Take the Lead — with Membership

Last August, when I was elected your national commander during the 94th National Convention in Indianapolis, I laid out the many challenges facing America’s veterans. But I also laid out a challenge facing the organization — membership.

I know Legionnaires work hard at recruiting and retaining members, but it’s important to get the word out about all the good work that The American Legion does for veterans, service members, children and youth, and community members. However, what I have found and heard from many of you is that it’s a lot easier to talk about how great the Legion is — and even educate new and potential members on the organization and its Four Pillars — when you have a strong knowledge and understanding yourself.

To give you that solid understanding of the programs and practices of The American Legion, we have developed a new training program: Leadership, Education and Development (LEAD). LEAD is a one-day, eight-hour training session designed to provide professional development training for post-, district-, county- and department-level members. Experts from National Headquarters cover a wide range of topics relevant to the operations of the Legion, such as the Four Pillars, fundraising, membership, public relations, resolutions and more.

I know many departments are currently preparing for their mid-winter conference. If your department is one of them, I encourage you to consider hosting a LEAD training program. All travel, lesson plans and handout materials are provided at no expense to departments.

I can assure you that this program is a surefire way to develop leaders who will increase and retain membership, and promote all the good that The American Legion does. If interested, call (317) 630-1330.

When people know who we are, what we do and who we do it for, they will entrust their children to our programs, donate to support our veterans and their families, and join The American Legion to make a difference. So as we embrace a new year, start it off on the right path by taking the LEAD training program. Let’s achieve our five-year membership challenge and more.

When it comes to this organization, I believe we can do anything we set our minds to.

— National Commander James E. Koutz, January 8, 2013

Submit Resolutions by May 1st Deadline

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.
Consolidated Post Reports

The Consolidated Post Report was established in 1975 in order to assist departments in the documentation of their various activities. Each 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 magnified. 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 space blank. If the 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 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 the 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 from 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 membership and aims and points to work on.

Your report is a measure of performance for the American Legion, Department of Maine, your post and you. Your report is the most important document your post will complete this year. Y our 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.

Mid-Winter Meeting Very Informative

Sweepstakes Winners

Our Mid-Winter Conference was concluded on Saturday, January 19, 2013 in grand style with the drawing of the Sweepstakes raffle. The lucky winner of the top prize of $3,500 was William A. Labelle, Sr. of Trenton Post 207. Other winners are as follows:

$500.00 — Robert J. Theriault, Waterville Post 5
$200.00 — John S. Keister, Waterville Post 178

Bob Bowen gave a presentation on area conferences and the most recent one conducted by the area.

Following the speakers, DA Woods conducted the sweepstakes drawings and made the announcements. The sweepstakes winners were: William Labelle, Sr. Trenton Post 207 was the Grand Prize Winner of $3,500. Robert Theriault, Waterville Post 5 won $1,000, Philip Morenault, Frenchville Post 145 won $500 and John S. Keister, Waterville Post 178 won $200.

Following the sweepstakes drawings DC Bouchard conducted the closing ceremony and the conference was closed in due form. It was announced that the Department Executive Committee meeting would be held Sunday morning at 8:30 at Post 5 in the Jim Boyle Hall. At 5:00 that evening, social hour was held at the post with the banquet commencing at 6:00 p.m. DA Woods was Acting Sergeant at Arms for the evening. Following the great meal the Unit #5 offered, our National Vice Commander Noylon then spoke on National Commander Koutz’s plan for membership and other programs of interest. The DEC met the following morning at 8:30 and conducted the business of the Department of Maine at hand. The meeting was well attended.

Mid-Winter Conference held in Waterville on Jan. 19. Berwick Post 79 placed 2nd nationally for the Post History contest. Bob’s One-Year Post History won first place at the Department level and was submitted as Maine’s entry in the Legion’s National Headquarters Post History contest. This win represents Bob’s third 1st place finish at the State level!!

Bob’s talent, hard work and dedication paid off when the Post #79 Yearbook he created won a prestigious 2nd place out of 47 total entries submitted from across the United States. Bob has served as Post Historian and official photographer for five years. Each post history takes hundreds of hours to compile and is an entirely volunteer effort.

Sincerely,
Rachael J. Currie
Administrative Assistant/ Webmaster/TML Assistant Editor

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Please visit The American Legion, Department of Maine website on www.mainelegion.org.

Our website offers a tremendous amount of information for you and your spouse, sons and daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, posts, districts and department officers. Some of the various things available to access on our website are current SMILE and Membership information as well as archives, The Maine Legionnaire newspaper, Scholarship applications such as Children and Youth, James V. Day, and Daniel E. Lambert; Award Nomination Forms such as Legionnaire of the Year, Firefighter, EMT/Paramedic and Law Officer of the Year; Program information for Oratorical, Boys State, Heroes-2-Hometown; VA Resources and VA Contacts; Legionnaire Insurance Trust information and link to www.thelit.com as well as other Membership Benefits; Paid-up-for-Life information and application; Contact information for Department Officers, Areas, Regions, District Officers, Posts and Department Committees; District Meetings; Membership Goals and Awards Consolidated Post Report Application (fillable); a link to National Headquarters website, the nation’s largest service organization www.legion.org which has a variety of information and services like renewing membership online, access to free publications such as Post Operations Manual, Membership Team Training Guide, Four Pillars of the American Legion, and Why You Should Belong brochure just to name a few; a link to the National Archives to obtain your DD214, a link to Maine Legion Baseball, Maine Legion Riders, The Sons of the American Legion, Maine Patriot Guard, Emblem Sales, MyLegion.org.

Please take a moment to visit our website to find out what we, The American Legion, Department of Maine have made available for you.

Sincerely,
Rachael J. Currie
Administrative Assistant/ Webmaster/TML Assistant Editor

Lloyd H. Woods
Department Adjutant

Berwick Historian Wins Nation Award

Keep Up with Dept. of Maine On Our Website

Pleas
66th Annual Boys State
June 16-20 in Waterville

The American Legion, Department of Maine is proud to announce the 66th Annual American Legion Dirigo Boys State program. This year’s program will again be held at Thomas College in Waterville during the week of June 16-20, 2013. Every American Legion Post and all subordinate bodies should alert their membership to one of the finest youth programs in the nation. 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.

We ask that the officers of your Post contact school principals or guidance counselors for assistance in this program. Make sure that your school officials are knowledgeable of the American Legion Boys State program.

The tuition fee for the program for 2013 will be $275 per student. Contact The American Legion Boys State, PO. Box 900, Waterville, Maine 04903-9900, Tel: (207) 873-3229, or go online to www.dirigoboyssate.org for application materials.

Thank you for your assistance in making the 66th Annual American Legion Dirigo Boys State Program a success.

On the Agenda

MARCH DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 2 — Cumberland: Mar. 17, Somerville Post 217, 7 p.m.
District 3 — Androscoggin: Apr. 14, Lewiston Post 22, 2 p.m.
District 5 — Oxford: Apr. 17, Rumford Post 24, 7 p.m.
District 9 — Kennebec: Apr. 18, Richmond Post 132, 7 p.m.
District 11 — Waldo: Apr. 21, Unity Post 50, 2 p.m.
District 12 — Hancock: Apr. 3, Ellsworth Post 63, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. mtg.
District 13 — Penobscot: Apr. 7, Lincoln Post 77, 12 noon lunch, 1 p.m. mtg., elections
District 14 — Piscataquis: Apr. 20, Dover-Foxcroft Post 29, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. mtg.
District 17 — N. Aroostook: Apr. 21, Eagle Lake Post 176, 1 p.m. dinner, 2 p.m. mtg., nominations.

MAY DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 2 — Cumberland: May 19, Westbrook Post 197, lunch 12 p.m., memorial service 1 p.m., mtg. and election of officers, 2 p.m.
District 3 — Androscoggin: Discretion of incoming commander
District 5 — Oxford: May 21, Locke Mills Post 68, 7 p.m.
District 9 — Kennebec: TBA (incoming commander’s choice).
District 11 — Waldo: May 19, Unity Post 50, 2 p.m.
District 12 — Hancock: May 14, Stonington Post 102, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. mtg.
District 13 — Penobscot: May 5, Howland Post 97, 12 noon lunch, 1 p.m. mtg., installation of officers
District 14 — Piscataquis: TBA, Greenville Post 94, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. mtg.
District 15 — Washington: May 19, Woodland Post 23, 2 p.m.
District 17 — N. Aroostook: May 5, Madawaska Post 147, 1 p.m. dinner, 2 p.m. mtg., district elections.

Sabattus Student Wins State Oratorical Contest

The Department of Maine High School Oratorical Contest was held at Thomas College on Feb. 16. Of the many Oratorical Contest volunteers, Robert and Susan Workman were put to work as the room monitors for the contestants. “Being with the contestants was fun and interesting,” said Susan. “You can see the pressure on these kids; they all want to do well – it was the general feeling of those who came in contact with the contestants.”

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Victoria Schalk
State Oratorical Winner 2013

Howland Post 97 presented a Blue-Star Service Banner to Dolly Vanadestine whose son Michael Vanadestine is serving in the US Navy overseas. And it was an exciting time with good com-

The American Legion passed a resolution to rekindle the Blue-Star Service Banner Program presenting mothers whose son or daughter is serving in the US Armed Forces as a reminder to others that preserving America’s freedom demands much.

Left to right, Post 97 1st Vice Commander Freeman Spencer, Department 2nd Vice Commander Richard Graves and Dolly Vanadestine.

District 2 — Cumberland: Mar. 10, Naples Post 155, 2 p.m.
District 3 — Androscoggin: Mar. 10, Sabattus Post 135, 2 p.m.
District 5 — Oxford: Mar. 20, Norway Post 82, 7 p.m.
District 6 — Knox: Mar. 16, Thomaston Post 37, 11 a.m.
District 7 — Lincoln: Mar. 13, Waldoboro Post 149, 6:30 p.m.
District 9 — Kennebec: Mar. 13, Waterville Post 5, 7 p.m.
District 10 — Somerset: Mar. 11, Madison Post 39, social 5:30 p.m., mtg. 6:30 p.m., nomination of district officials
District 11 — Waldo: Mar. 17, Stockton Springs Post 157, 2 p.m.
District 12 - Hancock: Mar 12, Blue Hill Post 83, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 mtg.
District 13 — Penobscot: Apr. 7, Lincoln Post 77, 12 noon lunch, 1 p.m. mtg., elections
District 14 — Piscataquis: Apr. 20, Dover-Foxcroft Post 29, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. mtg.
District 15 — Washington: Mar. 10, Cherryfield Post 8, 2 p.m.
District 16 — S. Aroostook: Mar. 2, Presque Isle Post 88, 1 p.m. dinner, 2 p.m. mtg., nominating committee.

APRIL DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 2 — Cumberland: Apr. 9, Gray Post 86, Past Commanders, 5 p.m.
District 3 — Androscoggin: Apr. 14, Lewiston Post 22, 2 p.m.
District 5 — Oxford: Apr. 17, Rumford Post 24, 7 p.m.
District 9 — Kennebec: Apr. 18, Richmond Post 132, 7 p.m.
District 11 — Waldo: Apr. 21, Unity Post 50, 2 p.m.
District 12 — Hancock: Apr. 8, Ellsworth Post 63, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. mtg.
District 13 — Penobscot: Apr. 7, Lincoln Post 77, 12 noon lunch, 1 p.m. mtg., elections
District 14 — Piscataquis: Apr. 20, Dover-Foxcroft Post 29, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. mtg.
District 17 — N. Aroostook: Apr. 21, Eagle Lake Post 176, 1 p.m. dinner, 2 p.m. mtg., nominations.

VICTORIA SCHALK
State Oratorical Winner 2013

Howland Post 97 presented a Blue-Star Service Banner to Dolly Vanadestine whose son Michael Vanadestine is serving in the US Navy overseas. Also presented was a letter from Maine First Lady, Ann LePage. On August 28, 2001, Vanadestine whose son Michael Vanadestine is serving in the US Navy overseas. And it was an exciting time with good competitors.

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Left to right, Post 97 1st Vice Commander Freeman Spencer, Department 2nd Vice Commander Richard Graves and Dolly Vanadestine.

Tommy Adkins, Dept. Historian, will present a program on how to start an American Legion Boys State, P.O. Box 900, Waterville, Maine 04903-0900, Tel: (207) 873-3229, or go online to www.dirigoboyssate.org for application materials.

Thank you for your assistance in making the 66th Annual American Legion Dirigo Boys State Program a success.
I'm honored to begin the 113th Congress as the Ranking Member of the full House Veterans Affairs Committee. With this honor comes a lot of responsibility, which I take very seriously. As the new Congress begins, I'm meeting with the National Veterans Service Organizations, including the American Legion, so that I can have an in-depth and frank conversation about what things and what veterans believe needs to change or be improved at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Already, the Committee has delved into a number of issues.

Congressional Update on Veterans’ Issues

On January 23rd, I joined with Committee Chairman Jeff Miller (R-FL) to introduce bipartisan legislation (H.R. 357) that would require schools eligible for GI Bill education benefits to give veterans in-state tuition rates even though they may not be residents of the states where the schools are located. Because of the nature of military service, veterans often have a difficult time establishing residency for purposes of obtaining in-state tuition rates. This bill will address this and ensure that veterans can access the affordable higher education options they have earned.

On February 5th, the Committee held a hearing to review the multiple cases of Legionnaire’s Disease at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System. The hearing examined VA’s efforts to prevent such a outbreak, outreach efforts, and what actions were taken after learning of contaminated water at the facility. A lot of information

More on MICHAUD

Commander’s Comments

With winter ending, we can all get out of our houses and get rid of the winter blues. Now is the time for a final push on membership for the next couple of months to finish up on membership.

The Development goal is 21,200, and we only need about 1,700 more members to pay their dues to reach 100%. This is not a far-reaching goal if everybody steps-up and does his or her best to achieve this goal. Remember, membership is the lifeblood of this organization.

We have two big Legion programs coming up, Legion Baseball and Dirigo Boys State. The Legion baseball program is under the guidance of our baseball director Charles Berube. He will guide the teams and coaches through the changes and rules that have come about this year.

We also have the Boys State program under the leadership of Gary Purington the Chairman of Boys State. The posts need to get their Boys State recruiting in to full swing.

We need to increase the attendance in this program to keep it viable. The attendance to this program was in a steady decline for a few years until last year when we had a slight increase. These increases in attendance are needed to continue to make this program self sustaining.

This time of the year is when the Posts and Districts start looking for new officers to lead your Post or District. When you elect these new officers, elect the best person for the job and not a person because he or she is your friend. The Post and District will fare better because of their dedication to the job and not because they want the prestige of the position or the hat. After placing this person in this position help him or her do the job.

“VETERANS HELPING VETERANS”

Major changes in claims work. As of March 29, 2013 there will be no more paper work to the veteran from the VA and vice versa a veteran must file through vonapp and the email system.

VBA faces multiple challenges, including an increasing claims backlog, more complex claims, and more time needed to process claims. The VA in pursuing the VBMS initiative (VETERANS BENEFITS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM) to transition VBA from a paper intensive claims process to one that is web based, electronic and more efficient. By improving the claims process and equipping employees with better technology, VBA can overcome these challenges.

The service organizations will be granted read-only access to the system for claims of veterans represented by a VSO under a Power of Attorney (POA).

Question: Does every veteran in Maine have a computer?

How does the end product get to the veteran or claimant without access to a computer? Is the VSO responsible for printing, cost of paper, and mailing to those without computers? It appears the increased burden will be substantial, workload and monetary.

There was an interesting piece of news regarding sexual harassment aired on TV several evenings, it does not seem plausible it is going to be that easy, just file, VA will service connect and compensation will be paid. I cannot believe this.

We still have the major problem with Philadelphia no contact, no correspondence regarding NSC veterans. DIC claim is a death claim. No end to it, their phone system is terrible, as bad as the VA 800 number.

Let’s keep hoping for spring weather, warming trends and green grass. Keep the faith people things are bound to get better.

Service Office Update

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The Adjutant Speaks

A ‘Second’ Look

The Winter Conference held January 19th in Waterville was considered a success. The Legion Family were housed in the same building and attended a joint banquet.

As of January 25th, Maine membership is in 16th place nationally at 17,657; however, that the last months are most difficult. I don’t like collecting phone numbers to catch people at home, but I must admit that the members I personally talked with paid their dues, so face to face does work.

This time of year is the most important in my mind, the selection of a nominating committee and the selection of officers for the coming year.

The nominating committee should be members who have a good knowledge of what the duties are and who will do the job. It really makes a difference on what will be accomplished and how it affects present members and new members.

Hopeful members considering moving into officer positions have taken the Legion Yearbook in recent years and made decisions by looking at the costs. We know that the last months are the most difficult. I am there for you and I will keep you informed.

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Americanism Corner

The State Oratorical Contest at Thomas College on February 16 was a great success. The three winners were as follows: First place, Victoria Schalk a junior from Sabattus; second place, Rebecca Richards, a home-schooled junior from East Winthrop and third place, Morgan Thies a senior at MCI, Pittfield. There were six contestants in all. All of the state officers were there including the NEC and NECA.

The next two programs are Boys State and American Legion Baseball. Let’s try our best to get more boys to attend Boys State. There is money at State Headquarters for the ones that can’t afford to go.

I really don’t know how much they have to spare but if each post gave a few dollars, it would help a lot.

There are lots of ways that each post can raise money to send a boy to Boys State. Let’s give it our best shot.

I have mentioned this a lot, but Boys State is rated the number one program among the Americanism programs. We do not have too many problems with the Baseball program. This year the coaches and helpers have to have a background check before they can put a team onto the field of play.

I can’t do it alone but we can do it together. The word is teamwork.

I will see you on the road.

Keep smiling and God Bless America.

100% Posts Membership: Dept. 1st Vice Commander John Hargreaves presents membership awards to 100% Posts during the Area 3 Conference held at Damariscotta Post 42 on Dec. 29. Left to right, Phippsburg Post 216 Commander Ken Kellogg, Phippsburg Post 216 Service Officer Bill Rollins, Dept. 1st Vice Commander John Hargreaves, Brunswick Post 20 Membership Chairman Marty Diller, and Brunswick Post 20 Chaplain Read Rich.

MAINE AIR GUARD MEMBERS JOIN POST 12

On Feb 6, Birkel also transferred Brig General John L. D’Errico, Chief of Staff, Maine Air National Guard, Veterans James T. Bair and Roger A. Hicks, all of Bangor, from the AL Dept. of Maine Post 178 to the James W. Williams, Post 12 of Bangor, Maine.

Historical Bulletin

The Department of Maine Oratorical Contest is now behind us and by general acclaim it went well. Conducted better next year? The answer is probably yes and that’s because as my mom used to say to me “There isn’t a thing you do that couldn’t be done better if you have the time and the money.” The Oratorical Committee documented most of its effort of this year, so now it will be able to review what went well and what didn’t go as hoped. This is where the committee’s history aids in making the assessments for a better tomorrow as the commercials use to say.

As we begin the downhill slide into a new Legion year, we should all be gathering the information we need to complete our various reports to the Department. One very important report is the Consolidated Post Report.

This one report is so important to The American Legion, that its importance can’t be over-emphasized. This report when consolidated with those of other states and presented to the US Congress is the summation of The American Legion’s worth to our country. It is our history in a nutshell to the American people. This report is a key factor in the US Congress’s assessment of our worth to our society.

Now having written about all that, I want to draw all our attention to those pages of the Officers Guide that address the Post Responsibility Audit (PRA). This section emphasizes the self-assessment that each Post, District, Area and yes even the Department should be doing as we write up our Consolidation Reports.

This section contains a Post (but can apply just as easily to the rest of our organizations) Responsibility Audit Form the purpose of which is to reveal to us where we are in the process of meeting the goals and objectives of The American Legion and those of our communities. Think long and hard about what we have done this year as we write our reports. Make certain we document what we have done. Fill out those Consolidated Post Reports thereby telling the community and everyone concerned what it is we did during this year.

Then, go to the Officer Guide Locate the “Post Responsibility Audit Form”, adapt it to your organization if need be and use your history to determine if your unit is accomplishing your objectives. Lastly, save all that you document.

This history is your stairway to excellence.
Recruit New Members, Qualify for Gold Status

Legionnaires who recruit 50 or more new members (transfers do not count as new members) into The American Legion by the May target date will qualify for enrollment in The American Legion’s elite Gold Brigade. These Legionnaires will be awarded unique gifts that designate affiliation with the Gold Brigade of The American Legion.

The gifts awarded to a Gold Brigader will depend on the number of times he/she has qualified for this award.

First time Gold Brigade members will receive a Gold Brigade patch, a special Gold Brigade cap pin, a Gold Brigade certificate, and a designer jacket or polo shirt or sweater with a Gold Brigade logo.

Second time (or more) Gold Brigaders will receive a Gold Brigade patch and certificate, a hash mark for a jacket sleeve, and a designer jacket or polo shirt or sweater with a Gold Brigade logo.

Keep bringing in 50 or more new members each year and the honors continue. A Gold Brigader who has won the award for five consecutive years is eligible for a distinctive Gold Brigade blazer. A Legionnaire may only qualify once every five years.

And a Gold Brigader who has earned the award for at least six consecutive years or more is eligible for a $150 check and a Legion cap with the inscription “Master Recruiter.”

Those Legionnaires who recruit 25-49 new members into the Legion by the May target date will qualify for the Silver Brigade Award. A silver cap and certificate will be awarded.

Silver Brigade and Gold Brigade awards cannot both be awarded to a recruiter during the same membership year.

Department adjutants must have all Gold and Silver Brigade certification forms located on pages 24-27 of the Membership Awards Manual to National Headquarters by the last day of May. Forms are available by visiting: http://www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion/publications/national_membership_awards_manual_0.pdf — The American Legion

The Maine Veterans Home in South Paris held a Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day on Dec. 7, 2012. Administrator of the home Joel Dutton tells the story of Bert Davis (seated) who was at Pearl Harbor during the attack, Dec. 7, 1941. Mr. Davis is a resident of the home.

Remembering nearly 5,000 U.S. military personnel who paid the ultimate price

The William J. Rogers Post 153 in Auburn will be remembering and honoring the 4,804 lives given for the liberation and freedom of the Iraqi people on Saturday, March 30th from 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm. The evening will feature the Rockin Recons, one of the four original P.A.L. bands that were featured in the 60’s. Their ability to emulate the best bands from the classic rock era is why they are successful with capturing the hearts of both the young and older generations. Since the reforming of the group after a 20 year hiatus in 1987 the band continued to perform. After several years some of the members decided to move on and new members were added to form the group today. “The Recons bring a range of music from the 50’s through the 80’s and are truly one of Maine’s classic rock bands," stated Public relations Officer, Paul R. Bernard. “On March 19th, 2003, President George W. Bush addressed the American people at 10:15 p.m. EST to announce the beginning of a "broad and concerted campaign" to disarm Iraq. The campaign was known as Operation Iraqi Freedom. The ultimate price for the freedom of the Iraqi people to date has been 4,804 precious lives. Australia, 2, Azerbaijan, 1, Bulgaria, 13, Czech Republic, 1, Denmark, 7, El Salvador, 5, Estonians, 2, Fiji, 1 Georgians, 5, Hungary, 1, Italians, 33, Kazakhstan, 1, Latvia, 3, Netherlands, 2, Poland, 23, Romania, 3, Slovakia, 4, South Korea, 1, Spain, 11, Thailand, 2, Ukraine, 18, United Kingdom, 179 and the United States, 4,486." All money raised supports veteran programs. Left to Right: Roger Blais, Ron Vachon, Douglas Doyer, Bob Blais, Mike Asselin, and Denny Blais.

Interested in Running for Dept. Office? Here’s How

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 15, 2013 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 (not computer generated) of you must be at Department Headquarters by April 26, 2013.

— State Headquarters

Stockholm Post 136 Commander Herman Fisher presents Joe Thibodeau with the Firefighter of the Year certificate at a dinner hosted by Stockholm Post 136 on Jan. 25 to honor the volunteers of the Stockholm Fire Department.
Fairfield Post 14
Fairfield Post 14 for their donation of $2,400 to the Fairfield Interfaith Food Pantry.

Madison Post 39
Madison Post donated $1,200 in scholarships to Madison and Carrabec High School students, $50 to the Anson Fire Dept. Aux, $557 for material to build a ramp for a Legionnaire and $220 for the One on One program at Togus.
Unit 39 donated $50 to the Family Violence project, $50 worth of items to Camp Tall Pines, $50 to the ALA Emergency Fund, $50 to Beals House, a $15 Bingo package for Mike Pinkham’s benefit, a $30 gas card to a veteran to help with medical traveling expenses, $50 to two community fire victims and $100 to an Auxiliary member who lost her home.

Belfast Post 43
Belfast Post 43, Unit 43 and SAL Squadron 41 donated four toasters for Camp Tall Pines.

Old Orchard Post 57
Old Orchard Beach Post 57 for their donation of $600 to the O.O.B. Police Dept. for purchasing dog food for the Canine Division.

Berwick Post 79
Berwick Post 79 with the assistance of Unit 79 hosted another successful American Red Cross Blood Drive at the Town Hall on January 26, 2013. Sixty seven units were collected on a very cold but sunny day.
Berwick’s Post 79 made the following donations: $500 to the Town of Berwick Benevolent Fund, $200 to the Table of Plenty, $60 to South Berwick’s Community Food Pantry, $100 to the North Berwick Christmas Project, $100 to the Dover Police Department Christmas Basket Project and $100 to the Somersworth/Berwick Community Food Pantry.
Congratulations to Historian Robert Place of Berwick’s Legion Post 79.
Bob’s One-Year Post History won first place at the Department level and was submitted as Maine’s entry in the National Headquarters Post History contest. Comrade Places’ talent, hard work and dedication paid off when the Post 79 Yearbook won a prestigious 2nd place out of 47 total entries.
Past Department Historian Richard Graves presented Bob Place a plaque marking his achievement in creating one of the top two Post histories in the nation at the Mid-Winter Conference in Waterville.

Herman Post 200
Herman Post 200 has donated $100 to the Bureau of Veterans Services in Augusta to help with the new Honorable Service Plaque.

VA Eliminates Eligibility Verification Report
The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently announced that veterans will no longer have to complete an annual Eligibility Verification Report (EVR). This elimination will allow more than 100 VA staff to focus on the compensation claims backlog.
Completion of an EVR has been required annually of beneficiaries to ensure pension benefits are received. Now, VA will work with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) to verify continued eligibility for pension benefits.
The American Legion applauds the inter-agency collaboration in order to reduce the time and processing of veterans’ claims.
“As the backlog for veterans’ claims rapidly approaches 900,000 claims, any news to assist in the reduction of the backlog is welcome,” said Zach Hearn, national appeals representative for The American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division. “The statement released by VA encourages a partnership with various government agencies that should not only reduce the burden of veterans receiving VA pension but also assist in allowing VA to focus on disability claims.”
Additionally, both the SSA and IRS are pleased with the partnership.
“Having already instituted an expedited process that enables wounded warriors to quickly access Social Security disability benefits, we are proud to work with our federal partners on an automated process that will make it much easier for qualified Veterans to maintain their VA benefits from year to year,” said Michael J. Astrue, commissioner of Social Security.
“The IRS is taking new steps to provide critical data to help speed the benefits process for the nation’s Veterans and Veterans Affairs,” said Beth Tucker, IRS deputy commissioner for operations support. “The IRS is pleased to be part of a partnership with VA and SSA that will provide needed data quickly and effectively to move this effort forward.”
VA will send a letter to beneficiaries who currently receive pension that explains the changes and provides instructions on how to continue to submit their unreimbursed medical expenses.
Visit www.benefits.va.gov/pension for more information about VA pension benefits.

DD-214 Discharge Papers Now Online
The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online:
http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records
This may be particularly helpful when a veteran needs a copy of his/her DD-214 for employment purposes.
NPRC is working to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files.
Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents.
Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site.
Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized.
The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records centers mailroom and processing time.
Please pass this information on to former military personnel you may know and their dependents.

3rd Gold Star & Survivors Weekend
April 19-21
The 3rd Annual Gold Star & Survivors weekend retreat with a Natures Classroom for their children will be held April 19 - 21, 2013 at Grotonwood in Groton, Mass.
Working on our 3rd Annual Gold Star & Survivors weekend retreat with a Natures Classroom for their children April 19th — 21st, 2013 at Grotonwood in Groton, Mass - it’s going to be a pretty special weekend for our Gold Star Families & Survivors. If you are a Gold Star Family or Survivor family from RI, CT, MA, NH, ME and VT and would like to attend please register at: http://www.projectnewhopema.org/sign-up
Bill Moore, M.A., President
Project New Hope Inc.
PO. Box 91
Leicester, Massachusetts 01524
US Family Health Plan Recipient of the 2012 COL. Robert E. Hawes Award for Community Service
George H. Frost Guardian Award
Goodbye, Ken Dolloff

2013 Scarborough Legion Baseball Season Just Won’t Be the Same

By DAN WARREN
Special to The Maine Legionnaire

T he first time in American Legion Baseball history that coaches had the ability to register their team via the Internet was in 2010 when the Legion launched a digital, step-by-step process through www.legion.org.

The new online registration process saved coaches the hassle of collecting and mailing registration forms, insurance forms and payments to various vendors for processing. And now, the Legion has launched a new and improved online and baseball registration site that’s faster, more user-friendly and meets new baseball policies: www.baseball.legion.org.

The new site requires coaches to create an administrator account — the same username and password from last year may be used. Once logged in, coaches will have the ability to locate and renew teams and players from previous seasons. Additionally, the registration site has been customized to meet the Legion’s new policy for background screening checks.

The traditions are still alive. This Memorial Day — the 14th annual Libby Mitchell Legion baseball parade float will travel down U.S. Route One in Scarborough on Memorial Day, honoring the hero, waving American flags, and Little Leaguers on back of the float waving to all 3,000+ people lined along the side of the road on the seemingly-always-sunny Memorial Days.

Legion baseball has changed. Oddly enough, Ken changed with it better than most of us. Even into his 90s, he understood “Kids are different today — and that is a good thing.”

He said, basically, make Legion ball what ever will serve the baseball community the best. The best players want to play out of state now, he asked? Fine with them. “Wish them well. We will take the other boy’s.” He liked more kids playing on more teams.

But he also ruffled feathers. He did NOT like the trend in the 2000s that saw some kids signing up to play on teams in several different leagues all during the same summer — Legion, Babe Ruth, Senior Little League, AAA etc.

“Have a Libby-Mitchell uniform, you will use that uniform to play on our ball club. You will have the same coach every year, and you will be required to listen to your coach. You will be a credit to the game.”

He wrote in a hand-scrubbed note, dropped off for one night, slid under my office door at my law firm.

Corny? Yup.

Old school? Like you read about. Effective? Yes.

On the money? For 40 years, if you are just judging by me.

He once said, and I think he was quoting the Bible or perhaps a military chaplain he knew in the European Theater during World War II: “I believe in comforting the afflicted — and afflict ing the comfortable.”

He chuckled when he said that. He often did. His voice laughed. But his eyes laughed louder.

Not any more, though.

Now it is up to the rest of us to see if we can remember all he taught us — whether we liked it or not — and now can pass those words on to others. Rest in peace, Ken.

Maine’s First Lady

Ann LePage, left, presents a Blue-Star Service Flag to Darlene Kritzman of Topsham to recognize son, Frank Kritzman, U.S. Air Force on Feb. 2. Four families were presented Blue-Star Service Flags recognizing loved ones serving in the military.

Photo by William Cricotte

New Baseball Registration Site Unveiled

Background screening checks will be conducted annually each season prior to any meetings, events, practices or games. All participants are required to undergo 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 checks. You will receive a notice of that upcoming season. This is required before managers and coaches can purchase insurance and enter their team roster on the new baseball registration website.

Deadline for teams to register for the 2013 American Legion Baseball season is May 15. Teams failing to do so by that date are subject to a fine payable to the Department of Internal Revenue with the 2013 Legion Baseball Rulebook, any team failing to register by June 1, 2013, shall not be permitted to play American Legion Baseball.

— Digital Dispatch

N o sport does schmaltz better than my pal baseball. “The first day of the baseball season is like a flock of geese, flying back in formation, to warmer climates after being down south, away from the harshness of winter,” etc., etc., a thousand poets and authors have written the past 100 years. Literary Cool Whip? Yup.

But no complaints here.

This year? The confectionery over- romanticized descriptions of what some of us still call America’s Game will be tinged with sadness this spring and summer in Scarborough. Why?

Mighty Casey has struck out — Ken Dolloff passed away in late 2012. We are now without the rudder we have had in Libby-Mitchell American Legion Post 76 baseball — and youth sports — since World War II. For me, I will be without my greatest administrative baseball ally — and self-described “stickler” — for the first time since 1973.

Dolloff, a D-Day veteran, gave us all the help we wanted in baseball the past 40 years (and more). He sold raffle tickets to buy catch- er gear. He collected bottles and can nickels to buy us new Legion uniforms six differ ent times in the 1970s and 1980s. He loaned his name to one of the scholarships we set up at Scarborough High six years ago — and “put the squeeze” on his friend Eddie Woodin to generously fund that scholarship (and another one named after Maine Legion baseball legend Sonny Noel — $4,000 per scholarship). BTW — Eddie, he of rifle arm for the Colby Mules circa 1950s, little “squeezing!”

Ken also gave us advice, some needling — and served as a “conscience for kids,” he would joke when he felt that was needed as well.

There were years that the Legion baseball coaches loved Ken. And there were years when he was in my home, I understood that what he said was true, but, they didn’t really want to hear it. Please don’t tell anyone, but he regularly preferred to tell me that what I did was stupid, or louder.

In 1973, I and some high school teammates were peeved we would have to travel to Saco to play Legion ball with the Thornton Academy kids. Why not have a team in Scarborough.

“The TA kids are Class A. They are bigger and stronger than you — and probably better,” he said. “You would be smart to play with them. That way, you can have a shot at the big boys (Deering, Portland etc.).” He was right. Pride swallowed. Gulp.

But how to get there? Transportation issues etc. “Ride your bike if you have to. Don’t let your kids ride bikes!” he snapped. I did. They do.

In the 1980s, there was a sponsor that had some relationship to alcohol. There were reports that some kids on this Greater Portland team were engaging in activities between games of doubleheaders, or after doubleheaders, on trips back to the Scarborough area while driving in cars.

“Not on my watch, boys. Not on my watch. If you can’t run your ball club, I will. Just watch me,” he said. The coaches were not happy to hear that from him. Who does he think he is?
Lewiston
Post 22 held a Memorial Service on the observation of the 70th anniversary of the sinking of the troop ship U.S.S. Dorchester on Feb. 3, 1943 off Newfoundland in the North Atlantic.
Post 22 Chaplain Donald T. Dube read the special prayer dedicated to the Four Chaplains. Post 22 Adjutant Jerry DerBoghosian gave the story of the Four Chaplains (U.S. Army) who gave their lives to save other soldiers during the sinking of the troop ship USAT Dorchester during WWII. They helped other soldier’s board lifeboats and gave up their own lifebelts when the supply ran out. The Chaplains joined arms, said prayers, and sang hymns as they went down with the ship. Left to right, Post 22 Sgt.-at-Arms Arthur Paradis, Post 22 Adjutant Jerry DerBoghosian, Unit 22 Auxiliary Secretary-Treasurer Clara Glen Dening, and Post 22 Chaplain Donald T. Dube.

Naples Post 155
would like to recognize three people. Left to right, Adjutant Dick Bell who helps make sure all the purchasing is done and organizes the events, his hard work and dedication is much appreciated, Glenda Trombley who is Second Vice Commander for the ladies auxiliary and executive board member, she is always there for any and all programs the legion organizes, and Maxine Goodwin, auxiliary and executive board member who is also the bar tender in the lounge, she is never far from the action of events of the Naples Legion. These three people are valuable members to the events and activities of Post 155 in Naples.

Harpwell Post 171
member of the Department Law and Order Committee Gil Ormsby, left, talks with Game Warden Captain Chris Cloutier about Law Officer of the Year Program at the Department, Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Maine Warden Service.

American Legion Post 205
Augusta honors Laura Benedict and family of The Red Barn restaurant in Augusta for becoming the new sponsor of the Post 205 American Legion Baseball Team on Feb. 14, 2013. The sponsorship is a multi-year commitment which will provide new uniforms and equipment for the team. Presenting the award to Ms. Benedict, from left, is Post Americanism Officer Patrick Eisenhart, Vice-Commander David Jackson, and Sergeant of Arms George Bean.

Berwick Post 79
with the assistance of Auxiliary Unit #79 hosted another successful American Red Cross Blood Drive at the Town Hall on January 26, 2013. Sixty seven units were collected on a very cold but sunny day. Left to right, Mike Olson and Judy Hall.
The American Legion Cyr-Plourde Post 145, Frenchville hosted its 2nd Annual Marine Reserve Toys for Tots for less fortunate children in the area of Sinclair, St. Agatha and Frenchville. Legionnaires & Auxiliaries gathered to wrap a total of 254 gifts for 126 children. Left to right, Chairman Percy Thibeault, Marine Sgt Robert (Bob) Sinclair, Santa Claus Ronald Landry, Co-Chairperson Claudette Thibeault, and Nevaeh, Timothy, and Arihanna.

Christmas Fun:
The American Legion’s Districts 1 and 2 hosted an Annual Christmas Dance/Party for The Maine Special Olympics at Westbrook Memorial Post 197 on Dec. 16, 2012. Left to right, Santa Gary York of Post 35, Athlete Henry Anderson, and Mrs. Santa Roxanna York of Post 35.

The American Legion Cyr-Plourde Post 145, Frenchville hosted its 2nd Annual Marine Reserve Toys for Tots for less fortunate children in the area of Sinclair, St. Agatha and Frenchville. Legionnaires & Auxiliaries gathered to wrap a total of 254 gifts for 126 children. Left to right, Chairman Percy Thibeault, Marine Sgt Robert (Bob) Sinclair, Santa Claus Ronald Landry, Co-Chairperson Claudette Thibeault, and Nevaeh, Timothy, and Arihanna.

Old Orchard Beach Post 57 sponsored three members and the District 1 HS Oratorical contestant in the 2013 Special Olympics Lobster Dip held on New Year’s Day. One hundred thirteen thousand dollars was raised by three hundred eighty-one “dippers” in ocean water temperature of 38 degrees and air temperature of 32 degrees for Special Olympic youngsters from all over Maine. Left to right, contestant Alex Eon, and members of Post 57 Colombe Cote, Frank Manduca, and Tara Malloy.

Gardiner Post 4 Chaplain Barbara Kasiola prepares for Four Chaplains Ceremony at the Post home in Gardiner on Feb. 3.

Howland Post 97 held its annual Boys/Girls State Dinner on Nov. 4, 2012 at the Post home. Penobscot Valley HS students attending Boys State were Robert Hallet, son of Bruce & Nancy Hallet, and Wade Thurlow, son of Grady & Marie Thurlow. Attending Girls State were Cassandra Taylor, daughter of Scott & Dawn Taylor and Bethany Heald, daughter of Keith & Tina Heald. Left to right, District 13 Vice Commander John Neel, Robert Hallet, Maine House Representative Jeff Gifford, Bethany Heald, and Wade Thurlow. Unable to attend the dinner was Cassandra Taylor.

Post 54: Peter Ogden, right, presents State of Maine Certificates of Honorary Service to Dale Skillin, USAF, Vietnam and Mrs. Pearl Skillin for husband Erwin Skillin (Deceased) at Wiscasset Post 54 on Jan. 26. Eighteen local veterans were recognized. District 6 Commander Ron Rainfrette assisted Mr. Ogden with the awards.
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, 2013. Applications can be obtained through Department Headquarters or online 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.

Sincerely,

Phil Geelhoed
President & CEO
Special Olympics Maine

Important Changes in State Income Tax Laws

In 2011, Governor Paul R. LePage signed into law major income tax cuts, many of which came into effect on January 1, 2013. As a result of these cuts, a majority of Mainers will be able to have less state income tax withheld from their paychecks.

What does this mean for the average Maine taxpayer?

A family of 4 with a Maine adjusted gross income (MAGI) of $25,000 or less will have NO state income tax withheld, will have NO state income tax liability, and will NOT be required to file a Maine income tax return.

A family of 4 with a MAGI of $65,000 and who takes the standard deduction can anticipate a decrease of about $300 in state income tax.

A single individual with a MAGI of $35,000 and who takes the standard deduction can anticipate a decrease of about $200 in state income tax.

Maine Revenue Services advises employers to notify their employees of these tax changes and to encourage employees to review, and adjust as necessary, their Maine Form W-4ME to immediately take advantage of the law changes and to determine the appropriate withholding amounts.

The 2013 withholding tables for individual income tax are available on the MRS web site at:
www.maine.gov/revenue/forms/with/2013/13_whtables.pdf

For more information on the changes to Maine’s tax laws, please visit the Governor’s web site at: www.maine.gov/governor/lepage/publications/making_maine_prosperous.pdf

Membership Is KEY!!!
Francis E. Crocker Served in the Army During WWII

Maine Veterans’ Home Veteran of the Month

As World War II veteran, Francis Crocker, the second of nine children, was born in Winthrop, Maine on July 12, 1923. He spent his youth helping to raise his eight sisters and brothers. In his teens, Francis played on the Winthrop High School State Champion basketball team. Despite being blind from one eye as the result of a childhood accident, Francis was inducted into the Army on February 12, 1943. Upon completion of basic training, Francis was one of three soldiers pulled from his regiment and sent to the Asiatic Pacific Theater where he served on active duty from February 19, 1943 until his honorable discharge on February 21, 1946. The rest of the men in his unit were sent to fight at Normandy where many of them lost their lives.

As a general carpenter, Francis built and maintained barracks and other military installations. He was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, the Victory Medal, the American Theater Campaign Ribbon and the Asiatic Pacific Theater Campaign Ribbon. Despite his visual handicap, or perhaps because of it, Francis also earned the Marksman Rifle Expert Infantryman Badge. After release from military service, Francis graduated from Gates Business School in Augusta with a BA in Expert Infantryman Badge.

Francis E. Crocker, left, Maine Veterans’ Home Veteran of the Month with his son, Gary Crocker.

Francis did not limit his community involvement to paid employment. He was instrumental in establishing American Legion Monmouth Post 204 and served as its first Commander and was a life member of the Winthrop Grange.

He served as a Selectman in Monmouth and on the Planning Board for many years. In addition, he assisted during local and State elections and spent many election nights counting ballots long into the night. Francis was a member of the North Monmouth Community Club and was instrumental in acquiring land and establishing the public beach for that community.

On July 27, 1946 Francis married the love of his life, Lorena Cram. They spent sixty wonderful years together at the home Francis built by himself in North Monmouth where they raised their two children, Gary and Kathleen (Gerard).

An avid camper, fisherman and hunter in his younger days, Francis reminisces many wonderful times spent with family and friends camping and fishing at Moosehead, Rangeley and Sebago lakes.

On one fishing outing with his daughter, Kathleen recalls catching a half-dozen fish with her Dad, which they strung on a line and hung outside the boat. Unfortunately, Francis forgot to pull in the line before heading back to camp. Upon arrival all that remained on the line were six lovely fish heads! Francis fondly recalls an annual trip to his favorite camping spot, high on a hill overlooking the Atlantic on Hermit Island. The Crocker family and friends enjoyed many lobster/clam fests topped off with wonderful homemade desserts.

Lorena died in 2007. Francis has two grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

He moved to Maine Veterans’ Home in 2010 where he lives a quiet life. He enjoys frequent visits by his son and daughter, time spent with a special friend, Ginny Gilbert, attending various activities, and especially enjoys a weekly musical program provided by “Lefty and Steve.”

Obama Signs Veteran-Friendly Bills

As the 113th Congress began its session, President Barack Obama signed three bills benefiting veterans that the previous Congress approved late in its term. Details of the legislation, signed Jan. 16:

- Education opportunities: Obama signed into law H.R. 4057, the Improving Transparency of Education Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2012. It was, in part, a call to action that helped us achieve the measure through both houses of Congress and onto the president’s desk. This legislation will improve the ability of GI Bill users to choose the school that best meets their educational needs. It would:
  * Require the VA to create a comprehensive policy that would meet this goal by informing veterans about their eligibility for educational counseling by creating a centralized complaint database on schools.
  * Require state-approving agencies to better communicate with accrediting agencies.
  * Require VA to link to certain performance-related data points on the College Navigator and other similar websites.
  * Identify software that would assist students in choosing a school and software that would evaluate their readiness to attend post-secondary education.
  * Require states to take military training into account in awarding licenses to work as medical technicians and other trades, thus speeding up servicemembers’ transition to civilian life.
  * Burn pit registry: Obama approved legislation that requires Veterans Affairs to establish a registry for troops and veterans who lived and worked near open-air burn pits used to dispose of waste in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere overseas.

In addition to including new requirements for providing a casket or urn for veterans with no known next of kin and establishing care for a military cemetery in the Philippines, the Dignified Burial and Other Veterans Benefits Improvement Act, S. 3202, aims to pinpoint the number of veterans who may have been exposed to burn-pit smoke so VA can track their medical histories and keep them apprised of new treatments.

Veterans advocacy groups and families of servicemembers who have become ill since their deployments hailed passage of the law as a victory.

“It validates the truth behind every death, every illness associated with exposure,” said Rosie Lopez-Torres, co-founder of Burn Pits 360 and wife of former Army Capt. LeRoy Torres, who developed a rare lung disorder known as constrictive bronchiolitis after serving in Iraq.

VA said Thursday it will announce directions for signing up when the registry becomes available.

Veterans cemetery: The president signed S. 2320, a bill titled Remembering America’s Forgotten Veterans Cemetery Act of 2012. This measure treats Clark Air Base Cemetery in the Republic of the Philippines as a permanent military cemetery in a foreign country. It is associated with the former Clark Air Base, which closed in 1991. The cemetery will be administered by the American Battle Monuments Commission. The bill further directs the commission to restore, operate and maintain the cemetery in cooperation with the government of the Republic of the Philippines.

— Digital Dispatch

The volunteers of the Stockholm Fire Department were honored at a dinner on January 25, 2013. The hearty pot roast dinner was hosted by the American Legion Post #136 of Stockholm. Seven of the ten volunteers were able to attend. The evening started with Brenda Jepson singing the Star Spangled Banner. Auxiliary President Kathy Robinson did a few fireman jokes and then Juanita Goetz sang several songs, some were sing-alongs. Commander Herman Fisher presented each honoree with a certificate and then announced the Fireman of the Year: Joe Thibodeau. Stockholm and surrounding towns appreciate these fine men for their service. Left to right, Joe Thibodeau, Steve Wimmer, Sven Bondeson, Joe Bither, Dave Duquette, John Gagnon, and Rich Long.
On February 15, 2013, students at Oak Hill Middle School in Sabattus presented a check for $439.24 to members of the local American Legion. Students in Ms. Lanteigne’s seventh grade advisory group initiated a coin drive for Operation Comfort Warrior throughout the months of November and December. The students decorated and distributed empty yogurt containers to every classroom and then gathered them up and counted all the coins collected. It took nearly two weeks for students to count and recount all the loose change and then roll it into coin sleeves.

Operation Comfort Warrior is a program dedicated to raising money for wounded American warriors. The money is used to fund a variety of needs while these veterans are recovering in hospitals or convalescing back home.

Items such as sweat suits and cotton socks to ease the pressure on burn wounds, iPods to help drown out tinnitus caused by damage to the eardrum after IED explosions, fitness equipment to help rebuild muscle strength, or even gift cards to local stores and home improvement centers to help meet the needs of disabled veterans and their families are just some examples of how the money donated to Operation Comfort Warrior is used.

The presentation ceremony began with the OHMS Band under the direction of Mr. Fuller playing the national anthem. Students Jacob Kirchner, Lindsey Weeks, Drew Gordon, Tyler Desmarais, and Chris Campbell made some brief remarks regarding the purpose of the assembly and how their advisory group went about collecting the money for Operation Comfort Warrior. Ms. Lanteigne introduced seven distinguished guests from the local American Legion who attended the presentation ceremony.

They included Ron Caron, veteran of the United States Marine Corps who served in Vietnam, Gordon Smith, Navy veteran who served in Korea, Dominic Santamango, Air Force veteran who served in Vietnam, Joseph Michaud, veteran of the United States Marine Corps who served in Panama, Jim Rancourt, active duty Army serviceman who has been in Iraq and who will be going to Afghanistan soon, Tracy Rancourt, who served in the Coast Guard and was stationed in Granada, and finally Joan Caron, auxiliary president of Post #135 in Sabattus.

After student Chris Campbell presented Ron Caron with the check, Caron addressed the student body. He recognized their efforts and sacrifice in raising money for such a worthy cause and shared some stories with them of how their coins will add up to make a big difference.

Nationwide, Operation Comfort Warrior is closing in on nearly $500,000 raised thus far. Caron presented a certificate and a minted coin to the school, which states “Thank you for your service.” The staff and students at Oak Hill Middle School are humbled and honored to be a part of such a worthy charity, which seeks to give back to those who give so much of themselves for others.

If you are interested in making a donation or starting an OCW fundraiser at your school or work place, visit www.legion.org/ocw. Checks can be made out to Operation Comfort Warriors, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. To get in touch with our local legion in Sabattus, contact Ron Caron at P.O. Box 76, Sabattus, ME 04280. His phone number is 375-4639 and his email address is caron3974@aol.com
THE AMERICAN LEGION,
DEPARTMENT of MAINE
OFFICIAL CALL for
NINETY-FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

In accordance with Article IV of the Constitution and By-laws of the Department of Maine, The American Legion, the ninety-fifth Annual Convention is hereby called to convene at Augusta, Maine, June 14-16, 2013.

The first business session will be called to order at 12:00 p.m. Daylight Savings Time, on the afternoon of Friday, June 14, 2013, with the final business session scheduled for Saturday morning, June 15, 2013, at 9 a.m. All general business sessions of the convention will be held at the Augusta Civic Center, Augusta, Maine.

PURPOSE

The convention is called for the purpose of electing Department Officers for the ensuing year; to elect delegates and alternates to the 2013 National Convention to be held in Houston, Texas; 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 15, 2013. A post with less than 15 members is not entitled to any delegates. All department officers, district commanders, area representatives 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 at the Augusta Civic Center on Friday, June 14, 2013, at 9 a.m. All delegates and alternates and members of the Department Commanders 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 Augusta Civic Center on Sunday, June 16, 2013. All department officers, district commanders, area representatives 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 Headquarters listing all delegates and alternates elected to represent the Post. All delegates’ registration must be prepaid.

All credentials must be verified by the Credentials Committee, which will be in session at the Augusta Civic Center, Augusta, Maine, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Saturday, June 15, 2013.

The Department Adjutant shall issue to each Post, 30 days prior to convention, a statement of the number of 2013 membership cards, accompanied by state and national dues, received at Department Headquarters on May 15, 2013. Listed with the membership report will appear the number of delegates allowed each post.

Credentialed 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 900, Waterville, Maine 04903-0900.

NOMINATION AND ELECTIONS

At the first session of Department Convention on Friday, June 14, 2013, nominations shall be made for the offices of Department Commander; Department First Vice Commander; Department Second Vice Commander; Department Finance Officer; Department Historian; Department Americanism Officer and Department Sergeant-at-Arms.

Nomination of officers shall be made by registered delegates elected to represent the posts of the Department or by delegates-at-large attending the convention. Nominating speeches are limited to three minutes. There will be no seconds to nominations authorized (DEC Mandate Jan. 20, 1991).

All candidates for elective department office must file with the Department Adjutant, prior to May 15, 2013, 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 15, 2013 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 Augusta Civic Center and Convention Center on Saturday, June 15, 2013. The Credentials Committee will be in session for two hours on Saturday morning, June 15, 2013, 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 2013 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 15, 2013. Posts wishing to have deceased members included in the Post Everlasting Ceremony are requested to submit a list of the honored dead to Department Headquarters. Lists must include name of deceased comrades and conflict served. If your post wishes to use the Post Everlasting list for The Maine Legionnaire 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 15, 2013, 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 upon 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:

Lloyd H. Woods,
Department Adjutant

Kenneth Bouchard,
Department Commander
Legion Post 86 Raises $10,000 for Kieve Veterans Camp

On an uncomfortably brisk October morning Joe Hansen pulled his pickup truck into the parking lot of the Falmouth Country Club, dropped his tailgate, and set up a table. He had spent much of his free time over the past six months planning for his “Tee It Up Fore A Veteran” golf scramble and spent nearly as much time listening to people tell him it wouldn’t work.

Joe, a Son of the Legion at Post 86 in Gray, smiles a little when he tells the story. “Me and a couple of guys from the Legion were at the hall when the Combat Vets Motorcycle Association was having their meeting. We told them we wanted to have a golf scramble and asked if they knew of any Maine-based programs that served veterans. That’s when we found out about Kieve Veterans Camp.

After some deliberation, I spoke with Kieve and that’s who we went with.” As Joe continues to speak, his smile grows. “I said to people familiar with these types of events that I wanted a full field; 36 teams, one hundred forty-four players. People said it wouldn’t happen; well, it did.

I wanted to raise $10,000, and again, people said it wouldn’t happen; well,” he says sheepishly, “We raised $9,300 and the good people at Windham Weaponry considered that close enough and kicked in a donation of $700. So technically we raised $10,000.”

He chuckles and then says, “We’ll do better next year.”

The day turned out to be what many called, “A Home Run!” After the presentation of The Colors by the Air National Guard’s Honor Guard, the skies cleared up. A new pickup truck donated by Casco Ford for a hole-in-one prize sat gleaming in the sunlight just outside the tee box on the 6th hole. Golf carts were scrambling around the course like ants and everyone was having a good time.

A full day of golf melted into the afternoon and the clubhouse filled up with excited teams of golfers. After a delicious buffet-style dinner, 50/50 drawing and prize raffle had been completed, Kieve-Wavus Executive Director Henry Kennedy and Veterans Camp Director Nancy Kennedy (no relation to Henry) came to the podium to thank the group.

“We are truly grateful for Joe and his team, to the many sponsors, and to you who have shown up today for this awesome event,” began Henry. “The money you’ve raised here will enable us to continue to welcome veterans and their families to our camps, treat them with the kindness and respect they deserve, and thank them for the sacrifice they’ve made for us.”

Nancy continued, “It’s a wonderful opportunity we have to work with veterans and their families, many of whom are working through the adverse effects of their wartime service to our Nation. The overwhelming response and turnout today send them the message that their community really does care about them.”

For a full list of sponsors of the “Tee It Up Fore A Veteran” golf scramble and information about the Kieve Veterans Camp please visit www.kieve.org/veterans.

Post 153: Honoring American Heroes Plaque

Gary O’Connell is seen reading the back of the award that stated: “The William J. Rogers Post 153, American Legion, Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion presents the Honoring American Heroes plaque to: Scott A. Laliberte, 133rd Engineering Battalion, February 5th, 2013.”

It was signed by Public relations Officer Paul R. Bernard representing the American Legion, Women’s Auxiliary, 1st Vice Commander Brenda Longton and Sons of the American Legion Commander, Tim Ricker. “Scott has been serving our community in the Auburn Police Patrol Division which is responsible for the overall protection of lives and property, maintaining law and order and responding to requests for services.

The Patrol Division enforces all criminal laws that are mandated by Federal, State or Municipal Government. And now Scott is preparing to embark with the 133rd Engineering Battalion on a tour to Afghanistan in the Global War on Terrorism which began with those military service members who have performed service in the War on Terror from September 11, 2001 to a date to be determined”, stated Bernard. “When we heard that the Auburn Police Department was going to throw a sending off supper at the post we just had to take this opportunity to recognize our own and wish him the best.”
Brunswick Post 20 Membership Chairman Marty Diller was presented with a National Commanders pin for obtaining 3 members from HQ Post (transfers) and a combination of transfers, new members and renewals at the 8th District meeting held at Topsham Post 202 on Feb. 13. Left to right, Dept. of Maine 2nd Vice Commander Richard Graves, Brunswick Post 20 Membership Chairman Marty Diller, and NEC Paul L’Heureux.

District 7 Commander Paul Herald opens the 7th District meeting in Boothbay Harbor Post 36 on Jan. 14. Twenty-six Legionnaires gathered at the Post for the District meeting. Department Commander Ken Bouchard, 1st Vice Commander John Hargreaves, N.E.C. Paul L’Heureux, 6th District Commander Ron Rainfrette, PNVC Chick Cicotte and Brunswick Post 20 Vice Commander Marty Diller were all in attendance. Left to right, District 7 Sergeant-at-Arms Jerry Elwell, District 7 Commander Paul Herald, and District 7 Adjutant Stanley Wall.

District 8 Commander Bill O’Connell gets ready to open the 8th District meeting at Topsham Post 202 on Feb. 13. Left to right, District 8 Chaplain Ken Kellogg, Phippsburg Post 216; District 8 Commander Bill O’Connell, Harpswell Post 171; and District 8 Adjutant Mike Doyle, Harpswell Post 171. N.E.C. Paul L’Heureux, 2nd Vice Commander Richard Graves, and Area 3 Representative Dan Boland were guests.

District 13 Commander and Post 200 Adjutant Bill Benson, left, accepts certificate for Honorable Service from Director of Maine Veteran Services Peter Ogden at Hermon Post 200 on Jan. 27. NEC Paul L’Heureux and District 6 Commander Ron Rainfrette assisted Mr. Ogden with the presentations. Sixteen local veterans were recognized.

National Vice Commander John Neylon, Dept. of N.H. meets with National Executive Committeeman Paul L’Heureux, right, at the Mid-Winter Conference in Waterville on Jan 19.
Joint Service in Remembering

Four life jackets representing the four brave Chaplains who sacrificed their lives when the USAT Dorchester was torpedoed.

Brunswick Post 20, Harpswell Post 171 and Topsham Post 202 held a joint service at Topsham Post 202 on Feb. 10 to celebrate Four Chaplains Sunday. Getting ready to serve cake following the 4 Chaplain’s Ceremony are left to right, Harpswell Post 171 Commander Bob Webber, Brunswick Post 20 Commander Dan Lindsley, and Topsham Post 202 Commander Bob Lemont. Guest Chaplain, Rev. Bud Welch Lt. U.S. Navy (Ret) was joined by Post Chaplains Read Rich of Post 20, Roger Dumont, Post 171, and Louis Larios, Post 202. N.E.C. Paul L’Heureux read the story of the Four Chaplains.

Rules & Regs. for Loaned Army Surplus Equip. Must Be Followed

MEMORANDUM TO: Department Adjutants, Department Commanders, National Executive Committee

FROM: Peter S. Gaytan, Executive Director, The American Legion, Washington, DC Natl. HQ Office

SUBJECT: US Army Donations Program

DATE: March 1, 2013

It has come to our attention that a number of American Legion Posts are not complying with the rules and regulations set forth by Tank Automotive Command (TACOM) regarding loaned army surplus equipment, i.e. rifles, ammunition and static displays.

We have been advised that some Posts are selling and/or giving away Army surplus equipment that was loaned to them instead of returning this equipment to TACOM. Please be advised that it is a federal violation and subject to legal prosecution if Army weapons and/or Army static assets currently logged into the possession of American Legion Posts are lost, transferred, given away, sold or used in any unauthorized manner. Additionally, our organization could be banned from participating in the Military Funeral Honors Program. Actions and violations such as these make it hard on those Legionnaires who volunteer their time and put forth such great effort to ensure that our fallen veterans have representation at military funerals.

The Army Donations Program Office has made several attempts to work with these noncompliant Posts and their representatives to obtain required paperwork concerning Army property. Unfortunately, some Posts may not be clear on the procedures to be followed. Those Posts in violation of these procedures will not receive additional/replacement rifles or assets for static display. In addition, these Posts’ future requests for ammunition will not be honored.

A listing has been compiled of Legion Posts that have been disqualified from participating in the Army Ceremonial Rifle and/or Static Display Program due to their lack of cooperation or non-compliance with the laws and regulations governing these US Army programs. If there are Posts in your Department already in noncompliance with said regs, a hard copy of this memo will be mailed to you with identifying documentation attached. It is imperative that you contact any Posts listed within your jurisdiction to rectify this situation immediately. Otherwise, we hope that this document provides helpful information and will prevent these problems from arising.

Thank you for your attention and for ensuring that this program’s participants are compliant to the legal regulations set forth.

Legion Launches New Claims Coach App

The American Legion’s free Claims Coach mobile app was launched last November to provide a step-by-step guidance to help veterans and their families connect with a service officer and navigate the VA claims process. After feedback from users, a new version of the app has been launched and is now available. The app can be downloaded from the Apple iTunes store or Google Play.

The new Claims Coach app includes a completely recoded directory of accredited American Legion service officers nationwide. The original service officers’ directory was static; the new one links live to the Legion’s membership database and is automatically updated each time the Claims Coach app is launched. The Claims Coach’s directory is now searchable by state instead of by zip code. And search results for each state now includes an “other resources” button, which will link veterans from the app to that state’s Department of Veterans Affairs website.

This is an all new app, not an update. Those wishing to download the new app must delete the old version first. However, if you are currently working with a service officer and have a checklist in progress within the original app, you should continue to use that version.

New and updated Claims Coach app media materials are also now available from the “Mobile Applications” web page at www.legion.org/mobileapps. Users can download print-ready files for the users guide, a one-page flyer and business cards. There is also a link to a low-resolution reader version of the users guide.

Hard copies of the Claims Coach Users Guide are also available through American Legion National Headquarters. Request stock #45-005.
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<td>68</td>
<td>Locke Mills</td>
<td>Persian Gulf</td>
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**Damariscotta’s Wells-Hussey Post 42 Hosts Area 3 Conference**

Saturday, Dec. 29, forty-four Area 3 Legion family members from 13 Posts enjoyed a delicious lunch along with an informative program focused on improving collaboration among the Dept. of Maine groups. Area 3 covers AL Dept. of Maine’s District 6 (Knox County), District 7 (Lincoln County) and District 8 (Sagadahoc County). Groups represented were the Legion, Legion Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and Legion Riders.

Area Representative Dan Boland opened the conference with Distr. 7 Sgt. at Arms Jerry Elwell presenting the Colors in place and Chaplain Vaughn Fish giving the invocation. Addressing the group were 6th Distr. Cdr. Ron Rainfrette, 7th Distr. Cdr. Paul Herald, 8th Distr. 1st Vice Cdr. Ken Kellogg, SAL Squadron 42 LCDR. James Hercial, Legion Riders Exec. Director, ALA Dept. ME President Mary Jane Mcloon, PNVC Wm. “Chick” Cicotte, National Executive Committeeman Paul L’Heureux and Dept. ME 1st Vice Cdr. John Hargreaves. The next Area 3 conference will be held in early March at a District 8 post.

Front L-R: Mary Fish (Unit 42 President), Mary Jane Mcloon (ALA Dept. ME President), Kaye Bouchard (Legion Riders Exec. Director), James Herald (Cdr. SAL Squadron 42), Area 3 Rep. Dan Boland, PNVC Wm. “Chick” Cicotte, Jerry Elwell (Distr. 7 Sgt. at Arms), Paul Herald (Distr. 7 Cdr.), William J. Cossette Jr. (Post 54 Service Officer/2nd Vice Cdr.). Second row, L-R: Brenda King (ALA Dept. ME Treasurer, hidden), Mike Doyle (Distr. 8 Adj./FO), Bob Webber (Distr. 8 Chaplain, partially hidden), Ken Kellogg (8th Vice Cdr.), Bill Rollins (Distr. 8 Service Officer), John Hargreaves (1st Vice Cdr. Dept. ME), Roy Benner (Cdr. Post 42), Ron Rainfrette (Distr. 6 Cdr., partially hidden), Vaughn Fish (Post 42 Chaplain).

**Access to MyLegion Open to All Legion Members**

MyLegion.org is a website designed to connect members of The American Legion to their Post and Department leadership, other veterans with similar interests, and the vast array of services offered at every level of the organization. If you are a member of the American Legion and wish to join MyLegion.org, please see below information and instructions under the heading American Legion Members. If you are a Post Adjutant or Commander, please see below information and instructions under MyLegion Post Officers Portal.

The American Legion National Headquarters has designed a secure internet site to assist Post Officers in their day-to-day membership processing duties. This site serves as a direct portal from the local post to National Headquarters’ membership system.

Features include:
- View and generate a report of members who have renewed on-line.
- Communicate with members by posting Newsletters, Announcements, and Calendar.
- Generate list of expired and eligible DMS members and connect with them.

Generate reports and submit Consolidated Post Reports.
Download Membership Materials.
Communicate with other officers through MyLegion Officer’s Forum.
View electronic version of The American Legion Dispatch.
Reports available in CSV file format allowing users to work with the data in other applications such as Microsoft Excel and Access.
All on-line features listed above are available at no cost.
Payment process for individual membership dues does not change. Your Post must continue to transmit membership cards and dues payments to your Department Headquarters.
To sign up for MyLegion Officers Portal, please visit www.my legion.org and click on Authorization Form. Fill out the Authorization form and mail or fax it to National Headquarters. Mail To:
The American Legion IT Division
Product Support Specialist
5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216
Fax: 317-860-3001 Phone: 800-433-3318

**More on MYLEGION, Page 20**
Attention: Next Deadline Is April 26

The deadline for material, stories and/or pictures to be submitted for consideration for use in the May-June, 2013 issue of The Maine Legionnaire will be April 26, 2013.

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.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS CARD

Membership Card No. ______________ Date ______________ Post No. ______________

Member’s Name ________________________________ show as entered in membership register

Old Address ____________________________________________________________

Post Office ____________________________ State ________ Zip ______________

New Address ________________________________

Post Office ____________________________ State ________ Zip ______________

Remarks ______________________________________________________________

To update your address: Complete all sections of the above form and mail it to The American Legion, Department of Maine, P.O. Box 900, Waterville, Maine 04903-0900.

MAINE VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY ELIGIBILITY APPLICATION

Complete the items listed below and return so that eligibility may be determined:

1. Name of Veteran ____________________________ Tele. # ______________

2. Address ______________________________________________________________

3. Date of Birth ________________________________

4. Service/Serial Number ________________________________

5. Social Security Number _____________ / County ________________________________

6. Please submit this application along with a copy of your Military Service Discharge (Form DD214). * If more than one period of service, please submit a copy of each DD214 you were issued.

7. Signature allowing the Veterans Administration to release verification of service information ______________________________________________________________

BUREAU OF VETERANS SERVICES — MVMC
163 Mt. Vernon Road
AUGUSTA, ME 04330
(207) 287-3481

MAINE VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY

Support Legion programs with donations.

Find out how to get VA assistance with direct access to Department Service Officer Information.

Locate other posts by City, State, or Zip Code.

Easy access to National Commander’s page.

To become a member of MyLegion.org, please visit www.myLegion.org and click on Members Click Here.

Click on Register and fill in the information to get your myLegion account started.

MyLegion
Continued from Page 19

local post and department through:
1. Announcements
2. Newsletters
3. Calendars
Renew online.
View post information and department information.
Network with other members that have created myLegion profiles.

District 7 Meeting: Department Commander Ken Bouchard speaks on Membership “Retention” is key to our membership growth. He also spoke on the Oratorical and Commanders Project “VETAID” at the District 7 meeting held at Boothbay Harbor Post 36 on Jan. 14.

Brooks Post 183 Dan Mulcahey, right, receives a silver medal recognizing his Purple Heart and certificates for his service in the military by Director of the Maine Bureau of Veterans’ Services Peter Ogden. The ceremony took place at the Stockton Springs Town Hall sponsored by Stockton Springs Legion Post 157 on Feb. 3. Second Vice Commander John Hargreaves and the District 6 Commander Ron Rainfrette were guest speakers.