2015 State Convention Plans Underway
Weekend Opens in Bangor June 19

The American Legion Department of Maine is proud to announce the 97th Annual State Convention in Bangor at the Cross Insurance Center which will open on Fri., June 19, 2015. Department Commander Richard Graves will call the convention to order promptly at noontime. The Fireside Inn and Suites located at 570 Main Street in Bangor will be the headquarters hotel. This promises to be an exciting and eventful convention for all of the Legion family members and their friends.

Even before the convention opens, there will have been many activities taking place. The Resolutions Committee will be meeting at 9 a.m. to consider resolutions that will affect our organization. This committee meeting is open to anyone who wishes to attend either to just listen or provide input on the pending resolutions to be put before the Department Convention.

More on CONVENTION, Page 2

Candidates for Department Office will be scurrying about and putting up their posters and other signs to let you know they are “the best candidate” for a particular office. As well, there will be a seemingly endless stream of legionnaires, auxiliary members, and Sons of The American Legion arriving at the various hotels in Bangor.

Past National Commander Tony Jordan will be on hand to welcome all delegates to the convention. There will be many awards and presentations to outstanding individuals both from within as well as outside our organization. Post awards will also be presented. One of the individual awards will be the Department Legionnaire of the Year. This, along with the Humanitarian of the Year award, is truly a prestigious award. We will have two Past National Commanders’ Leadership Awards to be presented.

Oratorical State Winner: Oona MacKinnon-Hoban of Portland, Maine representing District 2 wins the American Legion, Department of Maine 2015 State Oratorical Contest held at Thomas College in Waterville on Feb. 14. During the National American Legion HS Oratorical Contest held in April, Oona survived the first round, making her one of nine HS orators to compete in the semifinals. Left to right, Department of Maine Oratorical Chairman Donald Chase, Oona MacKinnon-Hoban, and Department Commander Richard Graves.

More on NATIONAL HS ORATORICAL CONTEST, Page 12

National Candidate Visits the Department of Maine

The leading candidate for National Commander Dale Barnett and Past National Commander Robert Turner, both from the Department of Georgia, visited the Department of Maine, American Legion on April 3-4, 2015. They arrived in Maine during the morning of April 3rd where they proceeded to meet up with Department of Maine, National Executive Committeeman John Hargreaves at the Ramsdell-Rogers Post 56 in York.

At approximately 10:00 a.m. they continued their travels with NEC Hargreaves for a visit to the Department of Maine State Headquarters located in Winslow where they received a special welcome from the State Officers of The American Legion. The Officers gave Mr. Barnett and Mr. Turner a tour of the state headquarters facility which recently became the new Maine State Headquarters for The American Legion in January, 2014. They were both very impressed with the new department and said it was very well organized and that the pride put into it is so evident.

After the tour and a brief meeting at State HQ, they proceeded to the Department Service Office located at the Togus VA facility in Augusta for lunch and a tour of the facility.

At 6:00 p.m. they traveled to Fitzgerald-Cummings Post 2 in Augusta for social gathering, pizza night and karaoke for the evening’s festivities. Dale Barnett and Robert Turner joined DSO Amedeo Lauria in a “special” performance of “The Banana Boat Song”. There was a great turnout.

On Saturday, April 4th, local post, district officers and guests welcomed Mr. Barnett and Mr. Turner at the William J. Rogers Post 153 in Auburn.

They then traveled to Topsham Post 202 for the 50th Anniversary and Rededication Ceremony of the Post. A large community and Veterans’ gathering saw the Topsham Memorial Post 202 become the Corey Edwin Garver Post 202. Corey grew up in Topsham and was well liked by all who knew him. The Post was dedicated to Corey Garver as a fallen hero who died June 23, 2013 in Zormat, Afghanistan.

Mr. Barnett and Mr. Turner then returned to Portland Saturday evening, so they could catch their flight home to Georgia Sunday morning.

More on VISIT, Page 16
Convention

Continued from Page 1

one for the outstanding District Commander, which will be the Past National Commander William J. Rogers Award, and the other to the outstanding Post Commander, which will be the Past National Commander Anthony “Tony” Jordan Award. The last order of business for Friday’s meeting will be to hear the nominations of those aspiring to department level offices. Those being nominated will potentially be leading the Department of Maine for the coming year and it is important for all delegates to carefully consider their individual votes. Friday evening there will be a hospitality room hosted by those who are seeking office within the department. This is your opportunity to get to know the candidates a little better and to ask any questions you may have about their views and ideas to help you decide your vote for the following morning. Please do your best to select the candidate who will do the job for our organization rather than those who just have the best smile or catchphrase. This is also an opportunity to enjoy the refreshments offered by the candidates and to meet new friends and renew old acquaintances.

The Credentials Committee will open the voting area at 8 a.m. on Sat., June 20 for your opportunity to decide who will lead the Department of Maine for the coming year. Polls will close promptly at 10 a.m.; however those in the voting line at that time will be allowed to cast their ballot.

Commander Graves will reconvene the convention on Sat. morning at 9 a.m. and there will be many awards and other presentations during this session. We have invited Senators Angus King and Susan Collins, Representatives Bruce Poliquin and Chellie Pingree as well as Governor Paul LePage and the First Lady Ann LePage. Hopefully, they will all think The American Legion important enough to make an appearance to let us know what they have done on veterans’ and other issues that are high on our priority list. We will be paying tribute to outgoing Department Commander Richard Graves who has led the Department of Maine this year in an exceptional manner.

Resolutions Committee Chairman John Hargreaves will then give a report of the committee’s recommendations on this year’s resolutions. The final and most anticipated event is the announcement of the voting results from the Credentials Committee. A rally will be given out to all of us who have voted, and the newly elected Department officers will be announced for the coming year. There will be both joy and disappointment, but each and every candidate is a winner to those who know how much effort goes into running for a department office. Every candidate will have done all he or she can do to promote our organization and its programs. Please take a minute to thank all the candidates, not just the winners, for they have played an important role in supporting The American Legion. Department Sgt-at-Arms Patricia Thurston will conduct a Memorial Service Saturday at the Cross Insurance Center just prior to recessing of the convention. Saturday evening will be a banquet for the installation of all Department Officers, District Cmdrs. and Area Commanders, along with the Department Auxiliary and Department of the Sons of The American Legion to follow.

The Department Executive Committee meeting will be at 8:00 a.m. Sunday at the Cross Insurance Center. This will conclude the events of our 97th Annual Department Convention. Hope to see you there.

What a Delegate Should Bring:

This is a short reminder to all legionnaires attending the ninety-seventh annual convention in Bangor, June 20th and 21st. If you are a delegate or alternate to this year’s convention, please remember to bring your current American Legion membership card or PUFL card. Attendees should go to the registration table immediately upon arrival and pick up your delegate or alternate package. Only registered delegates are allowed to vote or address the convention. The official uniform of The American Legion is the Legion cap.

Roland Lord, World War II Army Veteran was born May 19, 1925 in Brewer, Maine, son of Roland and Lilith Lord. Roland was one of five children, he had three brothers and one sister. His family moved to Richmond, ME where he attended school and lived the majority of his life. After school Roland began working at the local Durand shoe shop.

Roland joined the Army at the age of 18 during the draft. He went through basic training at Camp Wheeler in Georgia. He became a rifleman in the 88th Infantry Division, also known as the Blue Devils. Roland was wounded during the Battle of Monte Cassino, he was later awarded the Purple Heart. He recalls his tour being extremely rough as he was stationed in the mountains in Italy. Vehicles were unable to travel through the rough terrain so all rations were sent via mule train.

During his service he was able to take rest in Venice for 10 days. He has fond memories of traveling on the Gondolas through the streets made of water. Roland also enjoyed the beach during his stay. This rest period was much needed after spending days traveling up to 40 miles at a time on foot.

After his service, Roland returned to Richmond and married in 1947. Roland had six children; in 1963 Roland experienced a great tragedy losing his 8 year old son in a house fire. He takes great pride in living a life that he was able to support his family.

Roland was very active in his local church, he has always had a strong faith as his father was a preacher. He has been a member of the American Legion Post 132 in Richmond for 69 years, as well as long time member of the DAV in Auburn. Roland enjoys fishing and has spent 28 years snowbirding in Zephyrhills, FL.

By Jennifer McKenzie

VETERAN OF THE MONTH - FEBRUARY

ROLAND LORD

Augusta Veterans Home

Work of the American Legion Family

More Important Than Ever

To my fellow Legionnaires and Legion family members in the Department of Maine:

As the military downsizes, a topic which I will get to in a moment, the work of the American Legion family in your department is more important than ever. Veterans will be returning to your communities in need of jobs, medical care, access to education, and homes. Sometimes they will just need a sympathetic ear to talk to – people who understand because they too have made the transition from military member to civilian.

Many of these veterans are unaware that trained American Legion service officers can assist them with obtaining the benefits that they earned or that The American Legion hosts hundreds of job fairs every year across the country.

In addition to the excellent programs that The American Legion offers on the national and local levels, it’s your advocacy that is important. We need to speak out against irresponsible budgets and defense cuts by our elected leaders, cuts that will leave our country vulnerable at a time when terrorism seems to be increasing both in its frequency and depravity. We also must ensure the family of our fighting force is cared for so they will be able to fulfill their duty and not be worried about their loved ones.

Thanks to the hard work of The American Legion family, we are starting to see progress as VA recovers from the scandals last year that shocked the nation and let to a change in its top leadership. We applaud steps being taken by VA Secretary Robert McDonald in righting this important healthcare system.

Upon my election as National Commander, I set a goal to raise $4,000,000 total for all of the great programs operated or officially supported by The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of The American Legion and the American Legion Riders. Charitable giving is so important and my plan addresses all American Legion charities. All of the donations go to their stated causes.

As the number of senators and representatives with military backgrounds decrease both on the national and state levels, our voice must get louder. The way to turn up our volume is through our membership. It is our membership that best addresses the needs our returning veterans.

In order to be a family worth joining, let us always remember to “stay the course,” in serving God and Country, and carrying out our Four Pillars of Americanism; National Defense; Children & Youth; and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation. I thank you for your service as military veterans, as Legionnaires and as members of the Legion family.

Best wishes for a productive and enjoyable convention.

For God and Country,
Michael D. Helm
National Commander
Commander’s Comments

This article will most likely be my last message in The Maine Legionnaire as my tenure as commander ends June 20th, 2015. It seems only logical to reflect back on the original decision to move upward into the Department officer level as the post and district were very rewarding. I was encouraged to move because some felt my leadership skills would be helpful in moving the Department forward.

I was naïve enough to believe that I could make a lasting difference when really my journey was like a motor boat moving up a slow moving river, after my boat’s wake subsided the river returned to its everlasting stage. It is not possible to change personalities, but I had hoped to instill motivation, creating leadership responsibilities, a chain of command and setting an example for post leadership to follow to which I feel I have failed according to my own standards. It was never about me, I just wanted to make it better and could care less about the prestige the office may hold.

A ‘First’ Look

Each post is a little different, but post operations should and will be run by our manual. Post operations is divided into three sections. These sections will be used in conjunction with each other, since they are all part of management.

First, planning the structure to accommodate active and growing American Legion posts.

Second, concerns with the social part of the American Legion post.

Third, principles of financial accounting informing members, officers, house committees, etc. the results of the post home operation financial condition.

A balance sheet should be prepared at the end of the post’s fiscal year, including all entities controlled by the post.

The Department of Maine has had an outstanding year in many phases. The Service Office is exceptionally proficient and professional. The Headquarters is a beacon for all to see and the support the headquarters provides for the various committees is simply outstanding.

The majority of the committee chairpersons have been outstanding with their programs and many are meeting and supported by the headquarters staff. The Ora torical contest provided a candidate that reached into the final nine at National, many other programs will be coming up in June such as Boy’s State, Convention awards and Legion baseball.

Leadership training was pushed this year with instructions to District and Area commanders and we are already seeing a difference, but it takes time to bring about positive changes. Membership problems were identified and slowly addressing the problems of non-renewal. It was a tough winter for travel, several of our key leaders came down with medical problems, but we are going forward especially in the area of communications.

The best of times was meeting some outstanding Legion families and it has been an honor to serve in an elective office these past five years. As I return to the home post, I want to thank all those that supported me throughout the years. May God bless you and The American Legion.

On the Agenda

MAY DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 2 — Cumberland: May 17, Westbrook Post 197, 12 noon. Memorial service & election of officers.
District 3 — Androscoggin: Discretion of incoming commander
District 5 — Oxford: May 19, Locke Mills Post 68, 7 p.m., speaker and refreshments
District 9 — Kennebec: May 13, Maine Veterans Home, 7 p.m. Election of officers/installation
District 11 — Waldo: May 17, Unity Post 50, 2 p.m.
District 12 — Hancock: May 12, Stonington Post 102, 6 p.m.
District 14 — Piscataquis: May 16, Greenville Post 94, 6:30 p.m. supper, 7:30 p.m. mtg.
District 15 — Washington: May 17, Baileyville Post 23, 2 p.m.

JUNE DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 12 — Hancock: June 9, Southwest Harbor Post 69, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. mtg.
District 3 — Androscoggin: June 14, Auburn Post 153, 2 p.m.

JULY DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 12 — Hancock: July 19, Gouldsboro outing 11 a.m.

VETERAN OF THE MONTH - MARCH
RAYMOND H. CROTEAU
So. Paris Veterans Home

Corporal Raymond Henry Croteau, Sr. was born and raised in Lewiston, Maine and graduated from Lewiston High School. He joined the Maine National Guard on June 1, 1949, was in the Infantry division, and served as a rifleman. He achieved the rank of PFC. Raymond was discharged on July 5, 1954.

On July 6, 1954, Raymond enlisted into the Marines. He was stationed in Korea for two tours and was in the Korean War. He was a rifleman/guard and a wireman. While in the Marines, Raymond achieved the rank of Corporal. He also earned the Korean Service medal with two stars, the UN Service medal, and the National Defense Service medal.

After serving his time in the Marines, Raymond joined the Lewiston Police Department as a police officer. He then went to work for Bates Fabrics as an Industrial Engineer, and then worked his way up to plant manager. Raymond married Cecile Sauzier Pare and together they have four children: three girls and one boy. They also have nine grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. In his spare time, Raymond enjoyed gardening. He was an avid gardener and every year took tremendous pride in his garden, often having prize winning pumpkins. He also loved to watch hockey and football and was a fan of the Boston Bruins. Raymond also enjoyed fishing and spending quality time with his family, he was very attached to the family cat, Buffy.

Raymond came to the South Paris Maine Veterans’ Home in August of 2013 where he enjoys watching TV.

Thank You Raymond for your service.

By Ellie Newell

Remember: FLAG DAY
June 14, 2015
The Adjutant Speaks

Well I hope all of you have had enough of 2015 winter weather. I can speak for all the Department Officers when I say it was a tough year to visit many Posts and Districts, but at times it was more negotiable to drive north than the other directions. However, during this time there were many positive things happening in the Department of Maine. We have somehow managed to have 3 new appointees to our National Legislative Committee and they have taken this job seriously. They have contacted each other and as I write this article they are planning to meet at HQ and discuss what our legislators at our National level are doing to care for Veterans of this Country. As our State Legislative Committee does as well, they also plan to track what is done and what needs to be done. One of the new Committee members, David Patch from Boothbay Harbor Post-36, has already taken a trip to The American Legion Headquarters in Washington D.C. to work with our National staff and see what direction and support we can attain. Two other members, Peter Johnson from Greenville Post-94 and Jarrod Crockett from Bethel Post-81 were sent to D.C. to testify on behalf of not only The American Legion but all Veterans in Maine. Because these 3 individuals serve on both the State and National level, we are now seeing more interaction between all levels of government.

Another individual that we hope will serve in the future is Arnold Snyder from Stockton Springs Post-157. He supported the Committee by filing a report for each visit that was attended in D.C. His report was very professional and to the point and we thank him for his dedication and energy to make this happen.

The Department HQ seems to be the hub of the energy that has risen within the Department of Maine. The Service Officer Class has been a great success, and now we are booking classes 2 months ahead. We are now in the planning stages of starting classes for Post and District Finance Officers. There are other classes that we are planning, but this has been a subject that we feel is needed. With the help of some talented Legionnaires, we hope to start in the near future.

Speaking of talent, we are asking our 20,000 membership base if anyone within our organization has a background in writing grants & fundraising to please contact the office; we sure could use some guidance and would appreciate any support. Remember, what a great way to give back to the Veterans. (Office 873-3229 or cell 754-6044)

In closing, thank you all for the support as we make changes and at the same time bring us to a new direction for the future. It has proven to work in 3 posts where younger veterans are now taking charge and will become the leaders of this organization in the future. Remember that change is not always easy.

FORWARD & FOCUSED

Vietnam War Remembrance Day: Livermore Falls Post 10 held an Open House to welcome all Vietnam War Veterans and Veterans from America’s Military on Sunday, March 29. In recognition of the service and sacrifice of those veterans of the United States Armed Forces who served during the Vietnam War, the State designates March 30 of each year as Vietnam War Remembrance Day. The Governor shall annually issue a proclamation urging the people of the State to observe the day with appropriate celebration and activity.

More on A ‘SECOND LOOK’, Page 5
Americanism Report

WOW! It’s hard to believe that the year is almost over. When we meet again, it will be at the American Legion, Department of Maine’s yearly Convention in Bangor. It has been an honor to serve as your Americanism Officer for this past year and hope to continue for the next year. This year marks the 90th anniversary for America Legion Baseball. On July 17, 1925 in Milbank, South Dakota, the American Legion Junior Baseball program was proposed to serve the youth of America. Declare the weekend of July 17th as American Legion Baseball day at your local ball park. If and when you have the opportunity to take in a Legion Baseball game, do so and enjoy. The support will be greatly appreciated by the players.

Americanism should cultivate youth development, educational development, citizenship, community service, religious emphasis, and pride in our nation and the great symbol of our nation, Old Glory. And for each of those Americanism “ingredients”, opportunity to embrace a corresponding program or initiative abound…Legion baseball, Oratorical, Boys State, Junior Shooting, Cadet Law Enforcement, Scouting, scholarships, Get Out the Vote, Operation: Back To God, and Citizen’s Flag Alliance, to name but just a few. As we know Legion Posts cannot support all of these programs, but do and will support the ones they can. This year’s Dirigo Boys State will start June 21 at Thomas College. The boys will start checking in at 1200 PM (noon), so if you are able to be there to greet these fine young men, please do so and wear your Legion cap. American Legion Boys State is among the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for high school students in the nation. It is a participatory program where each boy becomes a part of the operation of his local, county and state government. Now is the time to start planning our Oratorical contest for the following year. If you’re able to find anyone interested in participating in the contest, then give them the materials to help prepare themselves over the summer months. This contest is designed to develop high school students a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Constitution of the United States. Other objectives are those of leadership, the ability to think and speak clearly and intelligently, and the preparation for acceptance of the duties and responsibilities, the rights and privileges of American citizenship. Have an enjoyable and safe summer.

Maine Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial Plaque

Maine Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial Plaque:

Bronze, 30” diameter, June 2002

Dedication: Mar. 3, 2003

Commissioning Agency: Commission to Recognize Maine Vietnam Veterans in the Maine State House Hall of Flags – Augusta, Maine

Sculptor: Gary Cooper – Fayette, Maine

Legends: IN HONOR OF ALL MAINE VETERANS OF THE VIETNAM WAR 1961-1975 AND IN MEMORY OF THOSE KILLED AND MISSING IN ACTION

Historical Bulletin

A another Legion year is coming to a close bringing the Legion’s Centennial Celebration that much closer. I have mentioned this in the past and want to remind everyone that we should have our posts prepared for the event. It’s going to be a perfect time to open our doors to the public and show them the many different programs the Legion offers to Veterans and the community, and what we have accomplished in the past 100 years. Don’t be afraid to boast about all that The American Legion has done and continues to do. Start gathering up those artifacts that have been put away all these years, whether in the attic or basement, the closet or within the depths of the post itself, to showcase to the public.

In my own community, we recently had a person come across a folder full of old pictures taken of past Legion events, that he came across when purchasing a home.

Thankfully he contacted the Legion and handed them off to us. These are the types of artifacts that are floating around your communities too. Use the centennial celebration as a selling tool in contacting others in your community who may have items hanging around with connections to your local post.

I have recently had the pleasure of attending a unique ceremony in which a post re-dedicated itself to Afghanistan soldier Corey E. Garver who was killed overseas. This ceremony got me thinking about how Legions, when first chartering, held similar ceremonies 100 years ago dedicating their namesakes to passed comrades. This mirroring event shows me the importance of the coming centennial and learning about those WW1 Veterans as I got to learn about Corey E. Garver.

Again, thanks to all of you this year who have shown an interest in preparing a history of your post. I didn’t get to meet as many of you as I have wanted to, but am pleased that many of you called with many questions concerning your history projects. I appreciate your interest and hope in the next few years there will be many more posts becoming more involved as we all prepare for The American Legion Centennial Celebration.

Membership is KEY!!!

Judge’s Corner

WOW, as I write this, I cannot believe that a year is almost over. With the elections and convention just around the corner, it amazes me how fast time flies. So I would like to take this time to thank Department Commander Richard Graves and Richard Graves for the appointment as the Department commander. All of our meetings with the Maine Congressional Delegation were very cordial and they all expressed support for our issues. However, in the hectic and complex environment they live in it will remain important to track the important veteran’s issues and maintain open communications with our delegation. This is a job shared by the Department of Maine and our National Headquarters.

See you at Convention and thank you for your service.

A ‘SECOND LOOK’

(Continued from Page 4)
Service Office Update

**Post Service Officer Training Continues**

Certificates Awarded

The Department of Maine State HQ had the pleasure of hosting three successful Post Service Officer Seminars for the months of February, March, and April, 2015. Post Service Officers from around the state were in attendance, as well as those from Congressional Offices. Training certificates were awarded for completion. Department Service Officer Amedeo “Deo” Lauria holds PSO classes once a month “free of charge” at Department HQ – 5 Verti Drive in Winslow, from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. with a light breakfast and lunch included.

**April 28 PSO Seminar:** Attendees, left to right (back row), Senator Angus King’s Office – Congressional staff Teague Morris, Auburn Post 31 Assistant Service Officer Alain Laverdure, Auburn Post 31 Service Officer Jim Frye, Limerick Post 55 Service Officer David Snyder, Greenville Post 94 David Taylor. Left to right (front row), DSO Officer Amedeo Lauria, and Trenton Post 207 Richard Butters.

March 31 PSO Seminar: Left to right (back row), Dept. Service Officer Amedeo Lauria, Senator King’s Office Representative Sarah Graettinger, Cherryfield Post 8 Service Officer Douglas Dowling, Sanford Post 19 Service Officer Dale Midgley. Left to right (front row), Assistant Dept. Service Officer Dave Kern, Cherryfield Post 8 member Dr. Ruth Moore, Congressional staff Sandra Graettinger, Cherryfield Post 8 Service Officer Alain Laverdure, and Rumford Post 24 Assistant Service Officer Randy Canwell.

The next class will be held Saturday, May 30 at Dept. HQ. If you are interested in attending or have any questions, please call 207-623-5726, or email amedeo.lauria@va.gov.

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Hope everyone is enjoying the spring thaw. Now is the time to get out of the house and into the yard! Glad to see the snow is finally gone!

The Department Service Office is fully engaged with our membership and other veterans regarding claims, pensions and survivors benefits, as well as other assistance we have had over 6,400 contacts so far this fiscal year!

I would also like to once again recognize the efforts of all the Legionnaires at the Area, District and Post level who are reaching out to our membership and letting them know about the Department Service Office and how we can help them with their claims for VA benefits! Keep them coming!

**Membership.** Please remember that your membership dollars keep the DSO open and available to our membership and veterans. Please encourage your eligible friends and family to use the DSO and to become members of the American Legion. There is power in numbers!

**Staffing.** We have a new Assistant Department Service Officer, David “Dave” Kern. Also, Eileen recently received her National Accreditation; so you now have three service officers to assist you. You can reach us by phone, but sometimes the phones are jammed, so a quick email to us will result in a quicker response; especially if it is a general question about the status of your claim and appeal.

Here are some topics that may be of interest to our membership:

**Should I file a Compensation Claim?**

The decision to file a claim is a personal one. It is your claim; not the DSO’s claim. Keep this in mind, filing a claim is a team effort. The veteran, DSO, VA, and private care provider. In general terms ask yourself these questions:

Did this disability start/occur while you were on Active Duty/ADUTRA or IUTRA?

Is it documented in your medical treatment record? Line of Duty? Performance file?

Is it Chronic? Have you been seeing a doctor since service for the disability?

Do I have a current medical diagnosis?

This is a very general list, but can help you in deciding whether or not to file. The best course of action is to always contact the DSO and make an appointment. Do not request copies of your service records as the VA is responsible to get your military performance and medical records from the records holding agency. In addition, they will obtain your VA treatment records as well. Also, if you elect to do so, they can request, with your authorization in writing, your private treatment medical records as well.

**Fully Developed Claims (FDC).** Our focus is filing fully developed claims (FDC), here in the DSO that means submitting claims with as much supporting evidence as possible. You don’t have to be concerned with getting documents from government agencies, i.e., service records, service medical treatment records and VA treatment records; however, to file an FDC you must obtain any records for treatment outside the government it will make the processing of your claim go a lot faster! If you are in an FDC status, DO NOT submit any additional evidence, or you will lose that status and possibly lose one year’s retroactive compensation. The up to one year back compensation retro-active compensation incentive ends in August of 2015 for first time compensation claim filers; so don’t procrastinate! If you think you have a claim, contact us immediately to make an appointment.

**Compensation and Pension Exams.** You must make every effort to attend your compensation and pension exams, failure to do so may result the denial of your claim with the VA. Notify the point of contact listed on your medical appointment sheet if you are unable to be present as well as the DSO so that we can work with the VA to reschedule it.

**VA Claim Appeals.** If your claim is denied by the VA, it is in your best interest to schedule an appointment with the DSO, so that we can review the reasons for denial and to see if we have sufficient evidence to appeal the decision. We will not submit Notice of Disagreements (NODs) or a VAF 9, Appeals to the Board of Veteran’s Appeals without talking with you and reviewing your claim. If you receive notice to file a VAF 9, notify the DSO immediately so we can assist you otherwise you may lose your ability to have your claim heard by the Board of Veteran’s Appeals in Washington D.C. Keep in mind that you can have a hearing locally by a Togus Decision Review Officer and then, if not successful in your appeal, a hearing with the Board of Veterans Appeal in Washington D.C. by video teleconference. You must notify us immediately upon receipt of a Statement of Case as there are 60 and 30 day time limits on filing for appeal.

**Contact Information.** It is extremely important to keep the VA up-to-date with your contact information, i.e., current address and telephone number. You must provide this to the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) (Claims/Pensions etc.) and to the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) if you are enrolled at the VA hospital. This information is NOT shared! Also, if you are a snow bird, let the VA know when you are out of town and furnish the new address, as failure to do so may affect your claim, compensation/pension exams and medication delivery.

**Togus VA Women’s Clinic.** If you haven’t already heard, there is a Women Veterans Clinic here at Togus. I specialize in women’s health issues. Please keep in mind that there are medical conditions that may be claimable for the children of women veterans who served in areas and on certain ships that are presumptive for Agent Orange. If you are a woman veteran, it is a good idea to give us a call or look for more information on www.va.gov.

**Surviving Spouses.** We offer veterans the service of sitting down, along with your spouse, to fill out the documentation required to apply for Survivor Benefits; Accrual, Widow’s Pension and Dependent Indemnity Compensation (DIC). How does this assist you? We do a preliminary review of your Service Connected disabilities and attempt to determine what entitlement may result at the passing of the veteran. We scan in your Service Connected disability information and there is no charge to you for reviewing your information. We can meet at your house and into the yard. Let us help you with your benefits now so you have time to enjoy your life!

More SERVICE OFFICE UPDATE, Page 7
Service Office Update
(Continued from Page 6)

the required documents and create a “drift” claim. At the time of the passing of the veteran, the spouse would come to the office with a copy of the Official Death Certificate, he or she would review and sign the documents for submission to the VA in Philadelphia. While it is something we don’t like to think about, it helps you as you look at your financial situation after the veteran passes. Keep in mind that with few exceptions the veteran’s compensation ceases at the demise of the veteran. The last paycheck must be held for disposition instructions from the VA, or you may incur a debt to the government.

NON SERVICE CONNECTED (NSC) PENSIONS. If you are receiving a Non Service Connected pension be aware that you must report any additional income to the VA immediately or you will incur a debt to the government! Example: If you received your NSC pension before your Social Security payments started, you must notify the VA and not spend the additional money. If you are receiving NSC pension of $1072 and you start receiving Social Security payments of $700, you are only entitled to the $700 from Social Security and $372 from the VA, a total federal benefit of $1072. The VA will periodically check your Social Security number against income tax database and Social Security database. When you are found to be overpaid, the VA will notify you that you must pay back the overpayment. This notice will be mailed to you, with instructions and a copy of your statement of refund showing the amount you are required to pay back, along with forms to return if you do not agree with the amount or do not wish to make payment. The VA will then attempt to collect the overpayment. If you fail to pay the VA, they will work with the IRS to have the overpayment withheld from your Social Security payments. They will also notify your state and federal government that you are owing a debt to the VA, and the government may deduct the amount owed from your taxes. You may also be subject to collection actions by a Judgement Lien, if you fail to pay the VA.

SEPARATION DOCUMENTS. If you were a member of the service and you have not obtained a separation document, you have 10 years from the date of separation to obtain your separation document. If you have not obtained one within 10 years of your discharge, your separation documents may be destroyed by the VA. If you wish to have your separation documents returned to you, you must contact the VA and request a copy. If you have lost your separation documents, the VA will not provide you with a replacement document. If you have a will, your separation documents may be obtained by your executor. If you do not have a will, your separation documents may be obtained by your heir, or a person who is entitled to receive your separation documents by law. The VA will also provide you with a copy of your separation document if you are deceased.

PSO TRAINING SEMINAR. We are again sending out a call to all Post Service Officers! If you contact the DSO, we will put you on our email list to receive the Department Service Office Newsletter. We have several Post Service Officer training seminars this fall. The next open class is on September 30th, to accommodate those who work. You can request a reservation for the seminar by emailing the DSO at amedeo.lauria@va.gov; email sooner than later, as we only have 6 students per class. The classes are conducted at the Department Headquarters, 1000 hours to 1400 hours with a light breakfast and lunch included. There is no cost to attend. We are about one quarter of the way toward having all Post Service Officers signed up. As you hold Post and District elections, please notify the DSO of the name and email address of your newly elected Post Service Officers so we can offer them the training and DSO newsletter.

PSO CONTACT INFORMATION. Post Service Officers, as a minimum, please send us your full name, Post, telephone number (your phone number will not be released) and email address. The purpose is so that members of your post can contact you for local assistance, and also, so that we can contact you by phone or email, if we hear from a member in your post that needs assistance.

CONSOLIDATED POST REPORT AND PSO OF THE YEAR AWARD. If you are a Post Service Officer, please make sure that your accomplishments and assistance to your members are recorded in the Consolidated Post Report that is submitted to Department in April by your Commander. The information is normally submitted by the Post Adjutant in paper, or by using “MyLegion” online at www.mylegion.org. This information will be used to select the “Post Service Officer of the Year” for the award presentation at the Department of Maine Annual Convention in June. The cutoff for nominations to the Department Service Office for “Post Service Officer of the Year” is June 1st; applications postmarked after that date will not be considered.

DSO NEWSLETTER. To sign up for the newsletter, please email your contact information to amedeo.lauria@va.gov and state in the body of your email if you would like your name listed in the newsletter as well as permission to link to your email address through the newsletter. The newsletter is emailed out monthly. The newsletter was developed as a way to stay in touch with Post Service Officers and to keep them up to date on changes and sources of information that is of value to our veterans. The newsletter contains active links to a variety of resources for veterans as well as links to you, so you can better serve the members of your post. We are not doing mailings at this time.

New Drug Take Back Container

VA Maine HCS is pleased to announce the installation of a NEW DRUG TAKE BACK CONTAINER for allow Veterans to easily dispose of unwanted prescription medications safely, secure manner. This program is the very shortly, take back envelopes for use in our CBOCs. The wanted drugs is an essential part of overall prescription drug safety and proper stewardship.

Receptacles for Patient Medication Disposal

Frequently Asked Questions for Staff:
• Can staff accept medication from the patient and then place it in the receptacle? No, for all areas except long term care. Per the law, only the patient, member of household or persons lawfully allowed to dispose of a decedent’s property may dispose of controlled substance prescriptions. In long term care areas (e.g. CLC, Don, Mental Health RRTP), the LTC staff may assist residents in disposing of the medication.
• Must the Veteran separate their non-controlled medications from their controlled medications? No, controlled and non-controlled medications may be mingled in the receptacle.
• Can the receptacle be used to dispose of illegal or illicit (e.g. cocaine, marijuana, etc.) that the Veteran may have? No, only legally obtained drugs may be placed in the receptacle.
• Can expired stock or partial doses be disposed of in the receptacle? No. The receptacle can only be used for patient issued medications. Note: Prescriptions returned in the mail as undeliverable will be considered pharmacy stock per the DEA and cannot be disposed of in the receptacle.
• What other items cannot be placed in the container? Needles or other sharp broken objects, trash, inhalers, aerosol

Korea Reborn Book:

Excellent Administrative Skills Provided: Augusta Post 2 member Eileen Krawczyk is the new Administrative Assistant at the Department Service Office. She brings excellent administrative skills and is already proving to be a valuable addition to an already outstanding service office.
President’s Message

The Department of Maine was honored with a visit by the National American Legion Auxiliary President Janet Jefford on April 17-19th. A fun time was had by all who attended. Thanks to all who made it a successful visit.

Coming up in May is Memorial Day celebrations though our state and across the United States. Do you know what the original Day was called? Do you know why we celebrate Memorial Day? What does it mean to you? The original name was formerly known as Decoration Day and originated after the American Civil War honoring those who died during war. Celebrating Memorial Day is a way to honor all those who have passed away during war - old and new wars. It is an honor to celebrate Memorial Day by remembering those who died fighting for freedom and faith for God and our country lest they be forgotten. June 14th is Flag Day. Celebrate by waving our Flag high letting everyone know that it is our symbol for Freedom.

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

Nancy Ronco, Department American Legion Auxiliary President

Volunteer of the Year: Machias Unit 9 President E. H. Johnson has been named “Volunteer of the Year” for 2015 by the Machias Bay Chamber.

National President Janet Jefford, shown with the 49 boxes that were packed and prepared for shipping to deployed troops in Africa during her visit with members of the 3rd District at Bath Unit 21 on April 18. Left to right, SAL Deputy National Commander Scott Morton, NEC Mary Jane McLoon, Department President Nancy Ronco, National President Janet Jefford, 3rd District Department Vice President Ginny Chaput who heads the Gifts of Gratitude program, Department Vice President Debra Ann Marr, Department Secretary Michelle McRae, and Department Chaplain Veronica Rokosny.

Gifts of Gratitude:

National President Janet Jefford, shown with the 49 boxes that were packed and prepared for shipping to deployed troops in Africa during her visit with members of the 3rd District at Bath Unit 21 on April 18. Left to right, SAL Deputy National Commander Scott Morton, NEC Mary Jane McLoon, Department President Nancy Ronco, National President Janet Jefford, 3rd District Department Vice President Ginny Chaput who heads the Gifts of Gratitude program, Department Vice President Debra Ann Marr, Department Secretary Michelle McRae, and Department Chaplain Veronica Rokosny.

Money Matters

This budget year is tougher than that of last year for five reasons. First, our membership continues to decline, thereby reducing our major revenue stream significantly. Secondly, our Label and Sweepstakes fund raisers continue to decline in the number of returns producing less revenue relative to the increased expense of those programs. Third, a revenue stream has not been identified or established yet to cover the capital fund demands which are now placed upon us as we move into the future. Fourth, because of increased enthusiasm for our ongoing programs, we have new demands on us to increase those budgets. Fifth and lastly, as we accomplish more, new demands are being placed on our Headquarters and Service Office Staff to increase their staffing.

It is no secret that our Membership continues to decrease each year. This is due to many factors with the biggest hit coming from the death rate among our WWII veterans. The Department share of dues is $12.50 per member and slightly less for PUFLs. A 5% loss in membership equates to a revenue loss of approximately $12,000. In no year since 2009 have we taken in revenue from membership dues greater than $795,000 with our last full year 2013 showing a five year drop of 19% in revenue to a level of $709,000. At the same time, our expenses dropped 15% as we cut back on expenses where we can. We have also been able to bring in other sources of revenue which allows us to keep our heads above water. But, we must continue to search for new revenue sources while mindful of the restrictions placed on us as a 501 (c) 19 organization.

Our spring and holiday label programs show over the last few years a decline in net revenue for each program resulting in less than a 60% return on our investments in these two programs. The Sweepstakes programs show an even worse revenue picture with both the number of people returning their sweepstakes tickets and decrease in net revenue per year for each program. We need to look at these four programs and see if they need to be replaced or somehow rejuvenated.

Nancy Ronco, Department American Legion Auxiliary President
King Calls on Congress to Maintain Construction Grant Funding to Support Veteran Care

During a tour of the Maine Veterans Home in Bangor last month, U.S. Senator Angus King called on Congress to maintain funding for construction grants to improve infrastructure at veterans homes across the country. The President’s Fiscal Year 2016 Budget would reduce that funding—which supports states like Maine as they seek to expand care through new or improved facilities—by $90 million, from $90 to $80 million.

“Our six veterans homes across the state, including this one in Bangor, serve thousands of Maine veterans every year, providing them with the type of long-term, high-quality care that their service and sacrifice deserves,” Senator King said. “But with more and more veterans seeking care at Maine Veterans Homes, now is the time to cut the vital funding that helps keep them up-and-running. It’s imperative that Congress, at the very least, maintain these construction grants so that veterans homes across Maine can continue to upgrade their facilities and better serve the growing needs of our state’s veterans population.”

Senator King also sent a letter to the heads of the Senate Appropriations Committee requesting that the Committee reject the President’s proposed reduction in funding, and instead, preserve the current $90 million. In his letter, Senator King noted that State Veterans Homes, like the six across Maine, provide care to approximately 53 percent of the VA’s long-term care population at a cost equal to approximately 16 percent of the VA’s long-term care annual budget.

Kelley Kash, the CEO of Maine Veterans’ Homes, said, “Currently, there is approximately $1 billion in approved and proposed State Veterans Homes projects across the nation waiting for matching VA funding. In Maine, we have identified another $200M in projects over the next 10-15 years to replace, upgrade, or expand all of our facilities to meet mandated changes in long-term care delivery. Continued funding from the federal government is critical to help seeing those upgrades through.”

Maine Veterans Homes care for more than 1,600 veterans and 400 eligible spouses annually in six facilities, which are located in Augusta, Caribou, Scarborough, Bangor, South Paris, and Machias. In 2013 the Scarborough Veterans Home received a $419,557 grant that helped cover renovation costs for the facility’s heating and air conditioning systems, rooms, and windows.

After Senator King visited the Bangor Veterans Home, he also toured the Department of Veterans Affairs’ Bangor Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Bangor where he met with veteran patients, staff, and administrators and discussed the important role the facilities play in delivering high-quality care to veterans in rural Maine.

Action Update from the office of U.S. Senator Susan Collins: Senator Collins Leads Successful Effort to Increase Veteran’s Accessibility to Care

In January of 2015, Senators Collins and King joined Senator Jerry Moran from Kansas to introduce bipartisan legislation that would have restored the VA’s interpretation of the 40-mile rule by force of law and make certain that the distance measured must be to a VA facility that offers the precise type of care the veteran requires.

Senator Collins led a bipartisan group of Senators in February of 2015 and sent a letter directly to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Robert McDonald, to bring these problems to his attention. The Senators urged him to use a common-sense interpretation of the 40-mile rule so that more veterans could be guaranteed the health care they needed. In March of this year, Senator Collins had an opportunity to sit down with Secretary McDonald for an hour to discuss issues important to Maine veterans. During this meeting, Senator Collins stressed the challenges faced by Maine veterans regarding the 40-mile rule and provided Secretary McDonald with the examples of veterans in rural Maine.

Following this strong bipartisan push and Senator Collins’ consistent effort, the VA announced in March of 2015 that it would adopt a common-sense interpretation of the 40-mile rule and implement the program the way that Congress had intended. This change roughly doubled the number of eligible veterans nationwide who could receive care in their communities and helped veterans throughout Maine access the quality healthcare they earned through their service.

Senator Collins was pleased with this important progress, but the work on these important issues is not finished. In April of 2015, during a hearing of the Senate Committee for Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, Senator Collins questioned Secretary McDonald about the VA’s delay in considering the type of care available within 40 miles of where a veteran lives. Senator Collins will continue to work to make certain that all those who have served do not face undue burdens accessing healthcare.

Budget Proposal: Governor Paul LePage presents his budget proposal to eliminate military retirement from State of Maine Income Tax on Tuesday, March 3 at the State House. Approximately two dozen Veterans, including Department of Maine Officers and Legionnaires, were in attendance to support the proposal.
— Your Letters —

Thanks and Gratitude Extended

American Legion Post 0178

Dear Commander,

On behalf of all of the members of The American Legion family who have suffered loss, and for those who will suffer loss in the future, I wish to extend my personal thanks and gratitude for your generous contribution on October 24, 2014 of $1,783 to the National Emergency Fund. Your contribution to this fund helps ensure that our ability to assist your fellow comrades can continue.

Because other revenue sources cover the administrative costs for The American Legion's National Emergency Fund, every dollar donated is used to help veterans and their families with rebuilding their homes and lives. Your fellow Legion family members and I can’t thank you enough for your devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Because no goods or services were exchanged, your contribution to The American Legion's National Emergency Fund is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Sincerely,

William Pease
Director, Fundraising Division

A Great Visit to the Department of Maine

Dear Adjutant Paul,

Thanks so much for a great visit to Maine. I know that Easter Good Friday and Easter weekend was not ideal for your department but you made great coordination to make Bob and I feel like honored guests.

The new Department “home” is so well organized and the pride you have in it is so evident.

Keep up the great work, your dedication and sacrifices is making a profound positive impact on the Dept. of Maine.

For God and Country

Dale Barnett

Plourde’s Retirement Celebration

36 Years Serving the Veterans of Maine

The American Legion Department of Maine recognized Nancy Plourde at the time of her retirement in Jan. 2015 at an event put on by the Bureau of Maine Veteran’s Services, in Augusta, on Jan. 22 with an official presentation on behalf of 20,000 plus membership. Nancy served the Veterans of Maine for over 36 years and was recognized by family, friends and colleagues with a surprise dinner at the Senator Inn. Nancy’s accomplishments and exploits were detailed by several in attendance. It was a night of good humor and good stories.

Retirement Surprise: Dept. Service Officer Amedeo “Deo” Lauria presents Nancy Plourde with a certificate and photo of Abraham Lincoln during a surprise retirement dinner held in her honor on Jan. 22.

Standing behind DSO Lauria is Peter Ogden, Director of Maine Bureau of Veterans Services.

2014-15 Leading Candidate for National Commander

Dale Barnett, a retired military officer, is proudly announced by the Department of Georgia as a candidate for the high office of national commander of The American Legion. Dale was commissioned in the U.S. Army in 1974 after graduation from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He served 22 years of commissioned service in a variety of stateside and overseas location. He served in combat in the First Gulf War as a battalion executive officer in a mechanized infantry unit earning a Bronze Star. His military decorations also include a Legion of Merit, combat infantryman, and three meritorious service medals. Dale retired in August 1996 as a Lieutenant Colonel and transitioned into a second career as a high school teacher and coach.

Dale was selected as Creekside High School Teacher of the Year for the 2005-2006 school year. He is a National Board Certified Social Studies Teacher. Dale coached varsity baseball, junior varsity basketball, and varsity boys and girls cross country during his teaching career. His cross teams both won region championships in 2010. He retired from teaching at the end of the 2011 school year.

Dale is an active American Legion member serving in many leadership positions, to include Georgia State Commander in 2007-2008. He is active in a variety of youth development programs to include a staff member of both Georgia Boys State and Boys Nation. He has served as National Chairman for both the Membership and Post Activities Commission for three years and the National Economic Commission Chairman for two years, which actively advocates for veterans in the areas of veteran employment, education, homelessness, and veteran business development.

Donations for Candidate Barnett Accepted at State Headquarters

Dear Fellow Legioneer: It is that time again when we start thinking of giving a donation to the leading candidate for National Commander of The American Legion.

This year’s leading candidate is Mr. Dale Barnett from the Department of Georgia. He, like all of his predecessors is faced with a large financial challenge to get to this most prestigious office. Dale has spent many hours and funds representing The American Legion, our veterans and their families before Congress and in other arenas. He has served this organization in many post, district, departmental and national positions.

It is appropriate for us to show our support for Dale as his Department of Georgia showed support for our own Anthony G. “Tony” Jordan and William J. “Bill” Rogers.

A donation to Dale’s candidacy for National Commander of The American Legion would be greatly appreciated by Dale. Please send your donations made payable to The American Legion to the Department of Maine, P.O. Box 900, Waterville, Maine 04903 and earmark it for National Commander’s Campaign.

Your donation will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

John W. Hagreaves
National Executive Committeeman

Convention Heads to Maryland

This year’s National Convention will be in Baltimore, MD Aug. 28 to Sept. 3, 2015. The hotel assigned for members from the Department of Maine will be the Days Inn Inner Harbor, 100 Hopkins Place, Baltimore, MD 21201. The hotel room rate is $133 plus Tax Rate of 15.50% - Doubles (1-2 persons). Additional Occupant in Room – $10.00 (3-4 persons); Rollaway Rate per Day – $10.00; Parking Rate per Day – Self parking - $29.00/Valet parking – N/A. If you are thinking about going to National Convention, please let The American Legion, Department of Maine know by calling (207) 873-3229, or email paul@mainelegion.org and we will be sure to put you on the mailing list for the information. For more information, please visit www.legion.org/convention/resources.
Legion Riders Prepare for 2015 Summer Events

While winter is finally coming to an end, the Riders have been busy preparing for the summer events that we have planned during our winter meeting held in Rockland at American Legion Post-1. We all traveled on March 7th from all points of the great State of Maine to conduct our yearly business. Upon arrival, we had the opportunity to not only visit with each other, but to be given a tour of the post and to meet the Legion family members of the hosting post. We enjoyed a light brunch and then started our meeting. Each Rider Chapter present informed us of their membership and events that they had planned for the summer of 2015. The total attendance for the day was 94.

Shortly after, we elected the new State Officer for the incoming year. Elected was:

- Kaye Bouchard, Director from Post 202-Topsham
- Larry Haines, Assistant Director from Post-21-Bath
- George Draper, Road Captain from Post-40-Winthrop
- Mike Lallemand, Sgt, at Arms/Safety Officer from Post-21-Bath
- Dan St. Pierre, Chaplain from Post-153-Auburn
- Paul L’Heureux Executive Director/Liaison from Post-153-Auburn

After the meeting, we enjoyed time together and we were treated to an excellent prepared Turkey dinner with all the fixings!!!

The Riders want to thank not only the Post for the hospitality, but to Post Commander and Rider Director of Post-1 Darrell Leavitt for making this a special day. We also wish to thank the Assistant Director Gary Leach and the kitchen staff for all their hard work in making this a successful weekend.

As the Riders prepare for our fund raising activities, we will all come together on July 31 and August 1-2 at our Summer Rally hosted by the Riders of Post-80 in Millinocket. We will have more information as the event is still being organized.

In closing, the Riders wish to thank all the Legion Family members that have supported our events and continue to help us to be a successful part of The American Legion. From all of us, please have a great summer, to the Riders, Ride Safe.

Loud & Proud
Legion Riders of Maine

Attention!!!
American Legion Members...Show Your Support!

Come join us at our Annual State Convention June 19-20, 2015 at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor, Maine. Learn about various new happenings that have taken place over the past year, benefits that The American Legion has to offer and other valuable information to take with you as well as to pass on to others that may want to become part of the American Legion family.

Sign up a new member at the event and receive a 2015 State Convention pin free. With your support, we can help The American Legion family grow to become bigger and stronger to better serve our Veterans here in the great state of Maine.

New members do not have to be present to join. All you will need to bring is their information filled out on the attached form, a copy of their DD-214 or another form of Military ID to verify eligibility, and a check in the amount of the Post dues. Drop the information off at the registration table where there will be someone available to assist you and award you with a pin as a token of our appreciation.

Membership dues will be applied to the 2016 membership year beginning July 1, 2015.
Improve Access to Healthcare for Military Veterans

Last year, we discovered that veterans in Phoenix, Arizona, had waited for more than 100 days to receive the medical attention they desperately needed. This lack of respect and attention for our military heroes is appalling.

As I have been traveling throughout the Second District and touring sites, such as Maine Veteran’s Homes in Bangor, Togus and the Lewiston VA Medical Clinic, I am constantly hearing from our military heroes of the need to improve access to quality healthcare.

As I have repeatedly said, I will work to help them receive the care they were promised, earned and deserve. To that extent, I have written letters to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and supported bills that will help improve veterans’ access to healthcare.

In February, I joined my House colleagues in sending a letter to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary, Robert McDonald, asking why funding for the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act was cut. I also pressed him on why the VA was using “as the crow flies” methods for those who live 40 miles away from a VA medical facility.

I also supported the Veterans TRICARE Choice Act, which will allow TRICARE-eligible veterans to voluntarily freeze their benefits in order to enroll in a Health Savings Account (HSA) program provided by their employer. When our military heroes enter the private workforce, they should be given the same health care opportunities as their non-veteran coworkers. It’s imperative for Congress to ensure that our military veterans have the best possible health care options that fit them and their family’s needs.

I believe these bills will help our local heroes get the healthcare they were promised, earned and deserved.

I will continue to support bills that will help improve access to healthcare for our military veterans and work to make sure they are getting the attention and respect they deserve.

Thank you to all of our veterans, and their families, for their sacrifices and service to our great country.

In March, after receiving pressure from Congress and the American people, the VA announced they will be using driving distance from a VA medical facility as the qualifier to use the Veterans Choice program – not “as the crow flies.” I am pleased to see that the Department of Veterans Affairs has changed their decision, but there is much more work to be done.

To help veterans receive access to healthcare, I supported the Veterans Access to Community Care Act. This bill will allow veterans to seek health care outside the Department of Veterans Affairs network if they live more than 40 miles away from a VA medical facility.

National American Legion High School Oratorical Contest

INDIANAPOLIS (April 11, 2015) – Excitement ran high for nine of 52 top high school orators as they advanced from the first round of intense competition in a national speech contest about the U.S. Constitution conducted by The American Legion. The speakers represent champions from 49 of 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Department of France and the Department of Puerto Rico. Each comes to The American Legion Oratorical Contest with one objective: leave with the $18,000 college scholarship Sunday afternoon.

Portland high Sophomore Oona MacKinnon-Hoban, Portland, Maine earned the right to compete against eight other semi-finalists from high schools in Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Virginia, Washington and France who earned the opportunity to return to competition late Saturday afternoon for the semi-finals. Only three emerged from that round to the finals which took place Sunday morning.

Although Ms. MacKinnon-Hoban was not among the final three she walked away with an all-expense paid roundtrip to Indianapolis for her and her father and $2000 in prize money from Maine Legionnaires as well another $3000 from the American Legion National Headquarters.

Geeta Minocha, a senior from Vanguard High School in Ocala, Fla., emerged from 52 contestants to win first place in this weekend’s American Legion.

Rowan Macwan, a high school junior from Naperville, Ill., earned a $16,000 college scholarship with a second-place finish, while Emma Skahill, a senior from Earlham, Iowa, earned a $1,000 scholarship and finished third.

In her prepared oration, Minocha pointed out that the Constitution was not a document that could have declared George Washington a king, but was instead a document “remodeling the government of the United States.” She lamented that voter turnout is now the lowest since the 1940s.

“Who we vote for matters,” Minocha said. “The leaders we elect should reflect the spirit of our society. Their main goal should be the preservation of our rights as written in our founding document. Failure to vote, then, is the equivalent of rejecting the freedoms bestowed on each individual by our Constitution. These freedoms, like a family heirloom, should be treasured and held dear. But it appears we have begun to take these freedoms for granted.”

This is the 78th annual competition, officially called The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program – “A Constitutional Speech Contest.” Since its inception the American Legion has awarded over three million dollars in scholarships.

The nation’s largest veterans organization holds the competition every year to encourage young Americans to improve their communications skills and to study the U.S. Constitution. More than 6,000 high school students begin competition annually at The American Legion post-community level.

“We use these programs to weave those kids into the fabric that is this nation,” said American Legion National Commander Michael D. Helm, who flew from Boston to attend the competition. “That’s something we continue to support in all of our programs, but Oratoricals is the epitome of all of that.”

High schools students who would like to compete next year should contact their local American Legion Post or go to this website for details:


Maine Oratorical Contestants:
The American Legion, Dept. of Maine 2015 Oratorical contests at Thomas College, Feb. 14. Left to right, Mitchell Thayer, West Newfield; Keegan Cannell, Green-ville; Harry Lin-
**Questions & Answers for Nick Caiazzo, Legion Baseball**

**April 13, 2015**

**Q:** Nick, you have agreed to serve as a Zone Commissioner in Maine Legion baseball this summer in southern Maine. Three questions—What is a zone? What zone will you lead? What is your role as a commissioner?

**A:** A zone is a certain geographic area in Maine. I will lead Zone 3 in southern Maine. My role is basically to facilitate the schedule, interpret the rules, be primary contact for the area for the state Legion baseball organization;

**Q:** What are your top three goals as commissioner?

**A:** Make the Senior American Legion baseball game a more competitive environment for players and coaches involved; continue to educate players and coaches about this wonderful game, and to try and teach life skills to players;

**Q:** Legion ball has been around in Maine since 1946 when the guys came back from WWII. Three questions for you—Did you play Legion ball? Where and when? What are your fondest memories of Legion ball?

**A:** Yes, I played Legion ball for three summer seasons. Shop and Save was the sponsor my first year (for Deering High players in Portland). Then, the sponsor became Nova Seafood for the last two years. My best memories are of hanging out with friends at field, and playing in Legion state tournament each year;

**Q:** Legion ball has suffered in the past decade or more, correct? What do you find the most difficult, challenging or frustrating about giving private instruction? About teaching kids?

**A:** Yes, I agree it has suffered in quality. Our top three challenges will be to try and teach life skills to players; what three things does Legion ball offer for the future? A: There is absolutely a role for Legion ball in the future. The cost for private leagues, AAA, may be too high for many families. Legion should be an inexpensive baseball experience that is competitive, and the geographic travel is still mostly "local;"

**Q:** You played ball at Deering High School, Caldwell Post/Nova Seafood in Portland, and then at UMO. What are your three top memories of playing for the Black Bears in Orono?

**A:** Yes, I went on to play at the University of Maine. My top memories are of playing against top college programs in the country; playing for Coach Winkin and Coach Kosty; and having the ability to mature physically and mentally for the pro-ball experience;

**Q:** You went on to play minor league ball three years for the Milwaukee Brewers organization. Three questions—what position did you play? What level did you play at? And what teams or leagues did you play in?

**A:** I was drafted as a catcher by the Brewers, but I also played both "corner" positions in the infield and outfield (3B, 1B, LF, RF). I played rookie league ball, Low Class A, High A, and also AA level (same level as Portland Sea Dogs). The teams and leagues I played for were: Pioneer League (Rookie); Midwest League (Low A); California League (High A), Texas League & Southern League (AA);

**Q:** What are your three best memories of pro ball? Travel-- playing in 42 of the 50 states; getting coaching from former big league guys that I grew up watching on TV, or knew from collecting their baseball cards; playing w/ and against guys that were and are currently in big leagues;

**Q:** Any regrets over your minor league career? Anything you still think about? Can you give us three?

**A:** I have good memories. I am very grateful for the experience. I don’t think about it all much these days;

**Q:** Since getting out of pro ball, you have been involved in coaching and private instruction? Can you tell us about that?

**A:** At The Edge, a private indoor baseball training center in Portland, I work with players at all age levels. I give individual and group instruction, and have coached teams there;

**Q:** What are the best three things about working with kids in the cage one on one?

**A:** Working with kids who really want to learn and be come better is great. It’s also good to work with kids who focus on “process” over outcomes; finally, as a coach you are always pleased to see kids improve, and their confidence grow when they start feeling more comfortable hitting or fielding;

**Q:** What do you think you can accomplish? What do you predict you will be saying about Legion ball in the future?

**A:** Yes. I played Legion ball for three years and the kids see the need for some adjustments to improve quality (Past decade have seen many lop-sided games, and forfeits). We have already started the consolidation piec— with Gorham and Westbrook working together to form one team. The 2015 league in Zone 3 also includes other teams made up of more than one school or town. What do you see in your crystal ball for the future of Legion ball in Maine?

**A:** I predict you will see more consolidation of teams throughout the state. We need to continue to try and persuade high school coaches -- who want to develop their high school teams for following spring -- to use the Junior Legion level wisely. Junior Legion is the place to have a single-school team and JUST focus on future development. Coaches should be sending their younger players to the Junior Legion level. At that level, we will still have single-town or single-school teams. The emphasis is developing player skills. Senior Legion should be just for older, better players. Take the best players from your school and team them up with the better, older players from another nearby town. The consolidated teams will be better quality. That will help the league tremendously. Nick, thanks for your time. Good luck this year as Zone Commissioner!
A Time of Critical Support for our Veterans’ Affairs

National Commander Mike Helm speaks at a hearing on Veterans’ Affairs held by a joint Senate and House Committee on Feb. 25 in Washington, DC.

The American Legion’s specific recommendations to the committee were some of the following:

Easing Transitions
- Enforce and promote compliance with laws and statutes already passed that are intended to help veterans convert their military skill into civilian careers.

Maintain positive, solution-targeted oversight of the Department of Veterans Affairs to include timely, accurate decisions on VA claims; proper staffing to meet patient demand at VA medical facilities; continued development of effective treatment programs for women; and building facilities where needed, on time and within budget.

License, Credentialing for Vets
- In their home states, Congressmen and women can serve as voices of encouragement for transferability of military experience into credits for licenses, credentials, and certifications, which was a key aspect of the Hire Heroes Act.

Expand Tax Credit for Employers
- Extend the Work Opportunity Tax Credit for five or more years for employers who hire veterans.

Open up the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to all veterans and current members of the National Guard and Reserves.

GI Bill for Veterans Businesses
- Modify the Post 9/11 GI Bill to allow veterans to convert educational benefits into funding for starting businesses or purchasing or expanding existing businesses.

Federal Contract for Vet Firms
- Close loopholes on agencies with Overseas Contingency Operations or trust funds that fill outside the normal appropriations, and hold those agencies to the same 3 percent standard.

Ensure the 3 percent goal for Service Disabled Owned Small Business is met by all federal agencies.

Help for Homeless Veterans
- Continue to fund the Grand and Per Diem Program at $250 million and SSVF at no less than $200 million throughout the maturity of VA’s five year plan.

Fund $75 million in new HUD-VASH vouchers while allocating more project-based vouchers to high-concentration cities of chronically homeless veterans.

Fund the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program within the Department of Labor’s Veterans Employment and Training Services at the authorized level of $50 million.

Improve VA Accountability
- Request a special prosecutor to investigate and vigorously enforce appropriate repercussions on a VA employee who engaged in fraudulent practices in pursuit of bonuses or other awards.

Ensure that bonuses for VA senior executives be tied to qualitative and quantitative performance measures that are transparent to the public.

Continue to offer protections for whistle-blowers who step forward to expose mismanagement and other practices that can harm veterans and their families.

Gain First Hand Knowledge
- Visit with staff Veterans Benefit Centers around the country to see firsthand veterans and their families to understand their frustrations and to help them find solutions.

Improve Access to VA Care
- Protect cuts in VA budget for facility maintenance and increase funding for infrastructure for staffing to improve veterans access to healthcare.

Care for Caregivers of All Eras
- Direct VA to the same level of caregiver benefits for any veteran, regardless of dates or theater of operations during their military service.

Treatment for PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury
- Provide oversight and funding to DoD and VA for innovative TBI and PTSD research currently used in the private sector, including non-pharmacological treatments.

Shifting VA Backlog
- Expand and accelerate use of the Fully Developed Claim process, which has proven to be effective at reducing the adjudication process.

Provide immediate relief to waiting veterans by establishing interim benefits for veterans awaiting action on claims pending more than 125 days.

Require VA to provide a publicly accessible, accurate, and easily understood monthly report on the number of claims for compensation and disability that were submitted, awarded, denied, or are pending.

Military Sexual Trauma
- Ensure that all VA medical facilities employ Military Sexual Trauma professionals to conduct proper screening and treatment referrals.

Direct VA to improve its adjudication process to ensure MIST claims are decided uniformly throughout the nation.

Environmental Hazard Exposure
- Ensure the VA expeditiously conducts peer reviews and scientific evaluation through the National Academy of Sciences within the Institutes of Medicine on exposures to Agent Orange, ionizing radiation, the chemicals and agents used during the Project Shipboard Hazard and Defense, Gulf War Illness, contamination at locations like Camp Lejune and Fort McClellan, Fort McClellan, or exposure to burn pits in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Expand the presumption of exposure to herbicides for veterans who served within 12 nautical miles of the Vietnam coast, to ensure that proper benefits are awarded to those with conditions associated with exposure.

Recognize C-123 aircraft as herbicide exposure sites.

Maintain Force Strength
- Demand that the automatic cuts of sequestration exempt the Department of Defense at least while our nation is still at war with terrorists around the world.

At the conclusion of the hearing the Maine delegates met one-to-one with all four Maine Congressional members to urge them to support Commander Helm’s testimony and to help establish more shelters for homeless vets in Maine.
Legionnaire Insurance Trust

Your valued status as a Legionnaire entitles you to LegionCare, up to $5,000 in NO COST benefits. But confirmation is required for full activation. $5,000 NO COST To You Accidental Death Protection if traveling on official American Legion business. $1,000 Accident Protection for all covered accidents. There are no strings attached and you pay nothing for this benefit. Legionnaires can sign up for the "No Cost" protection if traveling on official American Legion business.

AD&D by visiting www.theLIT.com/no-cost-legioncare or by calling the toll free number 1-800-235-6943. For more information please contact The American Legion, Department of Maine's LIT chairman Ramona Naragon at (207) 407-1019 or via email at mainelitdirector@gmail.com. Also, if you provide your DOB when calling Mona, she will help you to enroll into this No Cost Program.

College Legion Posts

A New Trend Sweeping Across the Nation

Concordia University is the first Wisconsin college to open an American Legion post

Mequon — A new American Legion post opened on the Concordia University of Wisconsin campus on April 1.

Concordia has never offered a veterans organization on campus, but that changed with the opening of American Legion Post 1881, which is named after the year the university was founded. American Legion Post 1881 consists of 36 military veterans who are either students, alumni or faculty at the university.

Concordia's veterans outreach efforts started in February with the promotion of academic support coordinator Eduardo Garza, a U.S. Navy veteran, to the newly-created position of director of veteran services. Garza leads the university's new Veterans Services Office, which will help guide and support veterans interested in pursuing higher education.

Garza said he chose to partner with the American Legion because of the programs, resources, advocacy and national network that it offers to its membership.

"We felt by partnering with the American Legion, which is the largest veterans organization, that we would be able to access all of the things they offer," Garza said. "We want to create some comradery among veterans and be a part of the community."

While Concordia will gain access to the Legion's resources and community connections, the American Legion is also benefiting by engaging with younger veterans. Wisconsin American Legion Commander Bob Shappell said there are less than 20 university Legion posts across the country, and when he became state commander last fall, he set a goal to partner with a university.

Shappell said he is working with three other Wisconsin colleges to create more community connections with the Legion. He said the resources and community connections that the Legion offers are valuable for younger veterans.

"It's a great way for these young veterans to get involved in the community and get their faces out there," Shappell said. "They have the support of their peers in college, but the Legion gives them the ability to go further than that. If they take advantage of those opportunities, they will become dedicated Legionnaires in the future."

The Wisconsin chapter of the American Legion is poised for growth again this year. By attracting younger veterans in colleges, Shappell believes the Legion will continue to be strong and relevant to younger veterans in the future.

"It's a different world than it was in 1960, when I was growing up with my dad and going to the Legion post, but certainly we are relevant to today's younger veterans when they find out what we are all about," Shappell said.


By Jeff Rumage April 6, 2015

Photo by Jeffrey Phelps

Newly-Established Legion Post: Military veterans, university leaders and local dignitaries attended a dedication ceremony for the newly-established American Legion Post 1881 at Concordia University of Wisconsin on April 1.

USAA Financial

USAA is The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Offering a range of top-rated financial and insurance products and services. USAA welcomes honorably discharged U.S. military veterans, active-duty troops and qualified family members and descend-ants of those who have served. USAA contributes funds to American Legion programs when members join through a dedicated channel: usaa.com/legion or by calling toll-free at 1-877-699-2654. —http://www.legion.org/usaa

Show your Support with The American Legion

USAA Rewards World MasterCard

This card lets members show their support for The American Legion. Your involvement helps The American Legion promote national security, mentor youth, advocate for American values and patriotism, sponsor youth programs and continue our commitment to serving our military members and veterans.

Each time you make an eligible purchase, USAA Bank will make a contribution to American Legion programs.

Your support helps The American Legion stand behind the issues and people that institute progress by focusing on veterans' rights and quality of life.

The American Legion USAA Rewards World MasterCard offer includes:

- Enjoy 0% introductory APR for 12 months on balance transfers and convenience checks that post to your account within the first three months following account opening. After 12 months, your Regular APR, currently between 10.90% to 25.90%, will apply to these introductory balances and any new transactions. Each balance transfer and convenience check has a transaction fee of up to 3%.
- Your Regular APR as low as 19.90% will also apply to your purchases and cash advances immediately upon ac-
- Get 2,500 Bonus Points after your first purchase.
- Redeem your USAA Rewards™ points for cash, gift cards or travel discounts.
- No annual fee or membership fee.
- With USAA Rewards:
- Redeem your rewards points anytime on usaa.com or from your mobile phone — with no redemption fee.
- Enjoy no cap or expiration date on points.
- Redeem your points for cash on mobile device that can be applied to your checking, savings or credit card account.
- Redeem your points on usaa.com for travel, gift cards, cash or merchandise.
- To apply for The American Legion USAA Rewards World MasterCard, please visit: https://www.usaa.com/inet/pages/bank_credit_cards_military_affinity_deeplink?adid=aff_tal_bnk_ec_web&affsid=010&cardTy=ALL

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE TODAY:
PLEASE VISIT WWW.LEGION.ORG/RENEW

Did you renew your membership online and lost or forgot to print your Temporary Membership Card? If so, please follow these instructions:

1. Go to http://www.legion.org/renew
2. Click on I've already renewed online and need to reprint my temporary membership card.
3. Enter your 9-digit Member ID#
4. Enter your Last Name and press “Continue”

Please note: Only current paid members of The American Legion can print their membership card from this page.
Candidate for National Commander Dale Barnett and Past National Commander Robert Turner Visit Maine American Legion

American Legion Maine State HQ

Maine State HQ: Department Adjutant Paul L’Heureux explains about the various improvements made to the Department State HQ facility since the move in January 2014 before proceeding on with the tour April 3. Left to right, Department Commander Richard Graves, candidate for National Commander Dale Barnett, and Department Adjutant Paul L’Heureux.

Fitzgerald-Cummings Post 2, Augusta

Pizza Social: Post 2 Augusta hosted a pizza social for incoming National Commander Candidate Dale Barnett and Past National Commander Bob Turner at the Post home on April 3. It was a full house to greet and meet the distinguished guests who showed their appreciation by singing a trio karaoke number with Department of Maine DSO Deo Lauria. Commander Turner even performed an Irish jig prior to the dignitaries’ departure. Also in attendance were NEC John Hargreaves, Department First Vice Commander Ron Rainfrette, Department Adjutant Paul L’Heureux and his wife Audrey, Post 2 Past Commander Tilden Doak, Post 2 Commander Pat Eisenhart, National Commander Candidate Dale Barnett, and Past National Commander Robert Turner.

Department Service Office

Lunch and Tour of the DSO: Incoming National Commander Dale Barnett, seated, listens while DSO Lauria talks about the many new happening and increased productivity at the Department Service Office. Incoming National Commander Dale Barnett and Past National Commander Robert Turner, along with State Officers visited the Department Service Office located at the Togus VA facility in Augusta, April 3, for lunch and a tour of the facility.

William J. Rogers Post 153, Auburn

Auburn Post 153 Commander Dan St. Pierre, left, greets the Leading Candidate for National Commander Dale Barnett at the William J. Rogers Post 153 on April 4 for coffee and donuts.

Greetings: Candidate for National Commander Dale Barnett gives greetings to Topsham Post 202 officers, members and guests on April 4, at the 50th Anniversary and Rededication Ceremony held in honor of Corey Edwin Garver, a fallen hero who died June 23, 2013 in Zormat, Afghanistan. Department Commander Richard Graves presented Post 202 Commander Nick Hamlin with the new charter renamed the Corey Edwin Garver Post 202, Topsham.


Boy Scouts Provide the Post Colors: Candidate for National Commander Dale Barnett offers a few good words to the Boy Scout Troop No. 202 members at the 50th Anniversary and Rededication Ceremony. The scouts performed the ceremony for the opening and closing of the Post Colors.

Corey Edwin Garver Post 202 Gathering: A large gathering took place at the Corey Edwin Garver Post 202 in Topsham on April 4, for the 50th Anniversary and Rededication Ceremony. Some of those in attendance are pictured here in celebration for this special event.

COREY EDWIN GARVER

Sgt. Corey E. Garver, age 26, of Topsham, Maine, died on June 23, 2013, in Zormat, Afghanistan, of wounds sustained when enemy forces attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

Corey attended Mt. Ararat High School from 2004-2006. He joined the Army in June of 2007. Corey's father was a career Navy sailor and Corey wanted to follow his footsteps into the military. Friends stated that Corey loved the military and was proud of serving his country. Others describe him as popular with an outgoing personality.

Corey had earned several awards for valor and distinguished service, including two Army commendation medals, the Army Achievement medal, two Army Good Conduct medals, the National Defense Service Medal, two Afghanistan Campaign medals, and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King stated: “He was a true American hero who valiantly dedicated himself to the defense of our country. His actions on the battlefield demonstrated the highest caliber of leadership and courage and we owe him our enduring gratitude.”

Corey is survived by many loving friends and relatives including his mother, Ellen Garver; and his father, Zachary Garver.

Thank you for your service and ultimate sacrifice, Corey.
THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MAINE

OFFICIAL CALL

FOR

NINETY-SEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MAINE

2015 Resolutions Index

Resolution 1 Training and Education (21st Century)
RESOLVED, By the American Legion, Department of Maine, that the Ninety-Seventh Annual Convention be held in Bangor, Maine, June 19-21, 2015, that Article IV Sub Section (a) item (4) of the Constitution and By-laws be amended to read "All current and future Department Officers, Area Commanders and District Commanders will within (45) days following the adjournment of the Ninety-Seventh Annual Department Convention, take the American Legion Extension Institute Course" and successfully complete and graduate from the said course. Previous graduates of the course upon providing valid confirmation would be exempted.

Submitted by Richard L. Graves, Sr., Department Commander

Resolution 2 Change in National Oratorical Contest Format
RESOLVED, By the American Legion, Department of Maine Convention assem-
bled in Bangor, Maine, June 19-21, 2015, that it urge the National Organization of the American Legion to change the aforementioned format of the National Oratorical contest to include the First and Second Place winners of the Quarter final contests to advance to the Semi-final contest which would consist of three contests of six contestants each, and the First Place winners of these contests would advance onto the National finals contest, and be it finally RESOLVED, that if adopted, this resolution be forwarded to the National Organization in Convention assembled September 1-3, 2015, in Baltimore, Maryland, for their consideration and action.

Submitted by Donald D. Chase, Jr., Department Oratorical Chairman

Resolution 3 Subject Hiring of Assistant Department Service Officers
RESOLVED, By the American Legion, Department of Maine Convention assembled in Bangor, Maine, June 19-21, 2015, that the VA&R Committee and the Department Service Officers be recommended to the Department Finance Committee for the inclusion of the above mentioned positions in the budget for the coming year.

Submitted by Paul L’Heureux, Richard Graves, Department Commander
THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MAINE
97th Annual State Convention Program
June 19-21, 2015
Cross Insurance Center
TENTATIVE AGENDA

Friday, June 19, 2015

Resolutions Committee (9 a.m.)
Cross Insurance Center, Bangor – Open
John Hargreaves, Chairman

First Session
Friday, June 19, 2015

Call to Order (12:00 p.m. noon)
Opening Ceremony
Presentation of colors
Invocation
Pledge of Allegiance
POW/MIA Table for One
Preamble
Report of the Committee on Permanent Rules and Organization
Welcome
Greetings
NEC Report
Greetings
Post Excellence Award (Report)
Legion Baseball
Maine Blind Camp Update
History Awards
Togus
Introduction of Past Commanders
& Past Legionnaires of the Year
Legionnaire of the Year Award
Greetings
Department Finance Update
Convention Site Report
Nomination of Dept. Officers
Announcements
3:20 p.m. Recess
3:30 p.m. Past Dept. Cmdrs.
Club Meeting
5:00 p.m. Past Dept. Cmdr.
Club Dinner

Second Session
Saturday, June 20, 2015

Dept. Commander, Richard Graves
Dept. Sgt.-at-Arms, Patricia Thurston
Director, Kaye Bouchard
U.S. Congresswoman, Hon.
Chellie Pingree
Maine Acting Adj. Gen., Gerard Bolduc
U.S. Rep., Hon. Bruce Poliquin

Second Session continued:
Saturday, June 20, 2015

Law/Firefighter/Game Warden/EMT/
Paramedic
Humanitarian Award
Oratorical Winner of Maine
Legionnaire Insurance Trust
Maine Veterans Homes
Service Office Update
USAA

Law & Order Chairman, Kirk Thurston
Chairman, Edward Rouch, Jr.
Chairman, Donald Chase
Chairman, Ramona Naragon
CEO, Kelley Kashi
Dept. Service Officer, Amedeo Lauria
Lead Account Manager/Military Affinity
Management Robert Warren
Chairman, John Hargreaves
Dept. Americanism Officer, Kirk
Thurston & Dept. Cmdr., Richard Graves
Chairman, Brenda Dearborn
Dept. Commander, Richard Graves
Maeghan Maloney
Board Member/U.S. Navy Retired,
Joy Asuncion

Americanism Awards

DSO Award
VAVS Awards
Children & Youth Scholarship
Daniel E. Lambert Scholarships
Maine Special Olympics Awards

Boys State
Greetings
Past Post Commander’s Club

Public Relations Update
4th Estate Awards
Roger’s Rangers & Tony’s Tigers Awards

Legislative Update/Awards
Membership Awards

Awards
Greetings
Report of Committee on Resolutions
Greetings
Honors for Outgoing Dept. Commander
Response
Report of Credentials Committee
Drawing for Sweepstakes Raffle
Memorial Service – Post Everlasting
Announcements
Benediction
Retirement of Colors
Adjournment (Sine Die)

7 p.m. Installation of Legion, Aux., SAL

Sunday, June 21, 2015
Cross Insurance Center

8:00 a.m. Department Executive Committee
Cross Insurance Center, Bangor
RESOLUTIONS
Continued from Page 18

to authorize the Department Adjutant to hire, with prior authorization of the Finance Committee (FC) and approval of the Department Executive Committee (DEC) a half-time position to assist in the handling of the workload. This resolution, if approved, would take effect in fiscal year 2015-2016.

Submitted by Amedeo Lauria, Department Service Officer

Resolution 4 Expansion of Periods of War Service for Veterans Benefits

RESOLVED, By The American Legion, Department of Maine Convention assembled in Bangor, Maine, June 19-21, 2015, that The American Legion urge the U.S. Congress to enact, to approve, a Veterans Benefit Act to expand the eligibility for “Periods of War” currently as defined by Title 38 USC 101-Definitions. Subparagraph (11) states, “The term “period of war” means the Spanish-American War, the Mexican border period, World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict, the Vietnam era, the Persian Gulf War, and the period beginning on the date of any future declaration of war by the Congress and ending on the date prescribed by Presidential proclamation or concurrent resolution of the Congress.”

RESOLVED, that eligibility “Periods of War” be expanded to all service members who were awarded the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (all services); Combat Infantry Badge, Combat Medical Badge, Combat Action Badge (Army); Combat Action Ribbon (Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard); or were Missing In Action and served in combat in Beirut, Lebanon from August 25, 1982 to February 26, 1984; or Grenada from October 25, 1983 to November 21, 1983 in operation Urgent Fury; or Operation Just Cause in Panama from December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990.

Submitted by American Legion Post 41

Resolution 5 Public Relations Committee

RESOLVED, By The American Legion, Department of Maine Convention assembled in Bangor, Maine, June 19-21, 2015, that Article XII of the Constitution be amended to delete the words “from each of the seven (7) Areas, one (1) member to serve for a period of one year,” be it further RESOLVED, the following words be inserted to replace the above words: “a minimum of five members from throughout the Department of Maine American Legion and such advisors as the Committee Chairman and Department Commander may deem necessary to serve for a period of one (1) years.” Therefore be it finally RESOLVED, that this amendment be effective as of the close of the 97th Annual Department of Maine Convention, June 20, 2015.

Submitted by Task Force for the Future Committee

Resolution 6 Area Commanders

RESOLVED, By The American Legion, Department of Maine Convention assembled in Bangor, Maine, June 19-21, 2015, that the Department of Maine’s Constitution and By-laws be amended to eliminate all reference to the position of Area Commanders from within the Department of Maine’s structure, effected at the end of the Department of Maine’s 98th Annual Convention assembled at Bangor, Maine, June 18-20, 2016.

Submitted by Task Force for the Future Committee

Resolution 7 Recognize Arctic Importance for National Security and Economics

RESOLVED, By The American Legion District 11 Meeting assembled in Unity, Maine, April 19, 2015, that The American Legion recognize the increasing strategic and economic importance of the Arctic for National security; and it be further RESOLVED, to bring the Resolution before the Ninety-Seventh Department of Maine State Convention of The American Legion assembled in Bangor, Maine, June 19-21, 2015; and, be it finally RESOLVED, to bring the Resolution before the Ninety-Seventh National Convention of The American Legion assembled in Baltimore, Maryland, August 28-31, September 1-3, 2015.

Submitted by District 11, Waldo County, Maine
**Sanford Post 19**  
Sanford Post 19 for their donation of $300 to the Sanford, ME Firefighters Association, $200 to WABAN camp, $300 to Four Chaplains Scholarship Run, $300 to Camp Campbell, $200 to Maine Children's Cancer Derby, $200 to Trafton Senior Center, $100 to the DAV and $100 to Cancer Walk Post 19 participant.

**Camden Post 30**  
Congratulations to Camden Post 30 Historian Jeffrey Sukeworth for successfully completing the required training and passing the final exam of The American Legion Extension Institute Course.

**Old Orchard Beach Post 57**  
Old Orchard Beach for their donation of $250 to Special Olympics, $290 for Legion Extension Institute Course.

**District 14**  
Thanks to Ray Tucker, Edward Lupien, and Charles Carr.

**Have You Asked a Veteran**  
TO JOIN Today?  
Help us increase membership for 2015!

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**The American Legion Extension Institute (ALEI)**

The American Legion's official training program can now be taken electronically. Please visit www.legion.org/alei. To take this online class, please login using your legion.org username and password, if you have one. If you do not have a legion.org username and password, please click on the Register button to sign up and get started.

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**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 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 section 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.

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**2015 Maine American Legion Baseball State Tournament**  
Wednesday, July 29 – Sunday, Aug. 2  
Wainwright Fields, So. Portland, Maine

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<th>DATE</th>
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<th>TEAMS</th>
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<td>Z3W vs Z4RU</td>
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<td>Game 2</td>
<td>Z1W vs Z2RU</td>
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<td>Game 3</td>
<td>Z3RU vs Z4W</td>
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<td>Game 4</td>
<td>Z1RU vs Z2W</td>
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<td>Thur. July 30</td>
<td>Game 5</td>
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<td>Game 6</td>
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<td>Game 11</td>
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<td>Game 12</td>
<td>Loser G11 vs Winner G9</td>
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<td>Game 13</td>
<td>Winner G11 vs Winner G10</td>
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<td>Sun. Aug. 2</td>
<td>Game 14</td>
<td>Winner G12 vs Winner G13</td>
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<td>Game 15</td>
<td>Winner G12 vs Winner G13 (if necessary)</td>
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Regional — Bristol, CT — August 4-9  
World Series — Shelby, NC — August 13-17  

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**Fort Pepperell Post CN09:** St. John's Post CN09 members at the Post's December meeting. Left to right, Bernard Agriesti, Raymond Reiser, Harlow Snippen, Millard Starr, George Walter, Ray Tucker, Edward Lupien, and Charles Carr.
State House Activities

American Legion Day: Aaron Chadborne, Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Paul LePage, and Representative Jared Golden (D-Lewiston) present the Governor's Proclamation, celebrating The American Legion's birthday, to Dept. Service Officer Amedeo Lauria at the Statehouse on March 18. Left to right, Winthrop Post 40 Adjutant Donald Chase, Auxiliary member Donna Chase, Honorable Jared Golden, Senior Policy Advisor Aaron Chadborne, Department Service Officer Amedeo Lauria, DSO Administrative Assistant Eileen Krawczyk, and Department Legislative Committee member and PR Chairman Patrick Eisenhart.

WHEREAS, the American Legion was organized at the Paris Convention on March 15, 1919 and chartered by Congress in 1919 on September 16th as a wartime veterans organization based on the four pillars of Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the American Legion has become a prominent community-service organization which now numbers more than 2.5 million members in over 14,000 American Legion posts worldwide with over 20,000 members and 174 posts in the State of Maine working a variety of programs that serve veterans, youth, the community, and the defense of our nation; and

WHEREAS, the members of the American Legion are dedicated to upholding the ideals of freedom and democracy, while working to make a difference in the lives of fellow Americans; and

WHEREAS, the 2015 observance of American Legion Day provides an opportunity to recognize Legionnaires in our community for their many contributions to the State of Maine.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, PAUL R. LEPAGE, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby recognize March 15, 2015 as AMERICAN LEGION DAY

throughout the State of Maine, and urge all citizens to recognize this observance.

Winning... with Teamwork

Support: Department Adjutant Paul L’Heureux, left, and Boothbay Harbor Post 36 member David Patch, a retired U.S. Navy Commander and American Legion Department of Maine Legislative Committee member, are pictured here at the Statehouse in support of Governor Paul LePage’s budget proposal to eliminate military retirement pay from State of Maine Income Tax on Tuesday, March 3. Mr. Patch spoke regarding his personal experience and why this needs to be passed in the budget.

Maine Legionnaires rally in support of the Governor’s budget proposal to eliminate military retirement from State of Maine Income Tax. After a briefing to the Governor presented by Dept. Officers and Legionnaire/State Rep. Mickey Devlin, over 60 Maine Legionnaires and legislators rallied at the Statehouse on March 3 in support of the budget proposal. Auburn Post 153 member Wilfred Danforth, left, Department Commander Richard Graves, and Maine Bureau of Veterans Services Director Peter Ogden are pictured here discussing the proposal.


Promotion: Department Adjutant Paul L’Heureux, right, and Major Paul Bosse in attendance for the promotion of Colonel Michael J. Bouchard to Brigadier General and Assistant Adjutant General of the State of Maine. Both Paul’s are Legion members of the William J. Rogers Post 153 in Auburn.

Department Adjutant Paul L’Heureux and Dept. Legislative Committee Chairman/Past National Vice Commander William “Chick” Cicotte, left, in Augusta for the promotion of Colonel Michael J. Bouchard.
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 1

Falling in Love with a Classic

She was a real beauty, despite her age. She had it all: grace, bearing, and class. She could really attract a crowd, with her blush-colored skin and naughty fender skirts. She was everything he wanted and much more. Although she was 64 when they first met, you could see where she had been a standout back in the day. She was everything he wanted and much more! It truly was one of those “match made in heaven moments” and so he brought her home to meet his wife.

She is a snazzy 1951 Chevrolet Belaire Convertible and he is Berwick’s own Barry Stevens, a man who knows a great car when he sees one. When it comes to cars, Barry has been “in the know” since he was 14 years old. He practically “grew up in the business,” working his way up through the years to his present position as the owner/manager of the North Berwick Auto Center, which he, along with his son Josh, established in 1998. Barry and his nine-person staff, many of whom have worked for him for 10 to 15 years, have established a sterling reputation in the local community for unparalleled car sales and service.

Barry, you should know, is a United States Navy veteran, a Service Officer for Charles S. Hatch Post 79 and a keen businessman whose hobby is restoring classics. (Barry’s wife, Andrea, does not seem to mind her husband’s infatuation, given the two of them have been a team for 40 years.) The 2nd current “love of his life” is a convertible with a nosed hood, frenched headlights, shaved door handles, and a decked trunk. Although she once had a roof, she was lovingly customized to be a permanent convertible. She will be on display, along with dozens of other classic cars, trucks, motorcycles, and other custom rides at the Berwick Car Show in Sullivan Square on Sunday, June 7, from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM (the rain date is June 14).

Mark your calendars now, so you don’t miss this great family event, hosted by Berwick Post 79 to benefit local area veterans. If you want to bring your own “classic” to compete for best in show, pre-registration forms are available at: North Berwick Auto Center, the Berwick, Maine town hall; Colony Used Auto Parts in Rochester, NH; Tri-City Dodge in Somersworth, NH; or from the Charles S. Hatch Post 79 website (www.berwickmelegionpost79.org).

By Rosanne Martin, Berwick Post 79 Public Relations Officer

“Stand and Deliver”: District 1 Commander Steve White presents copies of Dale Carnegie’s “Stand and Deliver” the holy grail of “Public Speaking” to Oratorical contestants Mitchell Thayer, right, and Joshua Maloney, left, at Sanford Post 19 on Jan. 25. Commander White presented both contestants with new copies of Dale Carnegie’s “Stand and Deliver” to help the students hone their communication skills.

Correction from February 2015 Issue—Pg. 23

Korean War Veterans Luncheon: Maine Bureau of Veterans’ Services Director Peter Ogden, right, and Post 19 Commander Gary Metzger, left, presents Sanford Post 19 member Robert Bailey with a certificate and Korean War book at the Korean War Veterans Luncheon held Oct. 26 at Sanford

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 2

Roll Call:

Westbrook Post 62 held an important Annual Veterans’ Residents Roll Call at Gorham House and Conco Wood on Nov. 11, 2014. Post 62 Commander Philip LeClerc read the names of the veteran residents and all other post members for their service to country. Left to right, Don Abbott, Post 62 Sgt.-at-Arms/Historian Frank Burila, Post 62 Commander Philip LeClerc, Claudette Judkins, and Post 62 member Leo Conley.

Photo by Kasey Gammon Bowie

Lake Region High School Honoring Veteran’s Day Events

Flag Etiquette: Naples Post 155/District 2 Commander Curtis Merrill speaks on flag etiquette.

Final Folds: Naples Post 155 member Everett Kinser, left, and Post 155 First Vice Commander William “Bill” Shane secure the final folds of the American flag.

Proper Way to Fold: Naples Post 155 Legionnaires show the proper way to fold the American flag. Left to right, Post 155 member Everett Kinser, Post 155/District 2 Commander Curtis Merrill, and Post 155 First Vice Commander William “Bill” Shane.
NAPLES — The American Legion Post No. 155 Commander Curtis Merrill knows that it takes many hands to pull off any community service project.

On Tuesday evening, the Legion recognized three local businesses that not only keep the economic engine running in this region, but also do not pause when it comes to helping out the community.

“These are small businesses that people don’t know how much they do to help the community. Every time, I knock on their doors, they are there to help. God love them,” Merrill said.

The three local businesses, which received the awards, are the Umbrella Factory Supermarket owned by David Allenson, P&K Sand and Gravel owned by Bruce Plummer, and Hancock Lumber, the sixth-generation family business now operated by Kevin Hancock.

“I’m honored. It’s great,” Hancock said.

“It was fun to come here tonight, and see everything that is going on. The Legion is such a vibrant presence in the community,” he said.

“Some people just drive by here and don’t realize everything that the Legion does for their community, or all it does for the veterans. It is just amazing,” he said.

Hancock Lumber became a business in 1848 when it constructed a modest mill. Currently, the locally-owned business has retail lumberyards in Maine and New Hampshire, a sawmill division in Casco, and a land company, according to the Hancock Lumber website.

The president of P&K, Plummer said, “it’s great” to have the 44-year-old business recognized, especially by the local American Legion.

“The Legion does so much. People don’t always know that,” he said.

“Anything these guys ask for, I am willing to help,” Plummer said.

The Umbrella Factory Supermarket is a staple in the lives of most area residents. When Merrill introduced Allenson, he mentioned reduced prices for the meat given away to winners of the twice-monthly “meat roll” at the Legion, as well as other donations of food for gatherings such as the Veterans Day Breakfast in Casco.

“He is always helping the community. It’s not just him, but all of his employees are helpful,” he said. In fact, the Umbrella Factory’s webpage has a space for people to post community events. In addition to lending a hand to community events when asked, Allenson is very busy, said Merrill.

“You people don’t realize this. But, he is in the store at 3 a.m.,” Merrill said.

By Dawn De Busk, Staff Writer, The Bridgton News

P&K Sand and Gravel, Inc. President Bruce Plummer holds the small business award that the company received from Naples Post 155 during a recognition banquet held at Post home. Post 155 First Vice Commander William “Bill” Shane, left, looks on.

Photo by Dawn De Busk

Hancock Lumber. Kevin Hancock, left, receives a small business award from Naples Post 155 First Vice Commander William “Bill” Shane Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2014, during a recognition banquet held at the Post home.

Photo by Dawn De Busk

Hand Shakes for Small Business Award: David Allenson, left, owner of the Umbrella Factory Supermarket, formerly known as Tony’s Foodland, shakes the hands of Naples Post 155 First Vice Commander Curtis Merrill, right, after receiving a small business award.

Photo by Dawn De Busk

WHAT’S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 4

“A Korea Reborn” Books Presented:
Department Commander Richard Graves and Department First Vice Commander Ronald Raintrette present Legionnaires with the special

“Korea Reborn” books at the District 4 meeting held at the Farmington Post 28 home on March 22. These special books are being presented at all District meetings. Left to right, Wilton Post 117 Commander Clifton Thompson, Post 117 member Raymond Wiers, Department First Vice Commander Ronald Raintrette, Post 28 Finance Officer/Membership Chairman Charles Hartwell, and Department Commander Richard Graves. Please call Department Headquarters if you have any questions on future presentations at 207-873-3229.
District 5

“Korea Reborn”: Department Adjutant Paul L’Heureux, right, presents Locke Mills Post 68 member Richard Melville, center, with a “Korea Reborn” book during the Post meeting held March 19. Pictured to the left is Locke Mills Post 68 First Vice Commander Raymond Hakala.

Locke Mills Post 68 Finance Officer Kenneth Hoyt, left, is presented with a “Korea Reborn” book from Department Adjutant Paul L’Heureux, during the Post meeting held March 19 at the Post home.

Oxford Post 112 members were presented with certificates of continuous service to The American Legion during the Post’s March meeting. Left to right (front row): Post 112 Adjutant Debra Lyons, 15 years of service; Harlan Wyman, 10 years of service; Post 112 Commander Edward Lyons, 20 years of service; (back row) Robert Tripp, 40 years of service; Post 112 Vice Commander Randall Jack (partially hidden), 5 years of service; Edward Young, 5 years of service; and Post 112 Chaplain Philip Perkins, 35 years of service. Missing from the photo is Daniel Witham, 5 years of service.

Great Success: Bethel Post 81 and Locke Mills Post 68 hosted the “Veterans No Boundaries” dinner on Jan. 31. The two Posts provided all of the food and staff to prepare, serve and clean up. The event was a great success. Pictured are all of the Veterans and volunteers.

“Veterans No Boundaries” Bethel Post 81 and Locke Mills Post 68 members who helped with the “Veterans No Boundaries” dinner on Jan. 31. Left to right (front row), Auxiliary Past Department President Jeri Greenwell, Nancy Gionet, Bertha Walker, Carol Everett, Anita Hakala, Unit 81 Auxiliary Secretary Mona Grover, Unit 68 Auxiliary President Jamie Hastings, Unit 68 Auxiliary Secretary Sue Vacca, Post 68 Service Officer Delwin Wilson, and Post 68/District 5 Commander Wayne Hakala. Left to right (back row), Post 81 Commander Bob Everett, Sylvia Clanton, Post 81 member Bob McCartney, Post 81 member Norm Clanton, Post 81 Adjutant/Service Officer Richard Grover, Carolyn Gifford, and Post 68 Adjutant Harry Orcutt.

Oath of Office: Brian O’Donnell, right, receives the oath of office as Commander of Sons of The American Legion Oxford Squadron 112 from Detachment Assistant Adjutant Bruce Pierce during the Squadron’s March meeting. Commander Brian O’Donnell is the son of the late James J. O’Donnell, who served in the US Army Airborne Division during World War II as an Ariel gunner with the Flying Fortress stationed in the Allusion Islands, Alaska. “My Dad was very proud of his service to the country in WWII, I am proud of his service to our country, and I am pleased that I have the opportunity to be a member of the Sons of the American Legion to honor his memory!” said Commander O’Donnell. Brian is an Oxford resident, the Vice President of Building Solutions for over 25 years, and a past code enforcement officer. “We are looking forward to working with Brian” said Oxford Post 112 Commander Ed Lyons. “Brian has strong ties to the community, excellent leadership skills, and will be a great asset to the American Legion Family.”
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 6

Camden Post 30
Commander Rosendel “Rosey” Gerry, left, receives 100% Membership Renewal Certificate from District 6 Commander Raymond Lewis, center, and First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette on March 2, at the Camden Post 30 meeting.

St. George Post Receives 100% Membership: Department First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette presents 100% Membership certificate to St. George Post 34 on March 18 at the Post home. Left to right, Auxiliary Unit 34 Secretary/Treasurer Beverly Emerson, Auxiliary Unit 34 Vice President Loa Blake, Auxiliary Unit 34 President Patricia Jarrett, and Post 34 Commander Stephen Jarrett, Sr.

Check Received: St. George Auxiliary Unit 34 President Patricia Jarrett presents The American Legion St. George Post 34 Commander Stephen Jarrett, Sr. with a check from Auxiliary on March 8 at the Post home. Left to right, Auxiliary Unit 34 Commander Gregory Peet, Department First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette, Post 34 Commander Stephen Jarrett, Sr., and NEC John Hargreaves.

Union Post 110
Commander Bob Hall, left, receives 100% Membership Renewal Certificate from District 6 Commander Raymond Lewis, center, and First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette on March 2.

District 7

Quilts of Valor Foundation: Damariscotta Post 42 hosted the Quilts of Valor Foundation as they presented 18 “Quilts of Valor” on Sunday, April 19. The packed hall was standing room only as family and friends joined in thanking military veterans for their service to the nation. Pictured here are the honorees who were present.

Damariscotta Post 42 Past Commander Gerald Miller receives the quilt “Anchors Aweigh” at the Post 42 Quilts of Valor Foundation presentation on Sunday, April 19. Miller served as an Engine- man First Class Petty Officer with the US Navy in Saigon from 1972 – 1973.

Augusta Post 2 Oratorical Contest: A cash prize and certificate of achievement was presented to Ross Poulin as the Augusta Post 2 Representative in the State Oratorical Contest. Left to right, District 9 Finance Officer Dana Parker, District 9 Commander Patrick Eisenhart, District 9 Americanism Officer Bill Chistopoulos, District 9 Second Vice Commander Normand Bernier, Winslow High School senior Ross Poulin, Post 2 Commander Tilden Doak, Sons of the American Legion Officer Steve Arsenault, and Post 2 Past Commander Al Dowling.
District 9 Oratorical Contest: Augusta Post 2 Oratorical Contestant Ross Poulin presents his speech at the District 9 Feb. 11 meeting. Poulin is a senior at Window High School and was nominated by both Senator Pingree and Senator King for appointment to West Point. He is a member of both the National Honor Society and the Varsity Boys’ Hockey team, and also holds a black belt in karate. He was presented with scholarship money, a certificate of achievement, and an American Legion medal for excellence by Department First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette, District 9 Commander Patrick Eisenhart, District 9 Americanism Officer Bill Christopoulos, and Post 2 Legionnaire Eileen Krawczyk. Ross placed 4th at the State Oratorical Contest that was held at Thomas College on Feb. 14.

Augusta Post 2 Receives 100% Membership: Department First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette, center, presents Augusta Post 2 Commander Tilden Doak and Post 2 Adjutant Howard Betts with 100% Membership pins and certificates.

Augusta Post 2 Installation: NEC John Har- greaves and Department First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette installed a new batch of officers at Augusta Post 2 on April 26. Newly-elected Post 2 Commander Pat Eisenhart outlined his immediate goals for the upcoming year. He cited May as a month to initiate good internal financial controls to support an annual list of program events. He then challenged the Post to achieve 115% 2016 membership goal, to conduct ongoing training, and to initiate all new members in accordance with the Post Officers Guide and Manual of Ceremonies. Left to right, Post 2 Adjutant Howard Betts, Post 2 Commander Pat Eisenhart, Post 2 Sgt.-at-Arms Eileen Krawczyk, Post 2 Finance Officer Henry Breton, Post 2 First Vice Commander Mike Hein, and Post 2 Second Vice Commander Jim Palmer.

Monmouth Post 204 members hosted a Community Supper at the Packard Center in Monmouth on April 12. There was a good turnout with plenty of food, and was enjoyed by all who attended.

District 10

Madison Sea Cadet Unit’s Annual Inspection

Madison – On Sunday morning March 8, NCB39 Battalion, US Naval Sea Cadet Corps (NSCC), passed their annual inspection with one of the best scores that the unit has ever received. The inspection, held at the Madison American Legion Hall, started with the cadets in a military formation followed by a presentation of the colors by the unit’s color guard. LCDR Holly Forbes, NSCC, Director New England Region 1-5, then accomplished the open-ranks portion of the inspection.

Once this portion of the unit’s inspection was completed, LCDR Forbes called cadet recruits Dylan Massey and Kira Braley to front and center and swore them into the unit. She then called cadets Trevor Edes and Conner Fennell to front and center and promoted each of them to E-3. Ensign Margaret Demchak, NSCC, was then called to front and center and promoted to LtJG, NSCC. Petty Officer First Class (PO1) Riley K. Coleman, NSCC, was called to front and center. LCDR Forbes presented PO1 Coleman with her promotion to Chief Petty Officer (CPO), NSCC. CPO Coleman’s father was called from the audience and he, and LCDR Forbes, NSCC, “pinned” the new rank onto now CPO Riley Coleman’s Dress Uniform collars.

LCDR Forbes, NSCC, and Madison Post 39 Commander Mr. H. Ralph Withee each addressed the cadets and the audience. A formal closing ceremony followed. Inspection of the unit’s financial, training and advancement records was next followed by a formal luncheon.

The US Naval Sea Cadet Corps program is open to 11-17 year old males and females. Please visit their website: http://ncb39bn.sharepoint.com

Parading the Colors: The Color Guard parading the colors at the NCB39 Battalion, US Naval Sea Cadet Corps (NSCC), annual inspection at Madison Post 39 on March 8. Left to right, E-3 Conner Fennell, E-3 Trevor Edes, E-2 Zebediah Gagne, and E-3 Jonathan Jackson.
**District 10 continued**

Madison Sea Cadet Unit’s Annual Inspection: LCDR Holley Forbes addressing the audience at the NCB39 Battalion, US Naval Sea Cadet Corps (NSCC), annual inspection at Madison Post 39 on Mar. 8. Left to right’ LtJG Margaret Demchak, LCDR Holly Forbes, LtJG Valerie Coulombe, Major Robert E. Demchak, USAF (Ret), E-3 Jonathon Jackson, E-3 Trevor Edes, E-2 Zebediah Gagne, E-s Conner Fennell, and CPO Riley Coleman.

District 10

Installation of officers at the Madison Post 39 home on April 13. Left to right (front row), Adjutant Richard Robinson, Finance Officer Gary Bulger, Commander Leo Hines, Ralph White, (back row) Sgt.-at-Arms Michael Coyne, Chaplain Jeff Stearns, First Vice Commander/Historian Tina Richardson, and Second Vice Commander Brian Folsom. Missing from the photo is Americanism Officer Image Moore.

Check Donated to Special Olympics: Madison Post 39 Commander Ralph Withee, right, and Post Auxiliary President Robin Turek, left, presents a check of $1,000 for Special Olympics of Maine to Department Adjutant Paul L’Heureux.

**Care Packages:**

Madison Auxiliary Unit 39 sends “Thank You” care packages to active duty American Legion members. What better way to say “Thank You” to local active duty American Legion Members but with a care package camouflage zippered bag with “Thank You” embroidered on it from Thirty-One Gifts, filled with goodies? The Thirty-One bags were purchased through American Legion Auxiliary member Sharelyn Parker. The bags were filled with different items, such as toiletries and other fun stuff. They were mailed to the 10 members of Madison Post 39 who are currently serving on active duty in the military (stateside and abroad). We wish we could see their reactions when they open their packages! Left to right (Madison Unit 39 members who worked on the project), Harriet Bryant, Kathleen Randall, Lauraine Mercier, Robin Turek, Sandy Ingalls, Tena Ireland, and Pat Santoni.

Photo by John Bryant

**District 11**

**WWII Medals Awarded:** Stockton Springs Post 157 WWII Veteran Clarence Littlefield is presented the WWII Victory Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, and the WWII Honorable Service Lapel button by Department First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette at the Post Home on Mar. 10. Left to right, Department First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette, District 11 Commander Lance Weddell, Clarence Littlefield, Madeline Littlefield, and USAF Ret. Presiding Officer Colonel Lee Snyder.
**District 11 continued**

*Great Meeting:* District 11 meeting held at the Benjamin Berry Post 50, Unity on April 11. Left to right, Camden Post 30 Service Officer Cecil Dennison, Dept. NEC John Hargreaves, and Unity Post 50 Commander Lee Spaulding. Other Department Officers in attendance were Department First Vice Commander Ron Rainfrette, Department Finance Officer Tommy Adkins and Department Service Officer Amedeo Lauria. It was a great meeting in which Lee Snyder gave an interesting presentation on the resources in the Arctic Circle and DSO Lauria gave a presentation regarding VA Claims.

*Order:* District 11 Commander Lance Weddell gavels the meeting to order at Unity Post 50 on April 19.

**District 12**

Frank Z. Yager of Hancock died peacefully at home with his wife Jeane Yager by his side. Frank was a WWII U.S. Merchant Marine Veteran and survived several voyages on runs in the Atlantic and eventually most of the world. A decorated veteran who unselfishly gave back to the military veterans of Maine by leading the Trenton Post 207 Color Guard doing hundreds of military funerals by rendering final honors to veterans and their families. Frank could be found at the State Capitol advocating for diverse issues of importance to the military community.

Frank and his wife were both active and vigorous members of The American Legion and its Auxiliary. His legion service included Trenton Post 207 Commander, County Commander, and was appointed to several State and National committees. He was also a recent member of Ellsworth Post 63. Frank was a PUFL (Paid Up For Life) member and a true and loyal friend to all veterans.

By E. Jeff Barnes

**District 13**

*American Flag:* Joe Imbriaco, General Manager of the Cross Insurance Center, Bangor, left, is presented with an American flag by Hermon Post 200 Legionnaire Harry F. Rideout. This American flag was flown over the United States Capitol during President Ronald Reagan’s funeral and was given to Harry F. Rideout by former Congressman Mike Michaud. Harry presented this flag to Mr. Imbriaco to hang during the 2015 Basketball tournament held in February.

*District 13 Membership Discussion:* Department First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette discusses membership at the District 13 meeting that was held at Hermon Post 200 on Sunday, March 1. “Membership” was the common theme of the meeting. Left to right, District 13 Acting Chaplain Jean Neel, District 13 Commander John “Jack” Neel (standing), and District 13 Adjutant Donald Candage.
**District 13 continued**

**Guilford Post 119**

Commander Brian Knowlton, left, presents his father World War II Veteran LeRoy Knowlton with a certificate from The American Legion National headquarters for his 70 years of continuous membership in The American Legion on Sunday, April 19.

**Special Award Presented:**

Guilford Post 119 Commander Brian Knowlton, left, presents Piscataquis County Sheriff John Goggin with a Special Award for his Department’s outstanding support to the Post during parades and ceremonial events on Sunday, April 19.

![Image of award presentation](image1.jpg)

**District 14**

**Corinna Post 173**

recently held a Country Western Jam Session on March 6, and were well surprised at the turnout. According to the Legion Rider’s Director, Dave Bolstridge, it went very well and are planning for another future event.

**100% Membership Certificate:**

District 14 Commander John Neel, left, and Department Second Vice Commander Peter Johnson, center, present a 100% Membership Certificate to Lincoln Post 77 Commander Darrell Savage at the Post home.

![Image of certificate presentation](image2.jpg)

**District 15**

District 15 meeting was held at the Cherryfield Post 8 on March 8. Left to right, Department Commander Richard Graves, District 15 Service Officer Ralph Flood, Darlene Dowling, District 15 Commander Doug Dowling, District 15 Adjutant Charles Fritz, and Department First Vice Commander Ronald Rainfrette.

![Image of meeting](image3.jpg)

**District 17**

**Van Buren Post 49**

Commander Harold Lausier, right, and Delano Duplessis, left, alongside a 10’ handmade cedar strip kayak that was donated to Post 49 by Duplessis for a fundraising cause on Feb. 19. Tickets are currently on sale at $10.00 each with the drawing to be held at the last meeting in May of 2015.

![Image of kayak donation](image4.jpg)

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**MyLegion.Org**

**A Free Website**

MyLegion.org is a FREE website designed to connect members of The American Legion to their Post and Department leadership and includes a site at each level of the organization. For more information or to sign up now, please visit http://www.mylegion.org.
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**Boys and Girls State Fundraiser:** Augusta Post 2 Past Commander Al Dowling gives big hugs to Laura Benedict, owner of The Red Barn, on Tuesday, Feb. 17, for hosting a fundraiser for Post 2 Boys State and Unit 179 Auxiliary Girls State programs. Great fun and camaraderie was had by all. Volunteers for the event from left to right, South China Unit 179 Junior Auxiliary member Hayley Hinds, Augusta Post 2 Service Officer Jim Palmer, So. China Post 179 Legionnaire Howard Morang, Unit 179 Auxiliary President Dawn Spoden, Unit 179 Auxiliary member Mindy McKay, Unit 179 Junior Auxiliary member Jenna Magee, and Post 179 Commander Rick Fischer.

The 68th Annual American Legion Dirigo Boys State Program  
June 21-25, 2015  
Thomas College, Waterville, Maine

For more information, please contact The American Legion, Dirigo Boys State at 207-873-3229 or visit us online at www.mainelegion.org or www.dirigoboystate.org
Donate to Your Favorite Charity

As we grow closer to the Annual State Convention (only weeks away) please remember to donate to your favorite charity. Your donations are presented to the charitable organization at the state convention on behalf of all of you who have donated this year. There are a number of charities that you have given to, just to name a few: National Commanders Campaign, Maine Special Olympics, Maine Blind Camp; Homeless Vets; Beal House; National Emergency Fund; Wounded Warriors and many others.

To make your contribution just send your donation to the address below. Clearly indicate the organization the donation is to go to.

The American Legion
Department of Maine
P.O. Box 900
Waterville, Maine 04903-0900

Please Consider a Donation to the Department Building Fund!

On April 25, the Department of Maine held its Annual Departmental Budget meeting with the Department of Maine Executive Council. A balanced budget approved by the Department Finance Committee was presented at that time and was approved by the DEC. Part of that budget approval was the acceptance of the Task Force-for-the-Future recommendation (accepted and endorsed by the Department Finance Committee) to refurbish the old garage into a “Departmental Center for History and Professional Development.” This center when fully developed will house training facilities and sufficient space to hold large meetings up to 60-70 people.

Some funding was allocated in a capital budget, but it will not be nearly enough. As a result, the Department will be conducting a fund drive this year to assist in raising the money necessary to build out this much needed facility. Our goal is to raise $65,000 this year through our membership. Also, if you have special building skills to donate, please consider volunteering your skills as we move through the various cycles of our project.

To make a donation for this very important project, please make check payable to The American Legion, Dept. of Maine, and mark it for the “Building Fund.” Mail check to The American Legion, Dept. of Maine, P.O. Box 900, Waterville, Maine 04903-0900. If you have any questions about the building fund or making donations, please contact the Department Finance Officer at either 873.3229 or 469.2616.

As always—Thank you for all you’ve done and continue to do.

Tommy Adkins, Dept. Finance Officer

Attention: Next Deadline is July 10

The deadline for material, stories and/or pictures to be submitted for consideration for use in the July 2015 issue of The Maine Legionnaire will be July 10, 2015.

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 to 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
or via email at:
legionme@mainelegion.org.

Rededication Ceremony: State Commander Richard Graves, right, presents Topsham Post 202 Commander Nick Hamlin with the new Post Charter renaming the Topsham Memorial Post the Corey Edwin Garver Post 202 during the 50th Anniversary and Rededication Ceremony held April 4.

Photo by Ron Caron


Photo by Ron Caron