



The American Legion Department of Maine

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Weekly Update



September 14, 2007

**When you look for the good in others,
you discover the best in yourself.**

☺ **SMILE** ☺

**Department of Maine
Fall Conference**

The Fall Conference for the Department of Maine will be held on Saturday, September 29, 2007 at America's Best Value Inn in Millinocket. All meetings of the Auxiliary and SAL will be held at the Millinocket Post home. America's Best Value Inn, located across the street from Post 80, will also be the location for Sunday morning's Department Executive Committee meeting to be held at 8:30 a.m.

The conference agenda is not finalized at this point, but some of the topics to be covered are:

American Legion Riders – Bill Kilde, Commander of Topsham Post 202, will talk about his motorcycle ride from Maine, through Vermont and other states on his trip to Indianapolis to present National Commander Morin with Maine's check for \$6,165 for the Legacy Scholarship Fund. Bill also took part in the first leg of the Legacy Run from Indianapolis to Reno, Nevada, site of the National Convention.

Heroes to Hometown, Membership, Public Relations are other topics to be covered. We will also have a question and answer period, with an open book test on the Post Officer's Guide that was entertaining and educational at a previous conference. Department Commander Paul L'Heureux will be talking about the meaning of Forward and Focused as it applies to his vision of the direction of the Department of Maine for the coming year. Barry Hathaway of the Maine State Police will be on hand to cover Games of Chance, to include bingo, sealed tickets, raffles, and the newly legalized Texas Holdem. (I believe the law becomes effective September 22, 2007, but check with the State Police to be sure)

The Auxiliary banquet will be held on Saturday evening at the Millinocket post home will feature a menu of roast pork, mashed potatoes, vegetable, tossed salad, and dessert. Auxiliary Unit 80 will also serve a lunch of beef stew or corn chowder and dessert at the post home on Saturday. Both meals are available for a package deal of \$15 per person. Please send checks to Tina Nicholson, 26 Forest Ave., Millinocket 04462 or tel.: 723-8515. Cutoff is September 21st.

Come join us for some fun, friendship, and perhaps even a little education about The American Legion and its programs.

Support Our Troops

When the term “betray” is used to describe any American general not named Benedict Arnold, it gets most people’s attention. When it is used in a *New York Times* advertisement to describe a brilliant wartime commander with the credentials of David A. Petraeus, it gets the 2.7 million member American Legion’s attention.

I met Gen. Petraeus when I visited Iraq earlier this summer. That I was impressed with this visionary officer is unsurprising and relatively unimportant. What is important is that the men and women serving under Gen. Petraeus believe in him. Their faith in the uniformed Princeton Ph.D. is not misplaced. Petraeus earned a reputation as a counterinsurgency genius early in the Iraq war when he commanded the 101st Airborne Division and basically rebuilt the government infrastructures in Mosul and Ninevah Provinces. As he mentioned in his congressional testimony, sectarian violence in Iraq is down - especially in the once wild Anbar Province. Local tribes are turning on al Qaeda and in many cases cooperating with the coalition. When one senator said Gen. Petraeus’s firsthand report required “a willing suspension of disbelief,” it seemed to this Midwesterner that it was Washington’s way of calling him a liar. Even so, the libelous attack on a general is not The American Legion’s primary concern about the anti-war movement. Our concern is for the private, the sergeant, the lieutenant and the major. If a distinguished general could be attacked in such a manner, what can the rank-and-file soldier expect when he or she returns home?

At our national convention last month in Reno, nearly 3,000 delegates unanimously passed Resolution 169, codifying The American Legion’s support for the global war on terror. The resolution recalls that Congress authorized the military action in both Iraq and Afghanistan and reminds Americans that you cannot separate the wars from the warriors. With nearly a million Vietnam veterans in our organization, the symbolism of such a resolution is striking. Never again should Americans be tarred as baby-killers, terrorists or criminals for risking their lives so others could be free.

With almost 170,000 American forces in Iraq, there will be some criminal acts from time-to-time. Find me a town anywhere in America with the same population and I promise you will find a higher crime rate than what is seen among our military. Where is the perspective when the headlines repeatedly remind us of those crimes, yet little is written about Army Reserve Capt. Joel Arends, who led a team in Baghdad through fire to rescue Iraqi civilians? And why are the convicted soldiers from Abu Ghraib more famous than Marine Cpl. Jason Dunham, who sacrificed his life smothering a grenade so that others would live?

As Americans, we all have a duty to speak up when our uniformed heroes are slandered. When a major media outlet accepts advertising revenue to mass produce such slander, we should be outraged. MoveOn.org can write anything it wants to, but the New York Times is not required to publish such libel.

Earlier this year, a presidential candidate called the Global War on terrorism a “bumper sticker.” I can think of 3,000 dead Americans who probably would disagree. “Support the troops,” however, really is a mere bumper sticker if we allow our fellow Americans, the media and our elected leaders to slander their heroism.

Marty Conatser
National Commander
The American Legion

Dixfield Post 100

Recently this office received a request from a deployed soldier, whose parents' home is in Dixfield, for various care-package items for his unit to give them more of a feeling of home. Their unit has seven female and 13 male members. I relayed this request to Dixfield 100 Post Commander Marcel Martineau, who quickly sprang into action, and two days later we received this reply from Commander Martineau:

Dear Ron: I have been in contact with the soldier's mother and the members of Dixfield Post 100, along with some of our cribbage players, have adopted this group. A care package will be going out to them before Halloween and before every holiday until the end of the year and for every holiday after that until they come home. God bless them.

Marcel

Editor's Note: This is outstanding support for our troops and typical of the support provided by The American Legion family to all our troops throughout the world. Great job by Dixfield Post 100.

Lisbon Post 158

As the war on terrorism continues in Iraq the number of soldiers wounded by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) continues to climb. Many of the soldiers are flown directly from the battlefield to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany with only the clothes they were wearing or medical gowns. Geiger Brothers of Lewiston and The American Legion have formed a partnership to provide shirts for these wounded soldiers. Each year Geiger Brothers have products that were rejected by the buyer. Because of the design or logo on the shirt they are not suitable for resale. This year Geiger donated 620 shirts to Coombs-Mountfort American Legion Post 158 in Lisbon to deliver to the battlefield wounded. Members of Post 158 then separated the shirts and mailed them to Landstul, Germany to brighten the lives of soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. This is one small example of the way local merchants and community's join together with The American Legion to support our veterans.

Kudos to Geiger Brothers and the Coombs-Mountfort Post 158 in Lisbon.

Bangor Troop Greeters

On Wednesday, September 12, 2007 the entrance highway to Bangor International Airport was changed from Godfrey Boulevard to Troop Greeters Way. This change will remain in place until the War on Terror is over. Commander Paul L'Heureux and Adjutant Ron Sailor had the pleasure of being at the ceremony dedicating the newly named street. This ceremony and the American flags flying on each and every light pole on this street were the fruition of a lot of hard work by Chairman Randy Kluj of Milo Post 41 and his faithful group of Greeters' supporters Pete Johnson of Greenville Post 94, Jeff Barnes of Ellsworth Post 63, and of course Randy's wife Janet of Unit 41 in Milo, who also doubles as the official photographer for this group.

Donations

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Charlie Bennett raffle	\$145.00 – POW-MIA committee
District 4	\$100.00 – POW-MIA committee
William Trahan, Sr.	\$80.00 – Healing Field
O.W. Valente	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Marilyn Gage	\$15.00 – Healing Field
William Chapman	\$15.00 – Healing Field
Bill Burke III	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Bill Boyington	\$15.00 – Healing Field
Ben Fitzgerald	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Ramona Dyer	\$50.00 – Healing Field
Doris Martineau	\$20.00 – Healing Field

Kudos

Fourth District Commander Charlie Bennett for making and donating a wooden bench to raffle to benefit the POW/MIA committee.

Department Service Officer Robert “Ki” Owen for going the extra mile to assist a veteran.

What’s Happening?

Hermon Post 200: Sept. 15, Bean Supper, Rescue Squad Building , Billings Rd., Hermon, 4:30 – 630 p.m., Adults: \$5, Children: \$2.50. Beans, Chop Suey, Hot dogs, Cole slaw, bread and desserts.

POW-MIA Recognition Day: Sept. 21, Farmington Post Office, vigil will start at 12:00 noon in front of the Post Office. Thirteen minutes for the 13 servicemen still missing from Maine and 13 additional minutes to honor all POW/Mia’s. Please bring a flag.

POW-MIA Recognition Day: Sept. 22, Lisbon VFW Post 9459, vigil will start at 8 a.m. A special ceremony honoring the family of Lt. Col. Paul E. Getchell and Tree of Hope ceremony will follow the vigil at approximately 11 a.m. Lunch will be served at the post home with DJ Janet George providing the entertainment. FMI please contact POW-MIA chairman Richard Nest at 353-0660 or miapow@aol.com

Convention Site Committee: Sept. 29, America’s Best Value Inn in Millinocket, noontime meeting.

Marine Corps Band Concert: Oct. 18, Merrill Auditorium, Portland, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are free, but are limited to four per person. Please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Portix: Marine Corps Band Concert, Merrill Auditorium Box Office, 20 Myrtle St., Portland, 04101 for tickets. No phone or Internet orders. Ticket holders must be seated by 7:15 or risk losing their seats to those in line without tickets.

District Meetings

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

District 13 – Penobscot: Sept. 16, Carmel Grange for 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 10 – Somerset: Sept. 17, Fairfield Post 14, 6:30 p.m.

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

Sons of The American Legion Detachment News

The Healing Field project has had some changes while we were in Reno. Lori Oakason, the national director of the Healing Field organization, came to our hotel to meet with us about our project. The Healing Field of Maine really has seen one change from the original concept. This change is with the goal of 25,000 flags. At this time, there are nearly 2,000 that have been purchased. The goal is now 3000 flags. This is probably more of a realistic number, although I believe that after the public sees the Veterans Day Fields it will prompt a lot of flag sales. We will more than exceed the 3000 flag mark when we get to put all of the flags in all of our fields together at the Maine Veterans Cemetery in Augusta on Memorial Day 2008.

I did a presentation for the Healing Field for the Wiscasset Senior Citizens last night. There were about 45 individuals there and it was received very well. Not only did we collect a number of flags, but I was surprised to find out that there were a large number of Legion & Auxiliary members in attendance. There were as many questions about membership as there were for the flags. I think that when we present these fields, we will be surprised at the interest people will have in joining. I believe that membership will be another residual from this project. So we all need to plan on having someone to have a membership booth at these fields.

I would like to thank and congratulate the Detachment for meeting the first target date of 10% 2008 membership is at actually 11%. Thanks guys, lets keep going because the next one is October 11th and we should be at 25%, and that isn't too far away!

Don Allisot
Detachment Commander

Best Wishes,

Ron Sailor
Department Adjutant

APPLICATION REQUEST FOR MILITARY DISCHARGE

Bureau of Maine Veterans Services
117 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
Tel: (207) 626-4464 Fax: (207) 626-4471

1. Veteran's Name: _____
2. Social Security Number: _____
3. Service/Serial Number: _____
4. Date of Birth: _____ 5. Date of Death: _____

6. I request that a copy of the DD214 (or equivalent) on file with the State of Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services be mailed or faxed to the following:

❖ Name and Address of individual (organization) to mail record to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

OR

❖ Name and Fax # of individual (organization) to fax record to:

Fax #: _____

Organization/Individual faxing to: _____

7. Signature of Requester: _____
8. Relationship to veteran: _____ ie: self, spouse, parent, child, etc.

NOTE: If requester is other than the veteran and the veteran is still living, the requester must provide a copy of the POA or Guardianship paper.