



The American Legion Department of Maine

P.O. Box 900, Waterville, ME 04903

Tel: (207) 873-3229

E-mail: legionme@me.acadia.net

Website: www.mainelegion.org

Weekly Update



August 22, 2008

**Criticizing another's garden doesn't
keep the weeds out of your own.**

☺ **SMILE** ☺

Membership

Membership is flowing into Department headquarters at a rapid rate. This past week we surpassed the 50% mark and for this early in the year is exceptional. Not only that, but Department Commander John Doyle has been bragging about how the Department of Maine is NUMBER ONE in the country. And you know what? He's right; we are number one in membership in the country. What a great job by everyone. Thank you.

Now, can we hold on to that position throughout the year? I believe we can. We have the potential to have an outstanding year in membership. Our membership quota set by our National organization this year is, for once, attainable. We need to get to 24,000 members before the second week in May and we are already over half way there. I know, I know. We have just done the easy part. Yeah, you are right. However, we can do the rest as well. Heck, we have done it before.

One of the things we will have to do to keep our current position as number one will be to recruit many more members. Last year at this time we had recruited nearly 300 new members, but this year we have recruited less than 200 new members so far. They are out there for sure, but we need to ask them. The number one reason given when asked why they did not join before they did – No one ever asked us. Shame on us. We didn't ask them. Let's not keep on making that mistake over and over. Let's get out there and as our friends, neighbors, acquaintances and oh yes, even complete strangers. It really is a benefit to them to belong to The American Legion and we are doing them a favor when asking them. Why should veterans want to belong to The American Legion? Because –

We take care of our veterans!

We take care of our country's children!

We have unparalleled Americanism programs!

We stand for a strong national defense!

Your Legion membership has a great deal of value and we all should be sharing that value with as many folks as possible. Just ask them. You will be surprised at how many will say yes and thank you for it later.

Due to the National convention in Phoenix, there will be no newsletter (SMILE) published on Friday, August 29, 2008.

**Presidential Memorial Certificates
Available For Deceased Veterans**

A Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) is a gold embossed paper certificate inscribed with the veteran’s name that bears the President’s signature. It honors the memory of honorably discharged deceased veterans. This program was initiated in March 1962 by President John F. Kennedy and has been continued by all subsequent presidents. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) administers the PMC program through the National Cemetery Association. Eligible recipients include the deceased veteran’s next of kin and loved ones. A copy of the deceased veteran’s military discharge document along with a copy of the death certificate must be provided when requesting a PMC. A PMC form may be requested in person at any VA Regional Office, by U.S. mail or by toll-free fax. A request form is available on the National Cemetery Administration website, www.cem.va.gov. A form is also attached with this newsletter.

Heartfelt Appreciation

Once again I had the pleasure of being greeted by members of the Maine Troop Greeters, this time while on our way to Afghanistan. My first exposure to your group was about 10 years ago when my unit, the 124th FG of the Idaho Air National Guard, deployed to Kuwait and on an earlier trip to Saudi Arabia. Unfortunately, due to scheduling and troop redeployment, we were not able to come back to Maine on our return home this time. I did snag a business card of yours and just wanted to let you and the rest of your organization know how much I, myself, appreciated your time and consideration in coming out to the airport to see us off on our trip this time around. It was a totally unexpected surprise and meant a world of warm feelings to see everyone when we walked off the plane. To see that much appreciation meant a lot to me but also brought home the lack of appreciation our veterans of Vietnam missed out on. I am eternally grateful that there is an effort to correct that error, now and for the future. Having you all take time out of your day to do this is reassuring to, not just me, but to all military personnel that they are truly appreciated and carries us through those particularly tough deployments. Please pass on my appreciation to all members of your group and in the event that my wife and I can make it out to Maine on a vacation, I sincerely hope to be able to visit with any and all of your group on a more personal level. Thanks again for all you do.

Sincerely, Dale Trongale, MSGt.
Idaho Air National Guard

Donations

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Winthrop Post 40
Guilford Post 119

\$100.00 – Healing Field
\$100.00 – Maine Blind Camp

Kudos

To Portland Post 17 for their donation of \$100 to the Cumberland County Sheriff's Dept. PAL program.

To Rumford Unit 24 for their recent blood drive which netted 123 pints.

To Unity Post 50 for their donation of \$150 to the Quaker Hill Christian Church in Unity to help with the repair of damages to gravestones and the church done by vandals.

District Meetings

District 17 – No. Aroostook: Sept. 7, Fort Kent Post 133, 1 p.m.

District 9 – Kennebec: Sept. 10, Oakland Post 51, 7 p.m.

District 8 – Sagadahoc: Sept. 11, Bath Post 21, 6:30 p.m.

District 3 – Androscoggin: Sept. 14, Lisbon Post 158, 2 p.m.

District 13 – Penobscot: Sept. 14, Etna/Carmel Post 107, noon lunch, 1 p.m. mtg.

District 11 – Waldo: Sept. 21, Brooks Post 183, 2 p.m.

District 5 – Oxford: Sept. 16, Oxford Post 112, 7 p.m.

District 14 – Piscataquis: Sept. 20, Guilford Post 119, 6:30 p.m. supper, 7:30 mtg.

What's Happening?

Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day: Aug. 24, Cole Land Transportation Museum in Bangor, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Information on Agent Orange, Wartime Service Certificates, Wartime Walking Sticks (veteran must show a copy of military discharge). Program at 2 p.m. with Major General Bill Libby as the keynote speaker.

Military Appreciation Night: Tuesday, August 26, Bill Dodge Auto Group, 262 Bath Rd., Brunswick, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Hospice Rooms Grand Opening: Sep. 9, VA Togus, Building 207, 1 p.m. This is the grand opening of the hospice rooms, much of which was paid for by the Legion and the Legion Auxiliary. This program was the initiative of Department Commander Lloyd Woods and Department President Nicky Weatherby started in 2005.

The Freeport Flag Ladies Annual 9-11 tribute: Thursday, September 11, 2008 from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. on Main St. in Freeport. All are welcome to join the tribute.

Flag Disposal Ceremony: Sep. 12, Unity Post 50, 6 p.m. Do you have a U. S. flag or flags which are no longer serviceable? If so, please drop them in the barrel we have designated in front of the post home on Windmere Lane or better still come to our ceremony and drop them off. FMI please call 948-2123.

Sick Call

Ross Barger, Bath Post 21, P. O. Box 626, Bath 04530

**Sons of The American Legion
Detachment News**

Let me start this week's installment with some thank you's. Thanks to Lee Rowe (Legion), Julie Rowe (Auxiliary) and Russ Ford (Sons), all from Post 150, for their help at the Special Olympics Beach Games & toll booths in Old Orchard last Saturday. We had a beautiful day and raised some much needed funds for Maine Special Olympics.

Ron Densmore, our Detachment Adjutant, reports the 2009 membership at 4% as of August 19th. I realize that many squadrons are just coming off summer break now, but our first target date is September 10th to make 10% membership. The Detachment membership team has already started calling the squadrons and I'm asking you personally to meet the challenge. We've got 2½ weeks to make the first membership goal, so let's start asking for dues, send in any transmittals you've got right away and make our first goal.

Bruce Pierce
Detachment Commander

Best Wishes,

Ron Sailor
Department Adjutant