Welcome to the 5th Edition of The Leadership Ledger. It includes Post, Dept. and Nat’l reports, leadership training events, upcoming conferences/conventions as well as rules and regulations pertaining to local, state and national laws. The Ledger is available by visiting the Department’s website at www.mainelegion.org under “News & Events” or on the home page. If you have any information to be published in The Leadership Ledger, please forward to Department HQ via email at legionme@mainelegion.org. All events will be posted on Department’s website by visiting www.mainelegion.org or by pressing the POST EVENTS image. All events will also be uploaded on the 1st and 3rd week of each month and must be forwarded to Department HQ via email at legionme@mainelegion.org.

HOLIDAY REMINDER
The Department Headquarters Office and Service Office will be closed Tuesday, December 24 and Wednesday, December 25 for the Christmas holiday.

DISTRICT MEETINGS
Be Connected – Be Heard – Be Informed

District 2 – Cumberland: Dec. 8, Yarmouth Post 91, 2 p.m. Annual holiday party/gift exchange
District 5 – Oxford: Dec. 17, Locke Mills Post 68, 7 p.m., appoint nominating committee. District Christmas part following.
District 5 – Oxford: Jan. 21, South Paris Post 72, 7 p.m. Oratorical contest, refreshments after.
District 7 – Lincoln: Dec. 16, Wiscasset Post 54, 6:30 p.m.
District 7 – Lincoln: Jan. 6, Boothbay Harbor Post 36, 5:30 p.m.
District 9 – Kennebec: Dec. 11, Augusta Post 205, 6 p.m.
District 9 – Kennebec: Jan. 8, South China Post 179, 7 p.m.
District 11 – Waldo: Jan. 19, Belfast Post 43, 2 p.m.
District 12 – Hancock: Dec. 12, Northeast Harbor Post 103, dinner 6:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m. mtg.

DISTRICT 1, 3, and 4, PLEASE SEND IN YOUR DISTRICT CALENDARS ASAP. THANKS
2020 MID WINTER CONFERENCE

The annual Mid-Winter Conference will be held Jan. 18-19, 2020 at Jeff's Catering & Event Center, 15 Littlefield Way, Brewer, ME 04412. The conference will be hosted by Commander Matthew Jabaut and 2nd Vice Commander Kirk Thurston. Hotel Reservations can be made at the following: Holiday Inn: 404 Odlin Rd. Bangor, Maine 04401. Phone: 207-947-0101 Website: www.holidayinn.com, Room Rate: $93.00 (includes breakfast). Quality Inn: 250 Odlin Rd., Bangor, Maine 04401. Phone: 207-942-8272, Room Rate: $89.00. Fairfield Inn: 300 Odlin Rd. Bangor, Maine 04401. Phone: 207-990-0001, Room Rate: $89.00. Please state “Legion” when calling for reservations. Please see attached files for more information and banquet reservations.

2020 HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL CONTEST

The American Legion, Department of Maine High School Oratorical Scholarship Contest will once again be held at Thomas College in Waterville on Feb. 8, 2020 at 9 a.m. Snow Date: Feb. 10, 2020 at 9 a.m.

The main purpose of The American Legion Oratorical Contest “A Constitutional Speech Contest” is to develop a deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. Other objectives of the contest include the development of leadership qualities, the ability to think and speak clearly and intelligently, and the preparation for acceptance of the duties, responsibilities, the rights and privileges of American citizenship.

Young orators will have the opportunity to earn some of the most generous scholarships. At the Post and District level, the scholarships offered range from $50 - $1000, and at the State level $50 - $1500. At the national level, each department (state) winner who is certified into and participates in the national contests 1st round receives $2000 and those who advance through the 1st round get an additional $2000. The overall national contest winner gets a $20,000 scholarship. Second place takes home $17,000, and third gets $15,000.

The members of the Oratorical Committee will be working with both Area and District Commanders to prepare Posts and Districts for their local contests. We hope to have all Post contests completed by Mid-December 2020 and all District contests completed by the end of January 2020.

The 2020 National Finals is April 17-19 in Indianapolis, at the Wyndham Indianapolis West. Quarterfinal and semifinal contests are scheduled for Saturday, April 18, with the finals scheduled for Sunday, April 19. Certification of Department winners is due to National by March 16, 2020.

For more information about the Oratorical Contest in Maine, please contact Oratorical Chairman Dale Midgley at 207-590-3532 | e-mail: midgleyd@earthlink.net. More information can be obtained by visiting www.mainelegion.org, your local American Legion Post, or The American Legion, Department of Maine Headquarters at 207-873-3229. Please check out the state and local Oratorical Contests by visiting National’s website at www.legion.org/oratorical.

MILITARY TRIVIA:
Submitted by Dwayne Hatfield, Mars Hill Post 118

Who are the only military unit members, NOT authorized to put their hands in their pockets, while in uniform?
UPDATE TO THE PREAMBLE & POW/MIA

As you many of you know, the POW/MIA empty chair ceremony changed following the 101 National Convention, and the Preamble changed at this last Fall NEC meeting. Please find attached the resolutions that changed both of these items.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EXPANDS ACCESS TO VETERANS IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 13, 2019

Department of Defense Expanding Access to Commissaries, Military Exchanges and Recreation Facilities

The Department of Defense is expanding commissary, military exchange, and morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) retail privileges on U.S. military installations as specified in the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018, included in the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019. Starting Jan. 1, 2020, access will expand to include all veterans with service-connected disabilities, veterans who are Purple Heart recipients, veterans who are former prisoners of war, and individuals approved and designated as the primary family caregivers of eligible veterans under the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. While this expansion will extend eligibility to over 4.1 million new patrons, the Department expects little to no impact on current patrons in most locations. There may be some impact in areas with a high cost of living, but the Department is preparing to accommodate all new patrons.

"These new privileges recognize the service and sacrifice of these veterans and those that care for them," A.T. Johnston, deputy assistant secretary of defense for Military Community and Family Policy, said. "If you or someone you know might be eligible for these privileges, share the message," Johnston said. "Please help us ensure these veterans and caregivers receive the privileges they’ve been granted."

New patrons eligible solely under this authority should be aware that the law requires the Defense Department charge them a small user fee to offset the increased expense incurred by the Department of the Treasury for processing commercial credit or debit cards used for purchases at commissary stores.

The Department of Defense is finalizing the details for these new privileges with the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Homeland Security and the Treasury. Information will be announced soon regarding installation access and the authentication process for these privileges. To learn more about the commissary, military exchange and MWR expansion, visit https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Factsheets/expanding-access-fact-sheet.pdf

COMMISSARY ACCESS

Veterans to receive access to Commissary/PX, free premium LinkedIn, your VA health records on iPhone and more. This link provides more information: https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USVA/bulletins/26c0746

THE MAINE LEGIONNAIRE SUBMISSIONS

Please be reminded that only those articles and/or pictures which are sent in proper form will be considered for publication in The Maine Legionnaire.

As we continue to receive an overabundance of photos for publishing, we must have guidelines to
follow. In order to publish any photo(s) received, effective immediately, the submitter must include the following: Who are the individuals in the photo (left to right), what the photo is about, and when and where the event took place. If the above mentioned is not provided, the photo will be returned to the submitter for clarification and submission of the required information.

Anyone interested in submitting an article and/or a photo please send via email to legionme@mainelegion.org or rachael@mainelegion.org or mail to The American Legion, Department of Maine, 5 Verti Drive, Winslow, Maine 04901-0727. Deadline for February Issue: Jan. 24, 2020

Answer to Military Trivia: The Marines.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - VETERAN FOCUS GROUP

If you are a military veteran or active service member, please consider participating in our research study at York Public Library, Dec. 17.

Participants will receive $100. We are interested in your opinions on organ and tissue donation.

The Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center/Harvard Medical School Teaching Hospital is looking for 12 veterans. You must reserve a spot prior to the focus group. The focus group will take only 60-90 minutes. For more information, please contact Jessica Shenkel: jshenkel@bidmc.harvard.edu, or 617-632-7054.

IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE?

Department of Veterans Affairs
Togus Regional Office
1 VA Center, Bldg. 248 (402/21)
Augusta, ME 04330-6795
http://www.vba.gov/ro/east/togus

- VA Benefits 1-800-827-1000
- Education/GI Bill 1-888-442-4551
- Voc. Rehab/Employment 1-877-421-8263 ext. 4600
- Homeless Veterans 1-877-421-8263 ext. 4449
- FPOW Veterans 1-877-421-8263 ext. 4480
- GWOT/SI/VS1 Vets 1-877-421-8263 ext. 4468
- Elderly Veterans 1-877-421-8263 ext. 4467
- Minority Veterans 1-877-421-8263 ext. 4461
- Women Veterans 1-877-421-8263 ext. 4499

The image below contains the link to The American Legion, Department of Maine State Directory. To follow the link just click on the image or visit http://www.mainelegion.org/pages/directory.php