



The American Legion Department of Maine

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Weekly Update



May 18, 2007

**The success or failure of a rain
dance has a lot to do with timing.**

☺ **SMILE** ☺

Congratulations to the following for achieving 100% in membership:

Portland Post 168 Weld Post 203

Membership

What a year in membership! We have done some amazing things this year and are proudly in fourth place in the nation at this time and remain NUMBER ONE in the Northeast Region. You have done a superb job with membership my friends and are to be commended. Department Commander Don Simoneau could not be more proud of all the legionnaires in Maine for their efforts this year, not only in membership, but also for all the successes we have had with programs, community service, and particularly service to all veterans. He has had a big smile for most of the year and you have kept it there.

As well, National Vice Commander Lloyd Woods is proud of all the Departments in his Northeast Region (12 Departments) because this region is in first place in the nation. Lloyd is particularly proud of Maine, as we have led the region for almost the entire year and it appears we will continue in this fashion for the rest of his tenure.

We are a growing organization and we should all be proud of our accomplishments. As we head to the Department convention next month in Bangor we can know we have truly made a difference. From Fort Kent to Kittery; and from Bethel to Eastport and all of the 168 more posts in between, we have served our communities, the state, and the nation, just as our preamble urges us to do. Walk proudly my friends; we belong to an outstanding organization that does make a difference, The American Legion, Department of Maine.

Note: In this newsletter you will find the Delegate Strength Report, which shows the number of delegates and alternate delegates each post is allowed at the state convention as determined by the membership totals as of May 17, 2007.

**Message To America:
Respect Memorial Day**

By Paul A. Morin, National Commander of The American Legion

Here is a surprise; I am not going to defend the Iraq war. I won't even explain the importance of the war on terrorism. VA budget? Not today. That's because this column is about Memorial Day, a hallowed day that should be about honoring the more than one million men and women who died in the service of this nation in wars and conflicts dating back to 1775. It should be above politics. Period.

Yet one presidential candidate has blatantly violated the sanctity of this most special day. I recently received an e-mail from a group called "Supportthetroopsendthewar.com." It included a video of former Sen. John Edwards. He calls on Americans to use Memorial Day weekend as a time to "bring an end to this war." Shockingly, the video is titled "A Memorial Day Message from John Edwards," with the smoking gun note, "Paid for by John Edwards for President." Moreover, the e-mail recommends that Americans bring signs with the message "Support the troops, End the War" to local Memorial Day parades. Revolting is a kind word for it. It's as inappropriate as a political bumper sticker on an Arlington headstone.

Edwards is hardly the first politician from either political party to exploit this day, a holiday that was consecrated with the blood of American heroes. But the e-mail makes me sick nonetheless. It needs to stop. This isn't about Edwards; it's about everybody. As national commander of The American Legion, I implore all candidates to refrain from politicking on Memorial Day.

The families of those killed in war should not be led to believe that their loved ones died for a less-than-worthy cause. They died because they took an oath to defend this nation and its Constitution. The sacrifice is the same whether it's for a "popular war" or an unpopular one. Memorial Day should be an occasion to bring Americans together to honor these heroes.

It brings to mind the words of Army Sergeant First Class Jack Robison, who recently wrote from Iraq, "Sometimes I think God must be creating an elite unit in heaven, because He only seems to select the very best soldiers to bring home early."

If you want to honor these heroes, visit a veterans' cemetery on Memorial Day. Attend a parade without the divisive political signs. Make cards for the comrades of the fallen that are recuperating in military and VA hospitals. Lay a wreath at the stone of a departed hero.

We Americans need to remember why Memorial Day is special. It's not about picnics or trips to the beach. It's not about making pro- or anti-war statements. It's not about supporting political candidates. It's about honor, duty and the ultimate sacrifice. It's about people who have decided that the United States is worth dying for.

**Oratorical Contest
Name Change**

The National Executive Committee of The American Legion by way of resolution at their May 9 – 10, 2007 meetings in Indianapolis has changed the name of The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest to **The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program – "A Constitutional Speech Contest."**

**American Legion
Legacy Run**

As an unfortunate consequence of operation Iraqi Freedom and America's war on terror, many children of active-duty military personnel are now members of single-parent families. In most cases, this also means their chances to attend college have greatly diminished.

The American Legion Legacy Run provides a full college education for the children of military personnel who died on or after September 11, 2001. National Commander Paul Morin has asked American Legion Posts and Riders from all over the country to conduct local or regional fundraising efforts on behalf of The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund with a National goal of \$250,000.

Commander Morin will travel with Legion Riders over 2,100 miles from Indianapolis to Reno, Nevada in August 2007 to the site of the National convention in Reno. Chapters, posts, units, and squadrons wishing to donate to The American Legion Legacy Run should make checks payable to the Department of Maine and indicate "Legacy Run" on the check. All contributions of \$500 or more will be recognized with a National Commander's certificate.

The American Legion Riders in Maine have volunteered to spearhead this effort in the State of Maine. Legion Riders, who are sworn Pony Express Messengers from Maine ALR posts will be riding throughout the state to collect contributions from each participating post on the weekend of July 27 – 29. Any post that has raised funds or wishes to contribute to the American legacy Scholarship Fund can contact and Legion Riders group at the following posts: Auburn 153, Rockland, or Topsham or mail to the Department of Maine, P. O. Box 900, Waterville 04903 as indicated above.

Once the contributions are collected, Pony Express Messenger Bill Kilde (Topsham Post 202 Commander) will then lead a group of motorcycle riders to Indianapolis to personally deliver the Department of Maine contributions to Commander Morin on August 18, 2007.

Donations

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Robert Jordan	\$75.00 – National Commander's Campaign
John Doyle	\$50.00 – National Commander's Campaign
Anthony Jordan	\$125.00 – National Commander's Campaign
Danny Ayotte	\$55.00 – National Commander's Campaign
Lester Dearborn	\$50.00 – National Commander's Campaign

What's Happening?

Fallen Heroes Salute: May 19, Rumford, 10 a.m. **THIS CEREMONY HAS BEEN CANCELLED, SEE MEMORIAL DAY EVENTS BELOW.**

Hermon Post 200: May 19, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m., Bean Supper at the Rescue Squad Building on the Billings Road in Hermon. Adults \$5, children \$2.50.

Hermon Post 200: May 19, 7 p.m., Armed Forces Day ceremony at the Hermon High School Auditorium. Capt. Michael Frasco, returning active duty veteran, will speak on “Why We Serve” and about his experiences overseas.

Graveside Service: May 19, 11 a.m., Mount Auburn Cemetery for Clinton Knowlton, Past Androscoggin County Commander, of Auburn Post 31.

Graveside Service: May 21, Pingree Center Cemetery in Parkman, 11 a.m. for the committal service of Ed Higgins, Past Fifth District Commander of Guilford Post 119.

Memorial Day Events

Vietnam Memorial: May 24 – 28, Old Orchard Beach. At Memorial Park at the corner of Staples and First Street. FMI please call OOB Rec. Dept. at 934-0860 or e-mail jwebber@oobmaine.com

Decoration Day: May 26, 9 a.m., Decoration Day at the Maine Veterans Memorial Cemeteries in Augusta (Civic Center Drive location) and Caribou. Lots of volunteers needed. Please join our Department Commander Don Simoneau and the many other Legion family members in this tribute to our fallen comrades.

Memorial Service: May 27, 8:00 – 9:30 a.m., National Memorial Day Concert on PBS (check local listings) by the National Symphony Orchestra. Live from the West Lawn of the U. S. Capitol.

Memorial Day Ceremonies: May 28, 10 a.m., Rumford Post 24, with the Fallen Heroes Salute ceremony at 1:30 p.m. Lunch at the post home. All are welcome.

Memorial Dedication: May 28, 2 p.m., Town of Raymond will be dedicating their Veterans Memorial at the Panther Run rest area on Rt. 302. POC is Howard Stiles – 655-4193 or popsicle@maine.rr.com Guest speaker, MG Bill Libby, The Adjutant General.

Memorial Day Ceremony: May 28, Bar Harbor, 10 a.m. at the town pier.

District Meetings

11th District: May 20, Winterport Post 138, 2 p.m.

17th District: May 20, Madawaska Post 147, 3 p.m. dinner, election. **(Note time change)**

15th District: May 20, Woodland Post 23, 2 p.m.

3rd District: May 20, Mechanic Falls Post 150, 2 p.m.

Sick Call

Roberta Guerette, Caribou Unit 15, 21 Garden Circle, Caribou 04736.

Sons of The American Legion Detachment News

There will be a Detachment Executive Meeting on Sunday May 20th in Belfast at 2:00 P.M. All are invited and the agenda will be to select the Detachment award winners. All Committees will be selecting those and we will be setting the stage for our convention.

It is still not too late to submit the Consolidated report forms and if the Post Advisors for their Squadrons would double check to see if those forms have been submitted, it would be greatly appreciated. Again, these forms are for award purposes, but more importantly for us to show our Congressional delegates how much we have subsidized their programs. If we are able to convince them with shear numbers that there needs to be more money appropriated for the VA, Youth programs or education, then we become a louder voice, so please be heard!

We are looking for about 75 members to reach 100% membership for 2007. The turnaround has been terrific. We achieved 100% membership for 2006 in mid-December, but have the opportunity to achieve this before the end of May for 2007! With your help we can make it happen. The Squadrons have been very responsive and I thank you all.

There will be a meeting for "The Healing Field" on Sunday May 20th at 2:00 p.m. at Bath Post 21. In our case it is definitely "The Healing Fields". At this meeting there will be an update on those fields that will take place and an update on what is happening.

Don Allisot
Detachment Commander

Best Wishes,

Ron Sailor
Department Adjutant