99.9 million (€63 million) from 1998-2004. The program insures 9.2 million active and retired US servicemen and dependents worldwide. The company routinely inflated claims by more than 230 percent, operated a phony insurance program, and billed for medical services never delivered, court records showed, as the Pentagon moved slowly to uncover the scheme.

Assistant US Attorney Peter Jarosz described Health Visions as the biggest violator yet in a long-running investigation into Tricare fraud in the Philippines. Marzan, one of the longest-wanted fugitives in the probe, recruited dozens of military retirees to falsely claim they and their relatives were confined at his clinic and received expensive medical services, US prosecutors say. He made fraudulent claims of $1.5 million (€1 million) to the program and was paid more than $1 million (€640,000), prosecutors add. In return, he typically paid kickbacks to the retirees. A US federal grand jury returned a 35-count indictment against Marzan in 1999, but he has apparently remained free in the Philippines after vanishing from Moncada. Neighbors, village leaders, police and former co-workers in the Moncada town hall, where he used to sit as councilor, say the doctor's family slipped out of town more than three years ago and remains underground. Claro de Castro, head of the National Bureau of Investigation's Interpol division, said his office has arrest warrants for a doctor and a beneficiary. But he refused to identify them or say if the wanted doctor was Marzan because agents are still working on the case.

Jerry Minor, a Navy retiree and administrator of Lifeline Medical Center--a Tricare-accredited clinic in western Olongapo city near the former US-run Subic Naval Base--said many accredited doctors and clinics in the city continue to overprice their services. Retirees are usually lured into the scheme because the clinics do not charge them the required 25-percent share of the cost, instead sending the whole bill to Tricare. Minor said. One clinic blacklisted by Tricare for fraudulent claims simply changed its name and is back in business, he told The Associated Press in an interview Friday. Minor said a retiree's wife who was convinced by a clinic four years ago to sign a stack of blank claim forms--one is filled out every time a beneficiary goes to a clinic--was shocked to find out last December that several women were collecting on claims using her details. "It was like signing a blank check," he added. He said he tried to find out for himself about the overpricing by going to a doctor, who told him he would be charged P850 ($20; €12.82) for a 15-minute consultation. The price was higher than the P500 ($12; €7.7) fee per consultation under Tricare regulations. Minor said when he brought up his share of the cost, the doctor told him, "Don't worry about it, you pay nothing. Tricare does." He said he has reported the anomalies to Tricare officials but the scams continue. Vicky Gross, a retiree's widow who used to work for Health Visions, said many doctors and clinics don't charge beneficiaries their share of costs but she did not know what they were charging to Tricare. Austin Camacho, a spokesman for the Pentagon's Tricare Management Activity, said the program has implemented new controls to combat fraud in the Philippines in recent years. Among other things, the program looks for patterns of aberrant practices and reviews claims that appear excessive. In 2001-07, the program refused to pay $288 million (€185 million) in fraudulent or excessive claims from the country, he said. Still, he said it is hard to catch all fraud overseas and Tricare does not exclude providers "without sufficient evidence." "This can be difficult in an environment where law enforcement resources are limited, providers are not always cooperative and are not subject to the US government's subpoena power," he said. Rufino Bayao Jr., a Navy retiree who served a 1.5-year US prison term and three years of probation for taking part in the scam with Marzan, advises retirees not to fall for the bait. "If they are caught, they will also suffer," he told AP in his home in northern Tayug town. "It's not worth it." Aside from the prison term, Buyao is having more than a third of his $800 (€513) monthly pension deducted to pay for $132,390 (€84,887) in restitution that a US court ordered him to pay. He says he got only P200,000 ($4,760; €3,052) from Marzan for signing false claims, with much of the money going for drinking binges.

Posted date: April 27, 2008
National Events/Department Events
Our Department Oratorical Winner with National Commander Marty Conatser and Joseph Caouette, Americanism Chairman

Pictures submitted by Dogh Haggan
Here are some pictures for the Department Newsletter. These 2 pictures are of my son Patrick Haggan Member Rhein Main Post #5 and his girlfriend Katie, and Patrick Haggan and I. These were taken during the National Commanders Dinner at the Fall 2007 Meetings. And yes the COLTS are still Super Bowl Champs

Doug Haggan

Commanders Dinner at the Fall 2007 Meetings

GR01’s New Commander Comrade Mendez and VC Abernathy at Officer Initiation

GR01’s newly elected Officers and Commander Brown

Department Awards Committee Meeting 19th of April 2008

Awards Committee Members.

Post Events

S.A.L. Meeting at GR42

Newly Elected Officers GR42 Legion, Auxiliary, S.A.L.

GR14 Commander and Adjutant out on the town in HeilbronnGR42 Bowling Tournament

A message from Patric Goesaert Flanders Field BE02 (Re-run from last month for general information purposes)

We will be attending the Memorial Day Ceremony on the 25th of May that takes place at Flanders Field American Cemetery in Waregem. We also shall attend the services held on the 7th of September. This is a service that is held on the borderline between Waregem and Anzegem for the 4 members of the Belgium resistance, 2 RAF Fighter pilots and 1 USAF pilot that where killed one the 6th of September 1944. (See Photo’s)

Hope to see you some time.

Patric Goesaert
Finance Officer BE02

Memorial Cemetery between Waregem and Anzegem Belgium

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.

mailto:americanlegion@hotmail.com