Legion’s Support Impacts Lives
A Year of Selfless Giving

The American Legion’s support for U.S. servicemembers and their families goes beyond lobbying for VA benefits, jobs and education opportunities. The Legion’s Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program is a perfect example of that support. In 2013, TFA disbursed more than $1 million in grants, assisting 2,080 minor children throughout the United States.

The generosity of Legion Family members and the Legion’s Endowment Fund Corporation made it possible for the Legion to provide shelter, food and clothing to those families in need. Thank you for your selfless donations.

The TFA program was established in 1925 to provide cash grants for the basic needs of minor children in homes where at least one parent is a veteran eligible for Legion membership. Membership in the organization, however, is not a requirement to receive a TFA grant. The program has awarded nearly $7 million in grant money since 9/11, fulfilling immediate, urgent needs for families such as shelter, utilities, food and clothing.

We hear the heartwrenching stories of those needing TFA assistance, such as those needing to fill an immediate, urgent need for a family in need. One family wrote, “We want to give you all such a huge thank you for your help to our little family. Your help is a burden lifted and a smile on our faces. We feel very humbled that you helped us. We are forever grateful. Thank you, from the bottoms of our hearts.”

Veterans and their families need our support. Let them know we are there for them by donating to the TFA program or by helping a family in need fill out a TFA application.

Learn more online:
www.legion.org/financialassistance

Millinocket Post Hosted Mid-Winter Conference

This year’s conference was conducted at the Baxter Park Inn in Millinocket, Maine on January 17-19, 2014. The conference was attended by many and thought that the information presented was very good and informative. The conference was under the direction of 2nd Vice Commander Ronald Raintreffe and Commander John W. Hargreaves.

National Vice Commander William Rakestraw, representing the 2.4 million member American Legion, was the guest speaker. Rakestraw who served in Korea resides in Wall, NJ.

A stirring presentation of the POW/MIA ceremony was given by Colin Hewett of the Winthrop Post 40 and an inspiring rendition of the poem “My Name is Old Glory” was performed by Jerry Bearce of the Thomaston Post 37.

Speakers at the conference included Amedeo J. Lauria who described how the American Legion Service Office, housed at Togus, helps veterans fight through the bureaucracy to get disability payments they are due. Mike L’Abbe from the My HealthVet Program at Togus helps Veterans go online to get prescriptions filled as well as a number of other services. Veterans attending the conference were given certificates recognizing their wartime service by LTC Peter Ogden head of the Bureau of Veterans Affairs at Camp Keys in Augusta.

A brief presentation was made by a representative from Kieve Veterans Camp followed by an update on membership processing by Commander Hargreaves and general membership update by First Vice Commander Graves.

Following lunch served by Unit 80 Auxiliary, keynote speaker National Vice Commander brought greetings from the National American Legion. There was a lengthy presentation by the Public Relations Team of Pat Eisenhart, Amedeo Lauria and Paul Durost which was well received by all. Department Judge Advocate Lester Dearborn gave a short summary on protocol and Robert’s Rules of Order. Following the speakers DA L’Heureux conducted the sweepstakes.

More on MID-WINTER, Page 2

Resolutions To Be Presented By May 1st

All resolutions to be presented for action at any Convention shall be presented to the office of the Department Adjutant on or before May 1 of the subject year.

Said resolutions shall be published and printed in the official organ of the Department of Maine, The American Legion in the next issue following said date of May 1. Resolutions must be presented to the Department Adjutant’s office in writing, dated and signed by the Commander and Adjutant of the sponsoring groups or Chairman and Secretary of sponsoring committee. Resolutions may be presented by two-thirds majority of the Resolutions Committee meeting at the convention.

— State Headquarters
Legion Seeks Eagle Scouts

The American Legion, Department of Maine is seeking nominations for the 2014 Eagle Scout of the Year. The state winner will receive a $500 scholarship and is automatically entered in the national competition.

Scouts applying must be an Eagle Scout, who will be at least 15 years of age and enrolled in high school. Applicants must also be a registered, active member of a Boy Scout Troop, Varsity Scout Team, or Venturing Crew, chartered to an American Legion Post, Auxiliary Unit or S.A.L. Squadron; or be the son or grandson of a Legioinaire or Auxiliary member.

Applications are available through The American Legion, PO. Box 900, Waterville, Maine 04903-0900, by calling (207) 873-3229 or on-line at www.mainelegion.org. Applications must be received at Department Headquarters by March 24, 2014. For further information, contact Headquarters. The national winner receives a $10,000 scholarship. Three-second place scholarship awards of $2,500 are also awarded at the national level.

Message From The Legionnaire Ins. Trust

Your Maine American Legion Department and the Legioinaire Insurance Trust (LIT) are constantly looking to improve the value of your membership. And, we have some exciting news to report!

Since 1966, the LIT has been offering a competitive, dependable package of insurance choices to protect Legioinners and their family. Our goal is to continue serving Legion families for decades to come. With the future in mind, we are pleased to announce that effective January 1, 2014, the A+ rated Transamerica family of insurance companies will become the new provider for our Hospital Indemnity Protection and Cancer Care programs with additional programs to follow soon.

Transamerica is committed to serving Maine Legioinners and their families with superior customer service that has made them an industry leader for over 100 years. Transamerica is also dedicated to staying ahead of your insurance needs in a changing world and will periodically update their coverage(s) to stay current with insurance laws and regulations as well as how healthcare is delivered.

If you are one of the thousands of Legion families currently enrolled in these products, rest assured that the transition will be as simple as possible. All you have to do is pay your next bill and your coverage will continue.

New products will be coming on board soon because of LIT’s partnership with Transamerica and you will see these items offered to Your Maine American Legion Department in the coming months. We look forward to this new partnership with Transamerica, and to continuing our commitment of service and protection to you and your loved ones.

NOTE: This provider change does not apply to the “No Cost To You” LegionCare Accidental Death policy at this time. Please contact us to apply via the enrollment form you can ask for at your post.

Sabattus Post 135:
Department John Hargreaves, left, met with Department Officers at Sabattus Post 135 on November 23. Around the table facing front is Finance Officer Tommy Atkins, to Tommy’s right is Department Second Vice Commander Ron Rainfrette, Finance Committee member Tom Naragon, NECA Brenda Dearborn and Department Historian Ron Caron in back of Tom.

Did You Pay Your ‘14 Dues

Legion membership is annual, the Legion year running from Jan 1 to Dec 31. If dues are not paid by Jan. 1 of each calendar year, the member becomes delinquent. If dues have not been paid by Feb. 1, the member is suspended, is not in good standing, and is not eligible for transfer.

The only method of transferring from one post to another so the continuity of the membership in the Legion is not broken is by formal transfer, which is available only to members in good standing.

If you do not have a membership card that reads “2014” then you are now a delinquent member. Your post tries so hard to get your dues collected prior to Jan. 1, so that you do not lose any benefits of your membership, including insurance coverage.

If you don’t have a “2014” card, please contact your local post today and pay them so your membership in The American Legion remains continuous.
The Act strengthens accountability by requiring VA to regularly track and provide information to the public on claims processing and the performance of VA regional offices (H.R. 1623 and H.R. 1824) taking steps to help ensure the VA has the needed information from other agencies to accurately process claims in a timely way (H.R. 1750)

* encouraging VA to expand the use of automation in processing veterans claims (H.R. 1805)
* speeding up claims by allowing veterans’ medical examinations to be done by physicians outside the VA system and encouraging veterans to file fully developed claims (H.R. 1921)

As many of you well know, there is no easy fix to the claims backlog. While some progress is being made, this legislation provides the VA with additional tools to help them reach their goal of ending the backlog by 2015.

Later last October, I joined the bipartisan leadership of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees on Capitol Hill to call for a vote on H.R. 813, a bill Chairman Jeff Miller (R-FL) and I introduced to provide advanced funding to the VA.

The VA currently receives its health care budget a year in advance, and our bill would ensure that the remaining VA budget is treated the same way.

The bill would also bring common sense budget reform to the VA by ensuring that the resources needed are in place in order to care for our veterans. Advanced funding has proven itself in the past with VA's health care budget, and the shutdown of the federal government last year very clearly demonstrated the need for extending it now.

Our bill was passed unanimously by the House Veterans' Affairs Committee in August, and members of the committee continue to urge Speaker Boehner to hold a vote on the bill.

On November 12, 2013, the House passed S. 893, the Veterans’ Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Act of 2013, which provided veterans a projected 1.5 percent COLA beginning this January. Since 1976, Congress has acted annually to increase veterans’ benefits by an amount estimated to keep pace with inflation. This year’s increase is the same as that provided to Social Security recipients.

On November 20th, after approving a bill authorizing major medical facility leases for the VA, our committee held a hearing that examined the VA's major construction program.

Multiple internal and external reviews, including committee hearings, have found serious deficiencies in the management of the VA's construction program, leading to significant cost increases and substantial delays in the design and construction of medical center projects.

I know some of you have experienced this, as construction on VA clinics in Maine took much too long.

In 2012, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) conducted a review of the VA's management of medical facility construction projects and released the report in April, 2013. GAO found VA's four largest construction projects, Las Vegas, Orlando, Denver and New Orleans, all had cost increases ranging from 59 percent to 144 percent, representing a total cost increase of nearly $1.5 billion and an average increase of approximately $366 million per project. Additionally, GAO reported schedule delays ranging from 14 to 74 months with an average delay of 35 months per project.

“Over budget” and “delayed” should not be the terms that best describe the VA's major construction projects. Unfortunately, that’s the most accurate way to characterize them right now. After years of reforms and attempts to fix the problems, VA is still coming up short.

While some delays and cost overruns are completely legitimate, this hearing revealed that numerous weaknesses still exist and must be addressed.

While 2014 has just gotten underway, I’m hopeful to report additional progress on issues important to all of you in my next update. And as always, please get in touch with me or my office if I may ever be of assistance.
The Adjutant Speaks

ADJUTANT CHANGE?

Change, how hard is it to come by? Well if you take the time to look up the word and its meaning, it starts to explain where The American Legion stands today and where it needs to go. Some of the meanings of change: to cause to become different; alter; transform; convert, to undergo a variation; absence of monotony; variety. And then we have a few more like, the act or process of substitution, alteration, or variation. Or how about this one: something of the same kind; new and or fresh. There are others that bring to us a change in what we do and how we do it.

Many of you have heard me quote Albert Einstein, who said, “Innovating is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” Well that’s what The American Legion in Maine has been doing and has caused many of our posts to start to slide in its membership and programs.

When Mr. Cicotte (“Chick”) and I have been asked to help a post that needs some revitalization, many times it has been because of the will NOT to change. In the process of evaluating these posts, many of the internal problems involved have been caused by Mr. Einstein’s reference, but in different words: we have always done it that way or he/she is the only one who can do it. But after a few adjustments and attitudes the membership and success of the post starts to change.

After spending two years with the Legion College program and allowed to work with some of the talents available within our organization it has finally started to change in our State. I have recently received many phone calls about our Public Relations team and what a great job they did with their presentation about modern technology and what is available for us to make those changes both with the media and financially.

We have seen what is starting to happen with our new members that have a background in the political arena and the financial world that we now live in. When we hear that we are not getting new and younger members to make those changes happen, I have to remind those with that attitude that you must allow those new members to make and develop those ideas. These are people that do not just wear the hat and have the title, but are willing to make those decisions that are not always well received by others.

How are we perceived when potential new members first walk into your post home? Is the post appearance up to par? Would you be proud to walk into a building that had not been remodeled in years? How are we looking upon when they attend their first meeting? Do we welcome them and their ideas as well? What do they think about when we are not talking about the new way to communicate: e-mail, Facebook, etc.? How about some of our programs? Remember not too long ago many were against the new program called The Legion Riders, only to eventually see that it was not only a successful program in other States but in Maine as well. We will soon bring 2 new programs on line and hope that the attitudes of the past will not interrupt these new ideas for growth in membership as well as our #1 goal to take care of veterans and their families.

In closing, I welcome all the calls that I have received since I took office on November 1st, but most of all I have enjoyed that small period of time the new ideas from not only new members but those who understand that we need to make those changes in order to succeed.

And we look forward to have the opportunity to celebrate our 100th birthday with the feeling of accomplishment that those who follow us will have the same opportunities as we did at our post homes as well as our districts and state level. I look forward to stay focused and move forward.

A ‘First’ Look

Please try to make your next Post meeting, pick up a friend and be prepared to give a little of yourself and you will be better able to feel how it will make you feel because you are an important part of this great organization.

The Department Headquarters suffered a winter storm interior water loss disrupting the entire organization, yet this great staff kept the spirit and are doing their best to keep up, while moving everything to another facility. We are truly blessed with such a great staff and the involved leaders are working together as a team. I am personally proud of each one of them.

The Mid-Winter conference just concluded and was very successful, receiving many favorable comments. The outstanding comments related to the friendly atmosphere. It was a great example of what can be done when all are in a positive attitude and working together for the good of the legion.

Look for changes in Public Relations getting out to the public on what the Legion does and training for future leaders as we move forward.

I have announced my intentions to run for Department of Maine Commander and one of my promises will be advocate for The Golden Rule. To treat others as you would want to be treated. For if you harbor bitterness happiness will dock elsewhere. Providing training at all levels will eventually pay dividends for the future. I can be reached at richard.graves58@yahoo.com Cell 207-340-8594 or 941-0938.

Commander’s Comments

Now that the holidays have to passed and the New Year has begun and before each fever sets in, it is time to take stock of our accomplishments and yes, our failures as well, during the last year. This has been an exciting and eventful year for the Department of Maine. We have a completely new leadership team and are pressing for progressive change throughout the State. We are moving forward.

Our accomplishments have been many and include an updated public relations program, an active engagement between each organization within the American Legion Family, and the beginning of a Department wide training system as well as many small things that happen on a day to day basis. There have been failures as well, as there will always be failures. Failure is, in fact, a part of the human condition. We fail so that we can learn, we learn so that we can continue to move forward.

The most prominent of our failures is one that we all must share, yet one that cannot be assigned to any one group or individual within our organization. This is our failure to increase membership in the American Legion Department of Maine. This is not unique to the Department of Maine but is true across the country. We need to access the lessons of this failure, employ the many and varied tools at our disposal and learn the techniques we need to reverse this downward trend and begin the process of...
A ‘Second’ Look

Mid-Winter Fun:
Department 2nd Vice Commander Ron Rainfrette, right, presents a red, white, and blue tie made out of duct tape and made in Maine to District 3 Commander Kirk Thurston at Mid-Winter Conference Jan. 17-19, 2014 at Baxter Park Inn in Millinocket, Maine. Ron stated that it’s very important to share a little fun after the programs.

Americanism Corner

Money Matters

Historical Bulletin

The Maine Legionnaire, February 2014

5
I hope you are all staying as warm as possible! I was able to attend the Mid-Winter conference in Millinocket. Thank you to all who were involved in bringing us a very informative and passionate conference. If you missed it, talk with someone who attended so they can share the highlights with you. In February, we celebrate the extraordinary faith, courage and selflessness of Alexander D. Goode, George L. Fox, Clark V. Poling, and John P. Washington. We know, these men are our Four Chaplains we honor for the sacrifices they made for others.

Their ultimate sacrifice is certainly a gift of valor. My hope is that all Posts in the state of Maine held a meaningful ceremony to honor these four Chaplains. As always, remember those who are serving and in harm’s way. Say a special prayer for their safe return home. Help me with sending out a huge hug and prayers to all who have recently lost a family member. Thank you for reading and may God Bless You All.

Service Office Update

I am happy to report that Dean Shelton and I are now officially recognized as nationally accredited veterans service officers by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of the General Counsel. In addition, I will be going down to Washington D.C. in March for additional training hosted by the American Legion, to better assist you as you submit your claims for education benefits, compensation, pension, as well as assisting your dependents with survivor and education benefits.

Do you do it? Dean and I handled over 744 actions on behalf of our Maine American Legion membership since the last time I reported out to you in the Legionnaire. This number includes claims assistance, appeals, appointments, walk-ins, telephone calls, emails. In addition, we have travelled to American Legion meetings to talk about the role of the DSO in assisting in the processing of your claims with the VA.

Meet the ADSO! In the last column I introduced myself, in this column I would like to introduce the Assistant Department Service Office Officer (ADSO), Orville “Dean” Shelton.

He was a member of the United States Navy where he served 10 years as an aircrewm an on Phantom jets all over the world. He also served with HA-3 in Vietnam, the most highly decorated Navy outfit in the Vietnam era, and an additional five years as a member of the Navy’s Military Police. He is also the Vice Commander for District 9, and is Commander of American Legion Post 205, in Augusta and is a member of the American Legion 49 and 8 as well. Dean also holds membership among other military service organizations as a lifetime member of the VFW AMVETS, and DAV.

His wife’s name is Gerda and they live in Augusta.

Do you have pending claims? If you have not already done so, I would like to ask for your assistance and attention, if you submitted a claim to the American Legion Department Service Office during 2013 or earlier, please give us a call and make sure your claim is “active.”

There are no claims here at Togus that are over one year old; you should have received a letter from VA by now if you submitted your claim over 365 days ago. Only appeals of claims are passed the one year point, check on those as well!

You can reach us by email or by phone between 0739 and 1500 every weekday to confirm the status of your claim and appeals.

Administrative Assistant in the DSO Office. The Department Executive Committee recently approved the hiring of an Administrative Assistant for the Department Service Office. The addition of this position should assist our members in getting prompt attention to their phone calls and correspondence.

The Department Service Officer and Assistant Department Service Officer will now have more time to work on claims, appeals and assist our members in the processing of VA hearings. If you are interested in this position, contact the Department Adjutant.

DSO Contact information. We are located at Togus VA Medical Center, Building 205, Room 318. You can contact us by telephone at 207-623-5736/3234, Fax at 207-621-4821, or by email at amedeo.lauria@va.gov or orville.shelton@va.gov.

You are always welcome to stop in the DSO Office, say hello, and have a cup of coffee and talk about your claim or seek other assistance. If you are interested in having us speak at your meeting or event, just contact us to set up a time and date! We are here to serve YOU our American Legion member!

Some veterans returning from very remote areas of conflict such as Afghanistan and Iraq may have returned home only to be injured in a sudden event. As we continue to iron out the logistics of your claims, we want to keep you updated as to where things stand.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

We look forward to seeing you at the November 10th Legislative Meeting and the November 17th Legionnaires Legislative Day here in Augusta.

President’s Message

Throughout the year we have sent care packages to our troops near and far, worked on pocket flags that are folded with lots of love and care, while handwritten notes, letters and homemade cards are sent to all. Each time a soldier holds homemade items, we are giving our service-members a chance to hold something from “home”. Home is also where our membership meets to plan and implement our Auxiliary Vision and Mission. Home is where the heart is.

As we prepare for the upcoming months we will be celebrating April as the Month of the Military Child. What is home like for the children of our deployed soldiers? How do you help in trying to fill that void of a missing parent?

Children & Youth is one of our premier Department of Maine’s Auxiliary Programs; there is so much we can do to support the children of our active-duty military families. For more information contact our Children’s & Youth Chairman, Veronica Rokonsky at 514-3033.

Home is where the heart is, it’s clear that the American Legion Auxiliary’s heart is with Our Veterans, Military and their Families, helping to make life a little bit easier each day.

In the Spirit of Service not Self for Veterans, God and Country.

Chaplain’s Corner

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NECA Highlights

Hello my fellow comrades! I know it’s been a while since I last wrote. I’d like to write by saying Thank you for your patience as I’m very slowly mending. I will fully catch a little bit on membership. The National Organization could be more involved for all of us to push “Paid Up For Life” better known as the PUFL. You can sign up online and you can even set up a payment plan. Please go to Legion.org and check it out. There are benefits to being a PUFL.

Now on another subject, as the Legion’s Women Outreach Coordinator, we know that we are all veterans; however, there are some veterans returning that don’t seem to know that. We all need to work on that, especially our female veterans.

Some are under the impression that they are not veterans and we need to change this.

This past November, the Commander of Post #24 took the first step. Trisha Thurston set up a Female Veterans Appreciation program dedicated to women who have served and still serving. It was truly a success. As I write this article, there are plans to have another day in the central part of the state. Information will be coming as we put the wheels in motion.

I’d like to thank all of my fellow Legionnaires for their well wishes and support. As I look forward to continue working with everyone.

Please call or email me if you need anything. Blessed be to you and your families.

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In the Spirit of Service not Self for Veterans, God and Country.

Judge’s Chambers

A great day to all, after just attending the Mid-Winter conference, it occurred to me just how our journey has changed. If I was to describe this change, I would compare it to a journey on the ocean in a large beautiful ship.

There are times during rough seas, especially when the waves are hitting us in the sides of the ship when it truly is a tough journey and difficult to keep our focus. When we turn into the wind and waves or when the seas still down, it sometimes takes a while to realize that the seas are still and we can and should enjoy the trip again.

The Legion is not that different from that. There are difficult times any group goes through due to personalities; that’s normal. We just need to know when we are facing the wind, our seas are calm, and focus can and should be only on our four pillars not on who brings up an issue but the merits of the issue at hand.

REMEMBER the last line of our preamble. WE ASSOCIATE OURSELVES TOGETHER...TO CONSECRATE AND SANCTIFY OUR COMRADESHIP BY OUR DEVOTION TO MUTUAL HELPFULNESS! I’m pretty sure our forefathers knew we would need to refocus now and again and that is precisely why they wrote that last line.

There is not one legionnaire that has preceeded us that did not make an important contribution to where we are today. It doesn’t matter if we agreed with what ever happened or not, it was the basis of where we are today. The most important thing to take from this is be proud of our organizational past and focus on the present, future and the last line at all times.

The conference was relaxed, informative and yes there was an air of MUTUAL HELPFULNESS and respect; thank you all in-attendance. Proud to be a Maine American Legionnaire!
American Legion Dirigo Boys State.

The American Legion sponsors the Boys State program and we encourage all other groups and organizations to join in promoting the program through sponsorship of candidates to American Legion Dirigo Boys State.

Emma Schalk of Sabattus Wins Oratorical Contest

Emma Schalk 2014 Winner of The Department of Maine Oratorical Contest receives award from Department of Maine Commander John Hargreaves.

By the Dawn’s Early Light

Thanks to the ceaseless efforts of Anthony J. Cincotta, Jr. and a team of five community leaders and businessmen, the U.S. flag that flies over Lord’s Cemetery and adjacent to the Veteran’s Memorial Park in Berwick is now brightly illuminated.

Ronald Reagan famously said “When you can’t make them see the light, we can all clearly see the American Flag flown there in honor of all those who served.” So now, anytime, whether it be at night or “by the dawn’s early light”, we can all see the American Flag.

The many months of time, effort and planning by all involved resulted in a project that greatly enhances Berwick’s Veteran’s Memorial Park and is now open to the public.

The American Legion and from the community at large. Thank you to all of you who volunteered and/or gave advice and assistance along the way. You are far too large. Thank you to all of you who volunteered and/or gave advice and assistance along the way. You are far too many to name, but everyone a valuable contributor and without you there could be no contest. Thank You!

Tom Atkins Chair, Oratorical Committee

67th Annual Boys State Dates

The Department of Maine High School Oratorical Contest is over for this year and it was an exciting time with good competition from six contestants.

Though all contestants are to be congratulated for participating, only one can win, and this year “2014” our winner is Emma Schalk of Sabattus, Maine representing District 3, but she had very stiff competition from her other five competitors. Rebecca Richards of East Winthrop, our winner from “2012” and representing District 9 was second, with Amanda Komulainen of So. Paris, Me., representing District 3 placing third in a very hotly contested contest.

All the contestants were very impressive and quite knowledgeable as mentioned by many of the fifty plus members of the audience in attendance. If you weren’t there, you missed an exciting contest which Donald Chase our Moderator for the event kept moving right along to the dramatic end.

My fellow members of the Oratorical Committee were tremendous in their efforts this year and I thank you all for your help, guidance and understanding as I stumbled through my second year as the Chairperson. While the contest went well, there are things that can always be done better and we look forward to the challenge next year. Volunteers are the life blood of any organization and so it is with this contest. Most of the year our main concern was that we wouldn’t have enough volunteers to fill all the positions required to put on the contest, but I am proud to say we had many volunteers from within the community.

The American Legion and from the community at large. Thank you to all of you who volunteered and/or gave advice and assistance along the way. You are far too many to name, but everyone a valuable contributor and without you there could be no contest. Thank You!

Harold A. Phelps

H arold A. Phelps was born in Auburn, Maine on September 21, 1932. He grew up in Auburn & Lewiston, Maine. Harold graduated from Lewiston High School in 1950. He enlisted in the service before he was 18 and was accepted in the United States Navy on September 5, 1950. He was stationed in San Diego, California along with the USS Prairie AD-15. Harold worked in electronics as Radio Maintenance. While he was there, he earned the Korean Medal and the United Nations Service Medal.

After Harold was discharged on August 5, 1953, he went to work for a year and then he enlisted again and went into the Air Force in 1955. Harold was stationed at multiple bases: Maguire AFB Trenton N.J. United Nations Base Chateauaux, France; a base in Waco, Texas; Mather AFB Sacramento, California; Pope AFB Fayetteville, NC.

Harold trained to be a Photo Interpreter and learned photography. He was an amazing photographer and won many awards at area fairs for his pictures. He did all of his daughter’s baby pictures.

In January 1957, Harold went to Navigation training and completed it in December 1957 and became a master Navigator. Harold retired from the Air Force on June 30, 1972.

Harold got married on September 26, 1959 to Jeanette, they have one child together; a girl named Christine, and they also have 2 grandchildren, Andrew & Soghie.

Harold went to USM and graduated with honors and received his BS in Business & Accounting. He went to work for the Department of Health & Human Services and worked for them for 16 years and then retired in 1993. Harold enjoyed traveling to Nevada and thru the Western States. He came to the Maine Veterans’ Home in September 2012. He enjoys the meals and going to exercise.

Thank You Harold for your service.
Bits ‘N Pieces

Rockland Post 1

Some of the contributions from Rockland Post 1 this past year are as follows: American Red Cross Blood Drives every month, Knox County Humane Society, The Hospitality House, Good Shepherd Food Bank, Dana Farber “Jimmy Fund”, Run for the Fallen, Boy and Girl Scouts, Coast of Maine Children’s Museum, The U.S.O., Knox County Health Clinic, Dept. of Maine Welfare Fund, Toys for Tots, Paralyzed Veterans, Rockland District Nursing Association, Wounded Warriors Project, scholarships to local students, Cell Phones for Soldiers, Backpacks for the Community, The Beals House at Togus, Child Welfare Fund, Thanksgiving and Christmas Baskets for the needy, Homeless Veterans, Dept. of Maine Blind Camp, The Special Olympics of Maine, The Legacy Fund, Keeping Kids Safe Program, Togus Veterans Projects, Maine Veterans Home Projects, Our Color/Honor Guard for area parades and military funerals, as well as donating our function hall for public benefits and individuals in need.

Fairfield Post 14

THANK YOU. Adopt-A-Platoon event. On behalf of the entire “Legion Family” of Grover-Hinckley, Post 14, Fairfield, we wish to thank all of the individuals, businesses, organizations, and Posts that donated comfort items to send to the Maine National Guard 133rd and 1015th. There were plenty of items to fill 31 boxes for our soldiers. The boxes were shipped on December 9th and, we were told all should arrive in time for Christmas.

Grover-Hinckley Post 14, Fairfield, held its annual Christmas meat raffle on December 7, 2013. Working together as a Legion Family with the Auxiliary, Sons and Riders, the total raised was $1,100 for the Interfaith Food Pantry in Fairfield. Thank you to all who attended to make the event such a success.

Fairfield Post 14 adopted one veteran at Togus and bought Christmas gifts at a cost of $166.36. They also donated 18 Thanksgiving baskets to the Fairfield Interfaith Food Pantry for needy families and 22 to Benton Grammar School, for a total cost of $1,250.20

Fairfield Post 14 Commander Gene Combs played Santa Claus on December 13 at the Albion school.

Caribou Post 15

Unit 15 for their donation to the Cary Mammography and Hope and Justice project.

Biddeford Post 26

Post 26 received a $4,000 grant from The Home Depot Foundation for roofing and window materials to make the post weather tight. Thank you to Commander Jake Mulligan, post officers and members of Post 26 for their dedication to helping veterans of all wars to transition back into civilian life.

Farmington Post 28

ALA Unit 28 delivered 35 Christmas gifts in five of the local nursing homes.

Auburn Post 31

Members of Auburn Post 31 delivered 40 full Thanksgiving Dinners to The Vet Center in Lewiston on November 22nd.

Madison Post 39

SAL Squadron 39 donated $200 to the Maine Home for Little Wanderers and $100 to a family from Madison who lost their home in a fire. SAL 39 member Jeff Ireland and his wife Tena donated a 39” television screen, one receiver and two wall mounts. They are the owners of KTRONICS Satellite and Home Theatre Systems of Madison.

Unit 39 donated $25 to the Red Cross Relief for the Philippines Disaster; $100 to the Merrill family whose home was destroyed in a fire, $50 to another fire victim in town, $50 toward a benefit dinner for the Merrill family and $50 backpacks to the ALA C&Y project and $25 to the 4th District fundraiser.

Belfast Post 43

Belfast Post 43 for their donation of $117.50 to the Wounded Warriors project.

Old Orchard Beach Post 57

Old Orchard Beach Post 57 for their donation of $200 to be used for the needy children in York County and $200 to the Ronald McDonald House.

Scarborough Post 76

Scarborough Post 76 for their donation of $1,000 to the Scarborough Veterans Home so they could enjoy a lobster dinner and $500 to Toys for Tots. With their toys collection and party, over $1,500 worth of toys and cash was donated.

Berwick Post 79

At the Berwick Post 79 meeting on January 7, Commander Mark Pilgrim had the pleasure of presenting Blue Star Banners to three Berwick families. Stephanie Rochefort whose daughter, Deanna, is in the Marine Corps; Dave & Roxanne Reynolds whose son, Joshua, is in the Army and Mary Emerson whose son, Joseph, is in the Air Force. Each family also received a personal letter of support from Ann LePage, First Lady of Maine.

Berwick Post 79 and Unit 79 held a Red Cross Blood Drive on 25 January in the Berwick Town Hall. On another very cold day the turnout was better than expected but the collection was difficult. 33 units of blood were drawn.

Stockton Springs Post 157

The Christmas spirit has permeated Jerry W. Dobbins Post 157 Stockton Springs. So far this Christmas they have donated over $500 to sponsor a military family in need of some Christmas help, the post also contributed part of the $738 raised in the District 11 sponsorship of a military family along with the Unity, Palermo and Belfast posts. These same members of the Stockton Springs Post are also acting on Santa’s behalf by answering letters for him sent in from children from Stockton Springs, Searsport and Prospect. Additionally, the post donated $525 to purchase and distribute twenty-one $25 Food Certificates (seven each to Stockton Springs, Searsport, and Prospect) to help families in need of a better Christmas meal. Once again it’s hard to beat the generosity of this country’s American Legion Veterans. Merry Christmas Post 157, home of Santa’s helpers. Stockton Springs Post 157 helped feed 56 people between three towns plus they also supported two families in the Christmas program for $550 and $763.

Litchfield Post 181

Litchfield Post 181 donated $150 to Wreaths Across America.

District 7 (Lincoln Cty)

For their donation of $100 to WAA.

Important To Stay Connected

Staying connected is key to retaining and recruiting American Legion members. So don’t sign up or renew a Legionnaire only to never make contact again. Try the following tips:

* Welcome new members by sending a “thank you” letter for becoming a part of the Legion family and include information on upcoming post meeting dates and times, and other post or community events.
* Send a packet of Legion brochures.
* Host a special dinner with prizes for early renewals.

— Dispatch

Eagle Cane Ceremony:

Department Commander John Hargreaves attended the Eagle Cane Ceremony at the State House, Hall of Flags in November, 2013. WWII Veterans were presented with a “The Hand Carved Eagle Cane Award”. Shown with the Commander is First Lady Ann LePage.

Photo by William Cicotte
‘Moneyball’ a Great Boys of Summer Flick

By DAN WARREN
Special to The Maine Legiaonnaire

THERE'S A SNOW ON THE GROUND. THE AIR IS CHILLY. THE GEESE HAVE ALL FLOWN SOUTH. AND, EVEN MORE Stark — there is no baseball being played outdoors now, at least in Maine. That’s why God invented Hollywood baseball movies!

The best one in a long time is “Moneyball.” The film stars Brad Pitt and focuses on the Oakland Athletics of the 2000s. The A’s are famous for the approach they take at putting teams together, with General Manager Billy Beane attempting to purchase contracts of players with high on-base percentages (OBP), for as little money as possible. — versus paying millions of dollars for sluggers who may hit 20 or 30 home runs but do not make much.

Beane has had success with this approach. Due to the fact that the A’s typically had an annual payroll of perhaps only 40 percent of what the New York Yankees payroll was ($200 million-plus per year), sportswriters began referring to Beane’s approach as “money ball.” A writer named Michael Lewis wrote a book about the A’s and titled it “Moneyball.”

It is on in Hollywood. Most baseball movies aren’t, by the way. Many are schlocky. Johnny-hits-a-home-run-in-the-9th-inning-to-win-The-Big-Bowl-type movies. Others, such as the movie “42,” about the life and hard times of Jackie Robinson, suffer from “horrible ‘game’ footage,” it often resembles 3rd grade baseball at recess.

The movie is good both because it spells out the Beane philosophy in a detailed, effective, believable, attractive fashion (your wives and girlfriends will like Brad Pitt). But also because it tells a good story with a beginning, middle and end. There are good guys (Beane; his assistant; and the A’s, wanting hero-types, journeymen players, Scott Hatteberg and pitcher Chad Bradford); and bad guys (the N.Y. Yankees for their money; old-school scouts for their laziness and blind traditions).

The new Assistant GM and Beane are talking about new players they have signed. All are cheap, all have been rejected by other teams.

“Are we like the Island of Misfit Toys,” the assistant says, borrowing a line from the Christmas movie “Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer.”

“WE LOVE OLD WIVES TALES”

Knicks are in a room together. They are discussing the pros and cons of Scottie Pippen. They speak in generalities and cliches. Beane is not impressed. The discussion is about players. Beane mentions Tommy John surgery. One of the grizzled old scouts rolls his eyes.

“You are not buying into that bullshit from Bill James,” Beane says. “As a matter of fact, I guess I am,” Beane says. “The game is about to start. Billy heads for the entrance to the locker room and workout room.

“Text me with the highlights,” Beane says casually, over his shoulder, to the assistant.

“Away you are going?” the assistant asks, panicky. “The game is about to begin!” Beane screws up his face. “I never watch games.”

DO AS I SAY, NOT AS I DO

Beane and a team instructor-coach, Ron Washington, go to a recruit’s house, Scott Hatteberg, who has been let go by the Red Sox. They like him because he gets on base. “Scott, I know you are done as a catcher due to the arm injury. We want you to play 1B!”

“IT IS NEVER EASY TO SAY GOODBYE

Finally, Beane plays his GM trump card. One day, Beane goes into the coach’s office. He says, “You’re not going to play Pena tonight, Art.”


Beane hands the recruit a contract and says look it over and give us a call.

CAN AN OLD DOG TEACH TRICKS TO NEW DOGS?

Aging slugger David Justice joins the team. The Yankees let him go. If the A’s would pay a chunk of his way, the Yankees would pay the rest and let him go.

Justice has a chip on his shoulder. He is resisting any attempt at advice from Beane about getting on base etc.

Justice and Beane have a confrontation near the indoor batting cage.

Justice suggests Beane is arrogant. He reminds Billy that Justice had been a prominent NY player. “You're not going to play Pena tonight...” Justice stops hitting and listening.

“How about you and I be honest with each other about what we each want out of this, David?” Beane says. Justice says ok.

Beane then says he can give Justice a place to play — and win — if Justice can provide role modeling for the younger players.

“Can you do that?” Beane asks. “Yeah...I can do that.”

Justice says, slowly, hitting again. “IT IS NEVER EASY TO SAY GOODBYE

Beane is telling his new assistant GM that the new assistant will soon have to help with such dastardly, larcenous players — and informing them of the news. The assistant says he needs advice there. The two then role play. The assistant pretends to be breaking the news to the player.

Beane says no. Too drawn out. “Look, would you rather have a bullet to the head, or be shot in the chest, and then bleed to death?” Beane asks, rhetorically.

YOUR WAY, OR MY WAY — OR NO WAY

One of the best scenes in the movie — Beane is having daily disputes and tension with his traditional coach Art Howe about the new approach Beane takes. Beane wants paying time for the new guys who have histories of getting on base a lot. Howe points out that some of those players are horrible defensively. Beane says that’s okay. Play them any way. Howe won’t.

Finally, Beane plays his GM trump card. One day, Beane goes into the coach’s office. He says. "You're not going to play Pena tonight, Art." Howe says, “Yes, I am. I’m the manager. I make up the lineup card.”

Billy says, “This is true. Art. But you aren’t going to use Pena tonight because he’s a Detroit Tiger now.”

Howe says, incredulously: “You son of a bitch....”

Load up on the popcorn. Enjoy the show!

Register Now for ‘14 Baseball

Team registration for American Legion Baseball is now underway online at www.baseball.legion.org.

Coaches can use the same username and password from last year, and they can locate and renew teams and players from previous seasons. The registration site also meets the Legion’s policy for background screening.

Background screening checks will be conducted annually each season prior to any meetings, events, practices or games that involve youth participants.

During the annual online Legion Baseball registration process, an acknowledgement will be required that each coach, manager and volunteer staff of an American Legion Baseball team has been verified as having passed the mandated background check screening requirements for that upcoming season. This is required before managers and coaches can purchase independent team roster on the new base-ball registration website.

For questions or concerns, please email baseball@ legion.org.

www.legion.org/baseball

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Maine Veterans Cemetery Receives Huge Grant Monies

Dear Commander of The American Legion:

I am pleased to inform you that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is awarding a grant in the amount of $1,115,764 for 100 percent of allowable costs associated with the expansion and improvement of the Maine Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Augusta, Maine (FAI: ME-13-18). The State of Maine submitted a formal Application for Federal Assistance for the project on December 4, 2013.

This grant will fund the construction of a pre-placed crypt section, an in-ground cremains section, landscaping, irrigation, and supporting infrastructure. The project will develop approximately 1.8 acres. The construction will include 960 crypts and 1,228 in-ground cremains burial spaces.

This grant will help the State provide continued service for 84,952 Veterans and their families. The closest national cemetery is VA’s Massachusetts National Cemetery in Bourne, Massachusetts, which is approximately 232 miles away. The closest State cemetery is the Veterans Cemetery in Springfield, Maine, which is approximately 93 miles away.

The Memorandum of Agreement is being sent to the Director of the Bureau of Veterans’ Services, Mr. Peter W. Ogden, the official representative of the State for this federally-assisted project.

Sincerely,
Joseph D. Riojas,
Chief of Staff

Consolidated Post Reports

The Consolidated Post Report was established in 1975 in order to assist departments in the documentation of the various activities a specific post has done during the twelve-month reporting period, June 1 through May 31. The Consolidated Post Report (CPR) may be the most important document your post will complete this year. Your post’s information, combined with that of other posts, is used when the National Commander and others testify on Capitol Hill on behalf of all veterans. Each post has a story to tell and when we speak collectively our strength is maximized. If your post did not participate in a program listed on the report, or if you simply can’t get the information by the requested date, leave the section blank. If your post only has one program, then that should be the one reported. If you can’t get exact amounts or numbers, please make a reasonable estimate.

Many questions call for figures, such as the number of Funerals Honors provided or the number of cases handled by the post service officer. Some of the items being assessed, like The American Legion National Emergency Fund, ask for the number of dollars spent. Do not report cents. Round your response to the nearest dollar.

All answers to the boxes and fill-ins should be typed or printed clearly using a pen with black or dark blue ink. Some questions can be answered by putting an “X” in the box provided. An “X” means “Yes.” A blank means “No.” You can also complete and submit your CPR information at myLegion.org using the online form. Make sure you have all your information ready, then simply sign-on and look for Consolidated Post Report under the “post and department” options. After completing the form, click on the “Submit” button to send the report to National Headquarters; a copy will automatically be sent to your department headquarters, as well. The on-line CPR form will be made available each year after the blank forms are distributed to the departments (usually in February). On-line submission will be available at myLegion.org through July 1st, the cutoff for receipt of forms at National Headquarters.

When using the paper form, send the original and one copy to your department headquarters by the date they specify. Keep the third copy for your post records.

If your post had projects, activities or events which cannot be adequately covered on the report form, attach a written description with pictures and articles, if applicable, to the national and department copies of the form. The narrative report will be reviewed by personnel at National Headquarters responsible for specific programs and shared with The American Legion Magazine staff. Your report is a measure of performance for your post and shows you are “Still Served America.”

MESCA Conference on Dec. 6 in Augusta

The American Legion at the Maine School Counselor Association’s (MESCA) December 2013 State Conference. Chairman of the Public Relations Committee, Pat Eisenhart, left, and Department of Maine Commander John Hargreaves are seen here manning the Department of Maine Informational Booth at the (MESCA) School Counselor Association Conference on Dec. 6, 2013 in the Augusta Civic Center, Augusta ME. This conference was held between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Not pictured, Tom Adkins Department Oratorical Chairman was also on hand to assist at the booth.

The purpose of the Departments participation at the conference was to provide information to school counselors on the Children and Youth programs of The American Legion and to provide information to the counselors on the Legions many scholarship programs. Our participation at such conferences is part of the Public Relations Committee’s efforts to raise public awareness in Maine of many American Legion activities performed throughout the state for our Children and Youth and our Veterans and military families.

Maine Blind Camp Report

The 2013 Maine Blind Camp sponsored by The American Legion was held at Camp Lawrwdeld July 21st to July 28th. Your Blind Camp Committee met on July 24 during the annual Camp Open House.

We were pleased to be joined by Department Commander John Hargreaves, SAL Detachment of Maine Commander Dickie Huntley, Auxiliary President Georgine Butman, and Camp Director Harry Sabnani. Other attendees included Past Dept. Commander Ken Bouchard, Past Dept. President Lois Worcester and SAL NECA Bruce Pierce.

We also welcomed other members of the Legion Family and spouses. This was truly an American Legion Family Event. We were also pleased to have John Lindquist from Christian Record Services, Keith Ellison the Director of National Camps for the Blind, Jose Cortes the Director of Adventist Youth Ministries, and Youth Minister Hector Perez.

There were 43 campers this year. Campers of all ages who are blind or legally blind can attend and many have been coming for a dozen years or more. If you know of anyone who meets these criteria, please make them aware of the program. Information on the Camp is available at www.lawrwdeld.org. All advertising including the web site and Camp brochures clearly identify the week as made possible by The American Legion.

Unfortunately fund raising fell a bit short for 2013. We raised approximately $35,000 which left us $520 short of goal. The SAL provided their usual donation of $1,500, Bath Post 21 $1,000, Machias Post 9 $250 and $200 was donated by Waterville Post 5, Fairfield Post 14, Oakland Post 51, and Guilford Post 129. We appreciate your continued support and any new donations will go towards the 2014 Blind Camp.

Prior to the meeting we enjoyed lunch. After the meeting we toured the Camp and met with campers and enjoyed a fine vegetarian meal. Due to rain the previous day, the annual talent show was held a day early so we instead attended a rodeo put on by the Horse Camp campers. The Blind Camp campers participated in several events including relays and one legged races. Thank you for your continued support.

Brian J. Knowlton, Chairman
Maine American Legion Blind Camp Committee
Good Turn-out at MWC

The American Legion Department of Maine Commander John Hargreaves, right, presents National Vice Commander William A. Rakestraw with a copy of “Korea Reborn” published by the Republic of Korea at the Department of Maine’s Mid-Winter Conference held in Millinocket, Maine on January 17-19, 2014.

Bar Harbor Post & Community To Honor Fallen Hero This Memorial Day

Bar Harbor’s local American Legion Auxiliary and Post will gather with community members and supporters from across the state to remember 2nd Lieutenant George M. Hout, who went missing in action over the Himalayas in 1944. This Memorial Day weekend, 2nd Lt. Hout, who received both the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross for his service in World War II, has never been accounted for, although he was presumed dead in 1944.

Nearly 70 years later, his hometown will honor his sacrifice by laying a headstone as well as holding a service at Bar Harbor’s Ledgelawn Cemetery on May 24th at 1 p.m. A reception at the American Legion, George Edwin Kirk Post 25 at 70 Cottage Street in downtown Bar Harbor will follow the ceremony.

Paul Durost, District 12 Commander and Adjutant of the George Edwin Kirk Post 25 in Bar Harbor, said organizing the event to honor and remember 2nd Lt. Hout’s service is some of the most important work his organization does. “We owe 2nd Lt. Hout and his family so much for his service and sacrifice,” said Durost. “After all these years, we want 2nd Lt. Hout’s loved ones to know that he is remembered and that his community is grateful.”

2nd Lt. Hout’s headstone will be placed on his family plot in the same cemetery in which Corporal Robert Tait’s remains were laid to rest last October after being returned to his hometown 62 years after he was killed in action in the Korean War.

Members of the public are invited to join in honoring 2nd Lt. Hout at the Ledgelawn Cemetery service and following reception. For more information, contact Ann Durost, President, George Edwin Kirk Auxiliary Unit 25, 207-669-5686, anndurost@gmail.com.

Have You Asked a Veteran TO JOIN Today?

Help us increase membership for 2014!

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REMEMBER:
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME
TURN 'CLOCKS AHEAD 1 HOUR
MARCH 9TH

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Photo by Tommy Adkins

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Post 157 Gift: Mrs. Nancy Olmstead presents Stockton Springs Post 157 Post Commander Ernest Kalinisan, and Post Adjutant Lee Snyder a picture of her son and a book entitled “A Soldiers Words” written from blogs which describe day-to-day events of her son during his tour in Iran. Her son U.S. Army Major Andrew James Olmstead was looking forward to the end of his tour when he was killed by a sniper’s bullet in Iraq on Jan. 3, 2008. The Post is currently working with Maine Veteran Services to obtain a Maine Gold Star Medal and certificate to be presented at a later date. The presentation took place at Stockton Springs Post 157 meeting Dec. 10, 2013. Left to right, Post 157 Commander Ernest Kalinisan, Post 157 Adjutant Lee Snyder and Mrs. Nancy Olmstead.
Legion Activities

Corinna Post 73 Commander David Bolstridge presented a Continuous Membership Certificate to Norman Partridge who has been a member of the American Legion for over 50 years. Norman continues to be a valuable active member at the Corinna post.

District 6: Department Commander John Hargreaves, center, speaks with District 6 Adjutant Ray Lewis, left, and District 6 Commander Steve Jarrett at the District 6 meeting held at St. George Post 34 on Oct. 26.

District 12 Commander and guest speaker Paul Durost prepares lunch for Area 5 members at Bar Harbor Post 25 presided by Area 5 Commander Lee Leeman on Nov. 9. The joint meeting was well attended by the Legion family along with Department Commander John Hargreaves and Department Adjutant Paul L'Heureux.

Corinna Post 73:
At left, 100-year-old member Lawrence Burleigh, center, receives a life membership from Corinna Post 73 Commander David Bolstridge, right, at his 100th birthday party held at the post. Also pictured is Lawrence’s wife Dorothy.

Post CN-09:
Keeping Very Busy


Outstanding: “Coombs-Mountfort American Legion Post 158, Lisbon, Maine, recognized the contributions of an outstanding Legionnaire on Veterans Day. Comrade Bill King enlisted days before World War II ended and served in Korea, being one of the remaining Chosen Few and finally, Vietnam. One year after his retirement from the United States Army, Bill started as an officer of the Post, serving continuously for the next 40 years, ending his long period of devoted service in 2013. Over the years, he mentored and trained too many Legionnaires to count and played an important role in the success of his Post. A couple other responsibilities he fulfilled were as trustee, for 39 years, Commander for five years, and leader of the firing squads for funerals and Memorial Day. Bill was presented with a Lifetime Service Award by NEC Paul L’Heureux at a breakfast where about 80 people attended to pay him honor.”

Members of American Legion Post 31, Auburn, above delivered 40 full Thanksgiving Dinners to The Vet Center in Lewiston on Nov. 23. Left to right, Post 31 Second Vice Fred Ward, Women’s Auxiliary President Nancy Ward, Colleen Starbird, and President of Veteran Riders of Maine Chuck Starbird.

Westbrook Post 62: at left, held a Presentation of Certificates Award Ceremony signed by Governor Paul LePage on May 19, 2013. The Certificates of Appreciation were from the citizens of Maine in honor of those who served in WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War, Cold War, and the Persian Gulf on May 19, 2013. Left to right, John Baker, Leo Conley, Robert Burton, James Michaud, Charles Melanson, Nelson Graham, Richard Lowell, Francisco (Frankie) Burila, kneeling, Philip LeClerc, Robert Meggison, Stanley Reynolds, Laurent Senechal, Thomas Caron, LTC Peter Ogden, Director of Veterans’ Services, William Hurd, Paul L’Heureux, Ashley Pike and William Cicotti.
Legionnaire of the Year Sought

Is that exceptional Legionnaire, the one with unquestionable leadership ability, a member of your Post?

Do you have that member within your post that seems to stand above the rest in all phases of your post activities? Does he or she aspire to higher positions within the American Legion?

If your post has that member who would qualify for the honor and prestige for the Past Department Commanders Award, why not submit their name and resume? Being chosen for this award is indeed a great honor. When in doubt, ask those who were previously chosen. It is a title you will be known for during your entire Legion career.

Maybe your Post has previously sent a candidate for this award who was not chosen. Why not submit the name again? There are no rules stating how many times you can apply.

Your candidate could be this year’s winner. Remember, everything in life is a gamble. The deadline for applications is May 1, 2014. Applications can be obtained through Department Headquarters or on-line at www.mainelegion.org

Send completed applications to The American Legion, State Headquarters, Attention: Past Department Commanders Award Chairman, P.O. Box 900, Waterville, ME 04903-0900.

Lewiston Post 22 held a candle light prayer at a recent membership meeting to commemorate the anniversary of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Towers on September 11, 2001, and remembering those who lost their lives at the World Trade Towers, the Pentagon and United Flight 93. Left to right, Post 22 Commander Jerry DeWitt, Post 22 Adjutant Jerry DerBoghosian, Post 22 Sgt-at-Arms Arthur Paradis, Post 22 Chaplain Donald Dube, and Post 22 Assistant Chaplain Reverend Stephen Crowson.

Post 157 Stockton Springs: The Christmas spirit has permeated Jerry W. Dobbins Post 157 Stockton Springs. So far this Christmas they have donated over $500 to sponsor a military family in need of some Christmas help; the post also contributed part of the $758 raised in the District 11 sponsorship of a military family along with the Belfast, Unity and Palermo posts. These same members of the Stockton Springs Post are also acting on Santa’s behalf by answering letters for him sent in from children from Stockton Springs, Searsport and Prospect. Additionally, the post donated $25 to purchase and distribute twenty-one $25 Food Certificates (seven each to Stockton Springs, Searsport, and Prospect) to help families in need of a better Christmas meal. Once again it’s hard to beat the generosity of this country’s American Legion Veterans. Merry Christmas Post 157, home of Santa’s helpers.
THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MAINE

OFFICIAL CALL

FOR

NINETY-SIXTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

I 

n accordance with Article IV of the Constitution and By-laws of the Department of Maine, The American Legion, the ninety-sixth Annual Convention is hereby called to convene at Bangor, Maine June 13-15, 2014.

The first business session will be called to order at 12:00 p.m. Daylight Savings Time, on the afternoon of Friday, June 13, 2014, with the final business session scheduled for Saturday morning, June 14, 2014, at 9 a.m. All general business sessions of the convention will be held at the Cross Insurance Center, Bangor, Maine.

PURPOSE

The convention is called for the purpose of electing Department Officers for the ensuing year; to elect delegates and alternates to the 2014 National Convention to be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, to receive reports of all Department Officers and standing committees; to consider the resolutions and actions of subordinate bodies and to transact any other business properly brought before the convention.

REPRESENTATION

Each post is entitled to one delegate and one alternate, and one additional delegate and alternate for each one hundred members or fractional part thereof paid up to May 14, 2014. A post with less than 15 members is not entitled to any delegates. All department officers, district commanders, area commanders and Past Department Commanders, in good standing, shall be entitled to vote and have all the rights of delegates in the convention. These officers and Past Department Commanders are delegates-at-large and must not be named as post delegates.

Alternate delegates are entitled to a seat in the convention but will have the right to vote only in the absence of the duly elected delegates. The decision of the selection of alternate delegates to represent absent delegates is a matter of decision within the respective delegations. All Legionnaires, Auxiliary members, Sons of the American Legion and guests are invited to attend convention as guests, but have no voice or vote unless delegates.

RULES OF ORDER

The rules of procedure at the Department Convention shall be those set forth in Robert’s Rules of Order, newly revised.

MEETINGS

The Resolutions Committee shall hold a public hearing on all resolutions submitted in accordance with the Constitution and By-laws of the Department of Maine, Cross Insurance Center on Friday, June 13, 2014, at 9 a.m. All delegates and alternates and members of The American Legion are invited to attend the session. Following this public hearing, the Committee on Resolutions will go into executive session to vote on resolutions to be brought before the body.

The Department Executive Committee will hold the first meeting at the Cross Insurance Center on Sunday, June 15, 2014. All department officers, district commanders, area commanders and Past Department Commanders are requested to attend.

CREDENTIALS

Each post will fill out the credential blank submitted by the Department Adjutant and return same to the Department Executive Committee. CREDENTIAL reports should be filed with the Credentials Committee at the Cross Insurance Center on Saturday, June 14, 2014.

The Department Adjutant shall issue to each Post, 30 days prior to convention, a statement of the number of 2014 membership cards, accompanied by state and national dues, received at Department Headquarters on May 14, 2014. Listed with the membership report will appear the number of delegates allowed each post.

Creditable reports should be filed with the Department Adjutant as soon as possible to allow for inspection and checking, thus correcting any errors. If there should be any changes in personnel on the list of delegates or alternates, corrections should be made with the Credentials Committee. Credentials must be verified by the Credentials Committee, which will be in session at the Cross Insurance Center, Bangor, Maine, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Saturday, June 14, 2014.

The Department Adjutant shall issue to each Post, 30 days prior to convention, a statement of the number of 2014 membership cards, accompanied by state and national dues, received at Department Headquarters on May 14, 2014. Listed with the membership report will appear the number of delegates allowed each post.

Creditable reports should be filed with the Department Adjutant as soon as possible to allow for inspection and checking, thus correcting any errors. If there should be any changes in personnel on the list of delegates or alternates, corrections should be made with the Credentials Committee. Delegates must be registered with the convention in order to vote (1975 Convention Mandate). Registration fee of $5 for each delegate and alternate may be paid by sending a check made payable to The American Legion, PO. Box 960, Waterville, Maine 04903-0960.

NOMINATION AND ELECTIONS

At the first session of Department Convention on Friday, June 13, 2014, nominations shall be made for the offices of Department Commander; Department First Vice Commander; Department Second Vice Commander; Department Historian; Department Americanism Officer; Department Sergeant-at-Arms; National Executive Committeeman and National Executive Committeeman Alternate.

Nominations shall be made on the creditable blanks submitted by the Department Adjutant prior to May 14, 2014, a letter of intent to seek office and furnish a copy of discharge papers, which makes them eligible for membership in The American Legion. The ballots for the Department Convention will be pre-printed indicating those candidates who have filed for office. Any candidate declaring after May 14, 2014 or nominated from the floor of the convention, will be a write-in candidate. Blank spaces will be left for write-in candidates. (DEC Mandate Jan. 27, 1985)

VOTING

Delegates may get ballots from the Credentials Committee at the Cross Insurance Center on Saturday, June 14, 2014. The Credentials Committee will be in session for two hours on Saturday morning, June 14, 2014, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Each delegate will go to the convention hall during the hours specified and secure ballots. No ballots will be issued after 10 a.m. Delegates will cast ballots immediately. Delegate’s card, badge, convention registration and your 2014 membership card must be displayed during voting.

Ballot Boxes will close promptly at 10:15 a.m.

UNIFORM OF THE DAY

Uniform of the day during the convention sessions will be The American Legion cap. Only the official representative of another veterans group may wear the cap of that organization in the convention hall.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

The Department Chaplain of The American Legion will conduct a Memorial Service to be held just prior to conclusion to the Saturday session, June 14, 2014. Posts wishing to have deceased members included in the Post Everlasting Ceremony are requested to bring a list of the honored dead to Department Headquarters. Lists must include name of deceased comrades and conflict served. If your post files a Post Everlasting list for The Maine Legioinaire and said list is up to date, a second list is not necessary.

LAW AND ORDER

Order will be maintained at all times in the convention hall under the direction of the Department Sergeant-at-Arms and his assistants. Delegates, alternates and members attending the convention are requested to be courteous to all speakers and visitors to the convention.

PRESS

The Department Adjutant’s staff will maintain press facilities during Convention sessions. The Department Adjutant must approve all communications from the Department Convention.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

A formal installation ceremony will be held Saturday, June 14, 2014, at 7 p.m. All department officers and district commanders will be sworn into office at that time and will automatically become members of the Department Executive Committee.

RAFFLES OR SALES ITEMS

There will be NO sales items or raffles at the Department Convention without specific permission of the Department Adjutant. This call will be read in all posts and district organizations and posted on the bulletin boards of all posts. This call is being sent to the officers on record. If new officers have been elected, please transmit this information to them.

Official:

Paul LHeureux
Department Adjutant

John Hargreaves
Department Commander
Westbrook’s ‘Wreaths Across America’ Rally Big Success

By AMEDEO LAURIA
Special to The Maine Legionnaire

Several members of the American Legion community were on hand at Westbrook Performing Arts Center to lend their support to the Annual “Wreaths Across America” rally hosted by WLOB radio personality Ray Richardson on December 9, 2013.

Wreaths Across America (WAA) is a national nonprofit organization founded in 2007 to continue and expand the annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. It was begun by Maine businessman Morrill Worcester in 1992 with a donation of 5,000 wreaths and now the donation is over 400,000 wreaths. The mission of the “Wreaths Across America” organization is “Remember, Honor, Teach,” and is carried out in part by coordinating wreath laying ceremonies and events specified Saturday in December at National Cemeteries in all 50 states and beyond. They also organize a week of events including international veteran’s tributes, ceremonies at State Houses and a week-long “Veteran’s Parade” between Maine and Virginia where we stop along the way to spread our message about the importance and sacrifice made by veterans and their families to preserve our freedoms.

American Legion Department of Maine Service Officer Amedeo Lauria and Past Post Commander Reginald Washby were invited as guests, along with other veterans, to speak on the air and share their military experiences with the WLOB radio and web streaming audience as well as those in the center.

The discussion included the various programs of the American Legion to include the currently ongoing Oratorical Program that is being conducted at the post, district and department level. The discussion even solicited a raised hand from a student in the crowd who wanted to know more about the Oratorical. Also on hand were Governor Paul LePage and his wife Ann who has made veterans her focus as the “First Lady” of Maine. After the rally, Ann was going to travel with the convoy, via motorcycle, down to Arlington, National Cemetery.

Veterans, members of the community, as well as students of Westbrook High School and Westbrook Middle School filled the Westbrook Performing Arts Center, a center that holds 1000 people, to standing room only.

Those veterans and family members invited by Mr. Richardson came up onto the stage and told touching stories of friends and family members who are currently serving or who have given the ultimate sacrifice to our great nation.

Those in attendance were entertained by the students who sung both patriotic and seasonal songs to the great appreciation of the crowd.

It was great to be a part of such a moving and patriotic event and we look forward to attendance, by members of the Legion family, in the future as well.

If you would like to contribute, volunteer, support, or find out more information about this amazing effort by Maine’s Worcester Family, go online to www.wreathsacrossamerica.org.

National Commander’s Message to You

Dear Legion Family Members and Friends,

By now you are familiar with the vast benefits of being a member of The American Legion. Today, I am here to encourage you to consider joining the Paid Up For Life program so you will always be a proud Legionnaire, along with me and the other 200,000 members who are paid up for life.

Why join the Paid Up For Life program? First off, once you do, you will no longer receive annual renewal notices or be subject to any possible future dues increases. You will also receive a lifetime subscription to The American Legion Magazine.

To join the program, just head to the online enrollment page at www.legion.org/join/pufl. From there you can enroll in the program and pay in full or select 12 monthly installments. Once you identify yourself using your member ID number you will be shown your personalized Paid Up For Life offer and can see why PUFL is an affordable choice. You will also be able to print out a copy of your offer to mail in if you prefer.

Each PUFL member receives a permanent plastic card, as well as an annual paper card to verify continuing membership in The American Legion. The annual card is mailed in July of each year.

Thank you for considering joining the Paid Up For Life program. If you have questions, please contact customer service at 800-433-3318.

For God and Country,
Dan Dellinger
National Commander

Candidates’ Deadline: May 14

Anyone wishing to run for a Department Office must submit a letter of intent and a copy of his or her discharge papers making them eligible for The American Legion to the Department Adjutant’s office on or before May 14, 2014 to be included on the official ballot at convention in June.

If you wish to be included in The Maine Legionnaire, the above information, plus a photo of you must be at Department Headquarters by April 25, 2014.

Eligibility Information

If you have served federal active duty in the United States Armed Forces during any of the war eras listed below, and have been honorably discharged or are still serving, you are eligible for membership in The American Legion:

- August 2, 1990 to date of cessation (Operation Desert Shield/Storm)
- December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990 (Operation Just Cause – Panama)
- August 24, 1982 to July 31, 1984 (Lebanon/Grenada)

(Korea) December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946 (World War II)
April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918 (World War I)
*Because eligibility dates remain open, all members of the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible to join The American Legion at this time, until the date of the end of hostilities as determined by the government of the United States.

U.S. Merchant Marine eligible only from December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946 (WWII).
Charles E. Sherman Jr. Post 36 Honors Its World War II Veterans

Veteran’s Day 2013 and Boothbay Harbor Post 36’s monthly meeting date conveniently fell together on November 11, 2013. We celebrated with a special dinner honoring our World War II Veterans and a slide show with their photos in uniform. The Honorees included Paul Adams, Bob Eaton, Bob Hanley, Dan Reed, “Robbie” Robinson, Curt West, and Bob Zimmerli. The 40+ audience were then regaled with anecdotes from each, and a most enjoyable evening was had by all! In the accompanying photograph, visible members are: (left side of table, foreground to back) Brian McKenna, Art Richardson, Skip Welch, Phil Chapman, and Harry Pinkham. (Right side, foreground to back) WWII Vet Bob Hanley, his son & Vietnam Vet Tim Hanley, WWII Vet Bob Zimmerli. Post 36 Commander observes from the podium.

Litchfield American Legion Post Honors America

On November 11th William Bold American Legion Post #181 of Litchfield, honored American Veterans and America by gathering at the Post for four special presentations. The post honored Staff Sergeant Kenneth Goodwin Nason, a WWII veteran killed in action, by refolding his burial flag and presenting it to Sgt. Nason’s daughter, Carolyn Nason Goggins, and his son, Robert Nason.

The flag was refolded by WWII Veteran’s, William Quackenbush and Malcolm Harvey, along with the assistance of Staff Sergeant Michael Boyce of the Maine Conservation Corp.

Following this ceremony the post honored the local Boy Scout Troop for their service to the post and the community by presenting appreciation certificates to each of the Scouts along with American Legion Coins. Also, a new American flag was presented to the Libby-Tozier School to be flown at the school. The presentation was made by Post Americanism Officer Norman Bernier.

These presentations were followed at 11 a.m. by the ceremonial flag retirement service led by post Commander Deborah Couture with the assistance of the Boy Scouts. The meaning of the pledge of allegiance was read by Bill Christopoulos, District Americanism Officer, and Norman Bernier, Post Americanism Officer, in preparation for disposing of worn out flags. The ceremony was followed by the burning of hundreds of flags which were dropped off at the Post for honorable disposal. The people attending were reminded that there is a deposit box at the Post for worn out flags to be honorably disposed of.

Law and Order

By KIRK D. THURSTON
Special to The Maine Legionnaire

My name is Kirk Thurston, Chairman of the Department Law and Order Committee.

This year’s committee members are Gil Ormsby from Harpswell, Roderick Collins from Bridgewater, Larry Newth from Mechanic Falls, Eric Dickey from Richmond and Mike Frelk from Bath.

The time has come for all legionnaires to press our local area First Responder organizations, i.e. Police Officers, Firefighters and EMTs, for information regarding the outstanding heroes in our communities. Contact the leadership of these groups and ask how you can help them honor their people.

The forms are simple and easy to prepare. Add a few newspaper articles on an individual and a supervisor’s letter of recommendation and you have a package for submittal.

I am willing to assist any Post in the preparation of their applications. Remember, May 1st is the deadline for packages to be at Department Headquarters. If you have any questions on form or content of the applications, packages or other ideas, please do not hesitate to contact me at 369-0831, e-mail fuzzyt3@roadrunner.com or call upon any of the committee members in your area. Refer to this year’s Department State Directory for their phone numbers.

Last year’s number of entries can be greatly improved, so let’s get out there and get some deserving people recommended and recognized.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours in Service,
Kirk D. Thurston
Department Chairman
Law and Order Committee

At Harpswell’s John Leo Murray Jr. Post 171 seventh annual Christmas party for Togus VA long-term care patients on Dec. 13, members of the Army National Guard, Marine Corps, Navy, Air National Guard and Coast Guard assisted patients at the pizza and lobster roll lunch and when they received individual gifts afterwards. The Togus Veterans Village received 3 tablets with Skype technology so patients can communicate with their families. Best Buy Manager Ray Poulin assisted Post 171 in the purchase of the tablets at a great price. Due to the efforts of Santa Claus Roy Knight, Gabor Lobster donated 20 pounds of picked lobster, which were fashioned into 90 lobster rolls by Mrs. Clause Debra Knight, elf Rachael Knight and Lisa True. The lobster rolls were a big hit with the patients!

Photo by Else Boland.
Since the Fall Conference, the department public relations committee has been meeting weekly to develop strategies to let the public know what our American Legion family does and to help bolster efforts to increase our membership.

Since then, the committee has published numerous press releases, radio public service announcements, presented on talk shows in southern Maine, produced facebook.com/maineamericanlegion, a slide show for the Mid-Winter Conference, and a District by District post public relations training curriculum.

The slide show emphasized the need for every legion post to establish personal relationships with members of their own post, local media, and the community at large.

Establishing relationship with existing members, especially those who don't attend meetings very often, develops a family atmosphere and prevents those members from feeling they are not needed or don't matter.

Last year, we lost 1000 members thus we have to stop doing the same old thing and expect different results.

The biggest reason we haven't recruited a lot of new members is because existing members aren't asking. Every member has to chip in the Department's public relations effort by putting our best foot forward in the way we serve vets, kids, the community, and appearing at public hearings on bills designed to help veterans.

By having positive, personal relationships with the community, each post can get the message out that the American Legion is not just a “bar.”

And lastly, the slide show emphasized the importance of developing personal relationship with local newspaper and radio people, other community organizations and people who can help get the word out, raise money and volunteers for post projects.

Starting at 9 am, Saturday, February 8, the PR committee will put on its first half day public relations training at the Bar Harbor post followed by another at the Rumford post on March 8th.

Any District Commander who would like the team to put on training in their respective districts should contact PR Chair Pat Eisenhart at 632-3807 or pat@theopcenter.com.

Goodwill Industries of Northern New England Veterans Fund Offers 1-Time Financial Need To Eligible Applicants

For Additional Information: www.goodwillnne.org
Appreciation Extended:

Phyllis D’Orsay, the longtime Veteran Service Officer at the Windham Veterans Center, receives a certificate of appreciation from David Tanguay, Post 148 adjutant, at her retirement party at the Portland Vet Center. D’Orsay visited with Windham area veterans on a biweekly basis for many years helping veteran’s access programs and services. Several members of the local American Legion and VFW Post attended the event. She retired at the end of November.

Harpswell’s John Leo Murray Jr. Post 171
Seventh Annual Togus VA Christmas Party

USS Zumwalt crew attends Harpswell’s John Leo Murray Jr. Post 171 Seventh Annual Togus VA Christmas party for long-term care patients on Dec. 13. From L-R, Command Master Chief Dion Beauchamp, HT1 Stewart Simpson, MM3 Alejandro Bolanos, GSM1 Olie Betancourt, MM3 Juan Torres, EN1 Quincy Fry, MM3 Christopher Felardeau, GSM2 Kevin Larios, Commanding Officer Capt. James Kirk. They assisted patients at the pizza and lobster lunch and in opening individual gifts afterwards. Togus Veterans Village also received 3 tablets with Skype technology so patients can communicate with their families.

“Wreaths of Enduring Memory”

Officers of the American Legion William J. Rogers Post 153 and Veterans of Foreign War Capt. Frank W. Hulett Post 1603 placed “Wreaths of Enduring Memory” on all veterans’ graves at Auburn Plains Cemetery on Route 4 also known as North Plains Burying Ground, Pleasant Plains Cemetery, Plains Cemetery & Poverty Corner Cemetery.

The VFW for years had placed American Flags at that cemetery. Two years ago the American Legion adopted the cemetery from the VFW as Bernard and Beaulieu lived in Turner and drove by daily. Since the Legion adopted the cemetery, a renovation took place and grave stones were straightened and repaired. Auburn Public Works trimmed the boundary trees and the cemetery received a face lift. “We have verified 30 veterans in this cemetery at this time and are proud to remember and honor them in this way”, said Bernard.

Many veterans have joint membership to several veteran organizations such as Hugh Brown who is currently serving as Chaplain for the VFW and 1st Vice Commander for the Legion. Brown has been a member of the Legion for approximately 27 years and 15 years at the VFW. Douglas who is currently Commander of the VFW and Trustee for the Legion, first joined the Legion in Europe and has served locally for 27 years and 29 years for the VFW.

Dupuis has served in the Legion for 29 years, and Beaulieu 13 years. “These men are pillars in our community and have been instrumental in helping a lot of youth programs and community events,” said Bernard

Left to right, Tibby Dupuis, Carl Douglass, Hugh Brown, & Don Beaulieu.

Everlasting gratitude: Wreaths across Windham for Veterans who gave all

By Michelle Libby

With a light covering of snow, volunteers from scout and veterans organizations joined together today to lay wreaths at every grave of Windham’s veterans. Scouting from Boy Scout troop 305 canvassed Arlington Cemetery next to the North Windham Fire Station, searching for placards, bronze stars or other items that denoted a veteran was laid to rest there. Each wreath with a red, white and blue bow was placed against the stone or flag holder. Boy Scout troop 51 worked at Chase Cemetery and Girl Scout troops worked at Smith and Mayberry Cemeteries.

Libby Sawyer, owner of Studio Flora, had the idea to put wreaths on all of the veterans’ graves in Windham for the holiday season, an idea she based on the Wreaths Across America program that sends wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery to adorn those graves. What she didn’t realize was that there were over 660 veterans whose graves were scattered all over Windham.

“We wanted to give back to all the people who have given to us,” Sawyer said. “I met with Anne Jordan and became overwhelmed with the numbers.” Sawyer contacted Roger Tomnotta from the veterans’ organization in Windham to see if she could help. Darra Tanguay from the America Legion Post 168 took over and organized groups of Boy and Girl Scouts to place the wreaths at each of the larger cemeteries in Windham with help from veterans. It was a massive project, Tanguay said.

“There are 30 cemeteries in Windham, 24 have veterans in them,” Tanguay said. He said that some are far off the road or might have only one or two veterans. Those are being placed by himself or another veteran. “Even the remote sites, we’ll still visit them,” he said.

“Everyone should feel good about doing things in the community,” said Sawyer. “It’s 100 percent American. We want to make sure that the next generation is understanding what these people gave,” she said.

The project is expected to cost approximately $3,500, of which they have raised about $1,000, including a $500 check from the Windham Police Department. To donate or for information call 650-7484 or make checks out to American Legion Post 148.

Sweepstakes Winners Announced

Fall Conference concluded on Saturday afternoon, Sept. 21, with our sweepstakes drawing, which saw four of our legionnaires win the following amounts:

The lucky winner of the top prize of $3,500 was Bernard Sinclair, Madison Post 39.

Other winners were $1,000 — Robert Beattie, Corinna Post 73; $500 — Robert Veilleux, Augusta Post 2 and $200 — Steve Walsh, Portland Post 17.

At the conclusion of the Mid-Winter Conference on Saturday, January 18, 2014, the Sweepstakes winners were drawn and announced.

The lucky winner of the top prize of $3,500 was Fred Hersom, Bath Post 21. Other winners were $1,000 - Sumner L. Thompson, Alfred Post 134; Archie M. Wing, Jr., Monmouth Post 204 - $500 and Alan D. McLellan, Waterville Post 178 - $200.

Testimonials Set for Greenville

Department Commander/Department President/SAL Detachment Commander Testimonials:

The Department Testimonial for Department Commander John Hargreaves, Department President Georigine Butman, and SAL Detachment Commander Richard Huntley will be held Saturday, June 7, 2014 in Greenville, Maine on the Katahdin.

This 3-hour tour will consist of a buffet-style meal along with entertainment from Rockin' Ron.

More information on meal arrangements will be made available soon and will be published on www.mainelegion.org and in our department newsletter or Smile.

Hotel reservations will be your own responsibility.

Indian Hill Motel: 127 Moosehead Lake Rd., Greenville — 695-2623;
Kineo View Motel: Rte. 15 Moosehead Lake Rd., Greenville - 695-4470;
Leisure Life: Lilly Bay Rd., Greenville — 695-3737

American Legion Riders, Chapter 147, Madawaska spent three days visiting every veteran in every Nursing Home in the St. John Valley. The Riders began their gift giving and visits in Van Buren on Tuesday, December 17th, and finished in Eagle Lake on Thursday, December 19th, 2013. The Riders who participated are shown here, left to right, Bob Thibeault as Santa, Diane Daigle, Eugene Michaud, Jolyn Michaud, Jenn Daigle — Director, Bob Gagnon, Nancy Michaud, Gil Roy, Sr., Dan Bruno, and Fern Laviole.

By Steve Page, Historian
VA Maine Health Care System Honors Philip Kennard

On October 29, VA Maine Health Care System conducted a ceremony to honor Veteran Philip Kennard, a 95-year-old WWII Veteran from Windham, ME.

Mr. Kennard was awarded 1st place in the recent VA Creative Arts Festival. He entered his piece “Twice Delivered” locally into the Creative Writing Division (Humorous Personal Experience) of the Competition and it won 1st Place in the VA Maine HCS competition and it was then selected from hundreds of submissions at the national VA level. This is a remarkable accomplishment and a first for VA Maine HCS as we have not had a National winner in all the years of participating.

Phil Kennard is pictured here receiving his certificate from Tracey Davis, Associate Director of Maine VA HCS.

Legion Riders, Chapter 147:

The American Legion Riders, Chapter 147 in Madawaska, were honored by the Caribou Veterans Cemetery Corporation, Friday the 13th at their regularly scheduled meeting. The Riders participate as Firing Squad throughout the year at the cemetery 40 miles away including Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Commemorative ceremonies. Accepting the award is the Director of Chapter 147, Jenn Daigle. She was joined by, left to right, second photo, Steve Page, Dan Bruno, Jenn Daigle, Diane Daigle, and Fern Lavoie.

Post 36 Boothbay Harbor Achieves 100% for 2013!

The Charles E. Sherman Jr. Post 36 in Boothbay Harbor was pleased to host the quarterly District 7 meeting on January 13th. Department Commander John Hargreaves, Second Vice-Commander Ronald Rainfrette, and Area Commander Dan Boland were present at the District meeting. Following the District meeting, our normal monthly meeting was held. Department Commander Hargreaves presented the Most Meritorious Service Award for achieving the 100% membership goal to last year’s officers, along with recognition pins.

Accepting the awards are, left to right, Post Commander Linc Sample; Dept. Commander Hargreaves; Adjutant Bob Raudenbush; and Membership Chairman Harry Pinkham. Following the ceremony, a special recognition cake was served.

Everlasting Effort: In Arlington Cemetery in North Windham Saturday morning, Christmas wreaths were laid by a group of Boy Scouts from Troop 805 and other supporters. Adjutant David Tanguay, left, and Commander Mel Greenier, in cap, of American Legion Post 148 in Windham, presented the troop with a certificate of appreciation for their efforts. The wreath-laying effort was part of Project Everlasting Gratitude with wreaths donated by Studio Flora/Sebago Gardens in North Windham. More than 700 wreaths, which local volunteers helped decorate last week, were placed on veterans’ graves in the 31 town-owned cemeteries by various Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and veterans groups recently.

We’ve Moved!
American Legion State Headquarters Now Located in Winslow

When in the area, come by and check out our spacious work space

The American Legion, State Headquarters has moved to a new location. We are now located on 5 Verti Drive in Winslow (corner of Route 201 and Verti Drive). Please stop by.

Above, The American Legion, Department of Maine Office Assistants Charlene Houle, left and Sherry Carey at our new Department Headquarters.

American Legion Riders 2013 Summer Ralley at Dover-Foxcroft Post 29. As this paper goes to press, the Riders will be holding their winter meeting in Waterville at The American Legion Hall at Post 5. More information to follow in the next edition of The Maine Legionnaire!

— Paul L’Heureux, Executive Director

Calais Post 3 Commander Mike Mclean receives a legislative commendation letter from Calais representative Joyce Maker at the Nov. 7, 2013, Washington County Community College annual Veterans Day Luncheon. The letter was given to him by the members of the Maine State Senate and House of Representatives for his “21 years in the Army, being commander of the Calais American Legion, and his long commitment to our veterans and our Nation”. We are all very proud of Mike for all his tireless work!
The American Legion Riders, Chapter 147, Madawaska, along with the Commander of Post 147 and four additional Legionnaires visited the Veterans in the nursing homes in Madawaska on Dec. 20. We started at Ridgewood and visited the Veterans. Left to right, Mr. Lionel Rouleau, Mr. LewisDoufouf, Mr. Gerard Michaud, Mr. Leroy Belanger, and Mr. Martin Lavoie. From Ridgewood, we moved down to Hillside Manor, and from there to Country Village Estates. All of the veterans were very, very happy to see us, as were the residents who stood and watched and applauded.

— By Steve Page, Historian
The deadline for material, stories and/or pictures to be submitted for consideration for use in the May 2014 issue of The Maine Legionnaire will be April 25, 2014. Please be reminded that only those articles and/or pictures which are sent in proper form will be considered for publication. Ineligible stories or pictures that cannot be reproduced will be returned to you. A reminder that stories must be in story format, we are unable to compose your information for you. As always, the editorial staff may edit all submissions at its discretion.

We are once again asking for input from all posts, auxiliary units, S.A.L. squadrons, individuals, etc. To make this paper informative for you, it is imperative that we receive submissions from the membership. Photos should be clearly marked as to who’s who in the picture as well as who took the picture. Anyone interested in submitting a guest editorial should contact The Maine Legionnaire business office at (207) 873-3229.