



The American Legion Department of Maine

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Weekly Update



August 24, 2007

There is never a wrong time to do the right thing.

☺ **SMILE** ☺

Congratulations to the following for achieving 100% in membership:

North Vassalboro Post 126

Membership

Membership is rolling into the Department at an amazing pace so far. We are approaching 60% and are still in the month of August. Way to go. We are on the move once again toward another outstanding year in membership.

The slogan of Commander L'Heureux to stay "Forward and Focused" certainly applies to membership and we are doing just that. We continually need to remind ourselves there are over 125,000 eligible veterans in Maine that have not yet had the opportunity to join The American Legion and the only way they will know about us is if you tell them. Occasionally they may read about us in the newspaper or see one of us on television, but there is nothing like the good old fashioned person-to-person, face-to-face handshake, friendly smile, and a real person to explain our organization to a veteran who may want to belong with us.

Our newest Maine American Legion post in Lebanon is doing exceptionally well. They are already up to 46 members and growing. We have had some tremendous success stories throughout Maine with the ten newest posts in Maine over the past seven years and this has given us a real boost in membership as well as increased our visibility in those communities. We have even had two or three that were not so successful, but you do not know how well they are going to work out until you try. If you do not try at all, then you will surely know what the results will be. Nothing ventured; nothing gained. So far, we are well ahead of the game when it comes to opening new Legion posts and the success these have brought to our Department.

If you follow membership at all, then you will know the Department of Maine is recognized nation-wide as a leader in membership. We have consistently finished in the top five nationally and that is a difficult thing to do year after year. Those in our organization who make the membership machine roll at top speed are to be commended. As I have said before, membership is a team sport and we need everyone on the team to make it work. Team Maine is on the move for another great year and I thank you for what you do to make that happen. My cap is off to you.

The Weekly Newsletter (SMILE) will not be published on August 31, 2007 due to the National Convention.

**POW-MIA
Committee Update**

On Saturday, September 22, 2007 the Maine Vietnam Veterans Vigil Committee will be holding its annual vigil and Tree of Hope Ceremony at the Lisbon VFW Post 9459 in Lisbon in recognition of National POW-MIA Day. The silent vigil will commence at 8:00 a.m. and they will stand for 13 minutes for each POW-MIA still missing from the State of Maine, with an additional 13 minutes for the POW-MIA's from all wars.

This year, following the vigil, they will be holding a special ceremony to present the family of Lt. Col. Paul E Getchell, whose remains were identified in December, 2006 and interred in Arlington in May 2007, with his chair, helmet and flag, which will be removed from the POW-MIA float. The Tree of Hope Ceremony and guest speakers will follow at the post home.

Everyone is invited to join this special ceremony to remember those still unaccounted for and to pay final tribute to one of our own Maine service members who has now returned home. Now, more than ever, we must remind the American People that **WE WILL NOT FORGET.**

Following the ceremony, a light luncheon will be available and music provided from noon to 4:00 p.m. FMI please contact POW-MIA Committee Chairman Richard Nest at 353-0660 or miapow@aol.com

In addition to the above ceremony, there was a ceremony for 2nd Lt. William Alfred Bujold of Rumford conducted August 24, 2007 who had been missing for 64 years. Lt Bujold was listed as missing in action in the World War II Pacific Theater off Pupuua, New Guinea. He was shot down on May 21, 1943 and on November 27, 2006 he was finally identified.

**Winthrop SAL Squadron 40
Supporting Our Troops**

Winthrop SAL Squadron 40 has just completed "Operation Shoebox" to send many comfort items to our troops overseas. Members of Squadron 40 spent many hours collecting, packaging and mailing 27 boxes of goodies to the men and women serving our country in foreign lands.

They collected money and materials from many merchants, groups and individuals as well as receiving assistance from Post and Unit 40. The comfort items included in these 27 boxes were books, hard candy, notepaper, envelopes, pens, combs, brushes, toothbrushes, toothpaste, beef jerky, pepperoni, canned fruit, cushioned insoles, deodorant, powder, shampoo, breath mints, and many more miscellaneous items. The postage alone was \$275 and the total value of this project was over \$2,000.

This was a project that took many hands to complete, but without the effort of the members of Winthrop Squadron 40, would not have been completed.

Kudos to each and every member involved. They are truly members of the Legion family.

**Togus Veterans
Need Our Support**

Many of you may not know it, but the patients at the VA hospital at Togus continue to need our help. The following are some of the items not funded by the government for the hospitalized veterans at Togus and you and your post are asked to consider a donation to provide some of these items.

- Supply Closet – It costs about \$4,000 per year to provide small personal care items such as shampoo, deodorant, powder, etc.
- Rehabilitation – Donations are used to host holiday parties, pizza parties, ice cream socials, and special needs/requests.
- Coffee – Ongoing program to provide coffee for veterans while they wait for appointments.
- Newspapers – It costs about \$175 per year per subscription.
- Phone Cards – Patient reps. Hand out about 400 30-minute cards in a year.
- Holiday Meals – To provide meals for family members of inpatients on holidays.
- Rechargeable Triple Head Razors – Approximately \$49 each.
- Postage Stamps – For patient use.

Please consider a donation to support any of the above items. If you are doing so, please make your check payable to the Department of Maine, P. O. Box 900, Waterville 04903. Along with the above needs, there is also a need for volunteers to visit with the patients, assist with special events, and to assist the Togus staff on an as-needed basis. FMI, please call this office or the Togus Voluntary Service at 621-4886.

Donations

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

American Legion Riders Richmond Post 132	\$100.00 – National Legacy Fund
American Legion Riders Richmond Post 132	\$250.50 – Blind Camp
John Head	\$150.00 – Healing Field
Woolwich Grange 68	\$105.00 – Healing Field
Steve & Lisa Wright	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Sgt. Justin Wright	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Elizabeth Darling	\$40.00 – Healing Field
Delbert Spinney	\$15.00 – Healing Field
Bruce Powell	\$60.00 – Healing Field
Cindy & Pam Darling	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Walter Leighton	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Huntoon Hill Grange	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Carol Dunham	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Robert Tracy	\$30.00 – Healing Field
Glenna Bodge & family	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Sunrise Ridge Sporting Camp	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Gray Post 86	\$200.00 – Healing Field

Thank You

I would like to thank everyone for all the get well cards. I really enjoyed all the names from the past and am feeling much better.

Bob Rich
Past Department Commander

Kudos

Bath Unit 21 members Amy Wright, Valerie Wright, and Pat Hutton for conducting the Surf & Turf bin-gos at Bath Post 21 the past several weeks to raise money for the Healing Field.

Old Orchard Beach Post & Unit 57 for their donation of \$100 each to the Marine Corps League Toys for Tots.

Gray Post 86 for their donation of \$25 to the Gray Fire and Rescue in memory of Eliot Emerson.

District Meetings

District 16 – So. Aroostook: Sept. 8, Limestone Post 127, 1 p.m.

District 17 – No. Aroostook: Sept. 9, Fort Kent Post 133, 1 p.m.

District 4 – Franklin: Sept. 10, Kingfield Post 61, 6 p.m. supper, also post meeting. All District Offi-cers are requested to attend.

District 8 – Sagadahoc: Sept. 13, Bath Post 21, 6:30 p.m.

District 14 – Piscataquis: Sept. 15, Guilford Masonic Hall, 6:30 p.m. supper, 7:30 mtg.

District 13 – Penobscot: Sept. 16, Etna-Carmel Post 107, 12:00 lunch, 1 p.m. mtg.

District 3 – Androscoggin: Sept. 16, Lisbon Post 158, 2 p.m.

District 11 – Waldo: Sept. 16, Brooks Post 183, 2 p.m.

District 5 – Oxford: Sept. 18, Oxford Post 112, 7 p.m.

What's Happening?

Buckfield Post 58: Sep. 3, 10:00 a.m., parade. Labor Day parade followed by music, games and food at the municipal center. FMI call 336-2031.

**Sons of The American Legion
Detachment News**

I would like to thank the membership of Augusta Post 205 for their interest in the Sons of The American Legion. Last Tuesday I was able to present to the post this great program. Accompanying me were 9th District Commander Bruce Bragdon and Vice Commander Brian Danforth. I welcome all inquiries and we are beginning to see some headway in expanding the organization.

I presented "The Healing Field" project to the Millinocket Post and although there were not many in attendance those that were had a chance to see the virtues of this project and will take it door to door in that area. Another update is that Millinocket Squadron's Adopt-A-Soldier program has increased from four soldiers to seven! The seventh will be sent a package very soon, now these soldiers are not just sent one package they are adopted by that squadron and are remembered several times during their tour.

I need to wish a speedy recovery to Joe Cooper he has had some health issues lately. As a matter of fact he may miss Fall Conference to have a Kidney Stone removed. GET WELL SOON JOE!

Fall Conference is traditionally a time for learning and teaching the intricacies of the organizations programs and projects. I want to have all of Detachments Committee Chairman at Fall Conference to explain and promote their program to the squadrons. I think it is much like a salesman selling his wares. There is only so much money out there that can be raised for the projects of The American Legion so the best salesman gets the lions share of the available money. That is the American Way. I have asked Ben Fitzgerald to present The Adopt-A-Soldier program to the membership at the meeting. I look forward to that and Ben don't wear out the mirror getting ready.

I will be in Reno when you read this. These are always motivational and I would suggest a trip to your National Convention, whoever you may be.

Don Allisot
Detachment Commander

Sick Call

Frank Yager, 12th District Commander, 51 Peaslee Rd., Hancock 04640.

Best Wishes,

Ron Sailor

Fall Frolic to be Held at Togus

It is time again to think about the annual Fall Frolic.

This year it will be held on Saturday, September 8, 2007 and will be a Bingo Extravaganza!

As in the past, activities will be held on each patient floor throughout the hospital. In support and cooperation with new guidelines regarding food policies, the VA will provide refreshments at the end of the activities. Organization members are asked NOT to bring food items to the Fall Frolic.

We will need about 10 - 15 volunteers per ward to help patients with the games and to serve refreshments after the games. At present the following organizations have stepped forward and committed to a specific responsibility for the day:

American Legion Family – NHCU 73
Veterans of Foreign Wars & Auxiliary -- NHCU 72
Elks – 4 South
Mason's – Building 200 – all of 3rd floor

Sign-in will be in Building 207, 1st floor (Dirigo room #121) with coffee and refreshments being served for volunteers only beginning at 8:30 a.m. but no later than 8:45 a.m.

All assigned volunteers will leave together from the 1st floor at 9:45 a.m. with all the games beginning around 10 a.m. All games should be completed by 11:45 a.m. Refreshments will again be available for volunteers after the Bingo games on the 1st floor of building 200 (Dirigo room #121).

All other organizations and VAVS Reps and Deps are warmly invited to join in and socialize with the hospitalized patients and residents and get reacquainted with one another. No organization is excluded.

For further questions, please call Voluntary Service at (207) 621-4886.

See you at the Fall Frolic!
Teri Olson, Recreation Therapist

EMPLOYER OF OLDER WORKERS AWARD

Purpose of Award: To confer recognition upon one employer in each state for an outstanding job in hiring and retaining older workers. A laminated plaque will be provided by National Headquarters for presentation for the Department Winner. It is recommended that Posts recognize their nominees as well.

Procedure: Nominations from Posts or other sources should be sent to Department Headquarters. One nomination will be selected from those submitted as the winner. Deadline for submission of nominations will be **December 31** of each year.

EMPLOYER OF OLDER WORKERS AWARD

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE INFORMATION:

1. **Exact** Name of company: _____

2. Business address: _____

3. Name and title of company's contact person: _____

4. Tel. Number: _____ 5. Type of business: _____

6. Total employees: _____ 7. Employees over 55: _____

8. Give reasons why you feel this nominee should receive this year's Employer of Older Workers Award. Include a brief summary of the company's policies and records which qualify it, such as hiring, promotion, retention, and affirmative employment policies; attach additional sheet of paper if necessary. _____

9. Name, title and daytime telephone number of the person making the nomination:

10. This nomination form must be signed by the appropriate Post official and sent to: The American Legion, Department of Maine, P.O. Box 900, Waterville, ME 04903-0900 by **December 31**. Please allow six to eight weeks for the award to be delivered.

APPROVED: _____

Post official signature

Date

Tel. Number

APPROVED: _____

Department Adjutant

Date