



The American Legion Department of Maine

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Weekly Update



November 2, 2007

**You can clutch the past so tightly to your chest that
it leaves your arms too full to embrace the present.**

☺ **SMILE** ☺

Congratulations to the following for achieving 100% in membership:

Standish Post 128

Great Diamond Island Post 212

**Healing Field
Ceremonies in Maine**

Co-chairmen PDC Herman Wright and Orono Unit 84 member Donna Sailor announced the details of the Healing Fields ceremonies to take place on Veterans Day, Sunday, November 11, 2007. This has been an extraordinary project for the Sons of The American Legion with the Legion and the Auxiliary carrying their share as well. It would be wonderful to have many, many Legion family members showing their support at these events. These events should be spectacular with an assembly of nearly 2,700, 3' X 5' American flags throughout the five locations and spaced every mile for the entire length of the Maine Turnpike. The flags will proudly stand on eight-foot poles and many of them are sponsored by individuals and dedicated to a loved one.

Lubec	Sunday, November 11	1:00 p.m.	85 Flags
Hallett's Field in Lubec, Guest Speaker Past Dept. Historian Rod Green, Wash. Cty. Honor Guard			
Rockland	Sunday, November 11	12:00 p.m.	200 Flags
Rockland Post 1, Guest Speakers Fire Chief Charles Jordan and Police Chief Bruce Boucher, Rockland Honor Guard			
Augusta	Sunday, November 11	12:00 p.m.	500 Flags
Capitol Park, Guest Speaker Dept. Commander Paul L'Heureux, Augusta Post 205 Honor Guard			
Bath	Sunday, November 11	12:00 p.m.	800 Flags
BNAS Kelly Field, McMann Sports Complex on Congress Ave., Guest Speaker Capt. Scott Walton,			
Portland	Sunday, November 11	2:00 p.m.	875 Flags
Deering Oaks Park (just off I-295 Forrest Ave. Exit), Guest Speaker Congressman Mike Michaud Brunswick NAS Honor Guard			

Membership

Membership has been doing very well so far this year and we are now over 76% of our goal in Maine. As with almost any aspect of membership, there is good news and there is bad. About a month ago we were nearly 600 members behind last year on the same date. However, we have closed that gap to just over 100 behind. We are still behind last year's numbers and almost of that gap can be attributed to new members. We now have 450 new members for 2008, but last year we had 570 on the same date. As I said; good news and bad news.

Several of our posts have already reached the magical 100% goal in membership and we have several others who are fast approaching this goal. Kudos to each and every one of the posts excelling in membership. You are helping us immensely. In the districts, Seventeenth District – No. Aroostook is leading the pack and 17th District Commander Art Leblanc is standing tall. We may need to remind Art that Sixth District – Knox and Commander Jerry Carr, Fourth District – Franklin and Commander Charlie Bennett, and Twelfth District – Hancock and Commander Frank Yager are close on his heels. There are even some other districts that are in a position to make a push at first place in the near future.

Let's keep the momentum going and have another banner year in membership for the Department of Maine.

Operation Care Package Help Wanted

On Saturday, November 10, 2007 the Troop Greeters Liaison committee of The American Legion will be at the Bangor K-Mart on the Hogan Road from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. collecting items to be sent to our deployed troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. Please join Committee Chairman Randy Kluj and other committee members in supporting our troops who will be deployed for the Christmas season to help make their Christmas a merry one.

A list of items needed will be available at the K-Mart store. FMI call Randy at 943-5509 or (cell) 279-0077.

Appreciation Banquet for Troops Past and Present

There will be an appreciation banquet for all troops, past and present, at the Grand Summit Hotel and Conference Center at the Sunday River Ski Resort in Newry on Saturday, November 10, 2007 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. It will be a buffet-style luncheon and is free to all military troops and veterans. There are also discounted rooms available for people who wish to stay overnight. Please contact Richard "Doc" Viitala at 207-357-6229 or docviitala@yahoo.com if you plan to attend. Even though there is room for 400, seating will be limited to those who RSVP.

This is a grand gesture of appreciation by the folks at the Sunday River Ski Resort and they would like to see everyone who is able attend this event.

**Support Your Troops
License Plates Available**

Effective November 1, 2007 the Support Your Troops specialty license plate will be available for purchase at Maine Motor Vehicle Branch offices in Augusta, Bangor, Calais, Caribou, Ellsworth, Kennebunk, Lewiston, Mexico, Portland, Rockland, South Portland, Springvale and Topsham. The Specialty plate code is **TS** and the assigned plate series for it will be 101-AJA through 999-AJZ. Vanity plates will be available if the requested sequence is not already used.

Simply return your current plates in exchange for the Support Your Troops plate and an excise tax adjustment will be applied.

Additional information is available at 624-9000, Ext. 52149.

**Flag Folding Recitations
At National Cemeteries**

“13-Fold” Ceremony, Other Scripts Approved

To ensure burial services at the 125 national cemeteries operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reflect the wishes of veterans and their families, VA officials have clarified the Department’s policy about recitations made while the U.S. flag is folded at the gravesite of a veteran.

“Honoring the burial wishes of veterans is one of the highest commitments for the men and women of VA,” said William F. Tuerk, VA’s Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs. “A family may request the recitation of words to accompany the meaningful presentation of the American flag as we honor the dedication and sacrifice of their loved ones.” Traditional gravesite military funeral honors include the silent folding and presentation of an American flag, a 21-gun rifle salute, and the playing of “Taps.”

The clarification includes the following:

- Volunteer honor guards are authorized to read the so-called “13-fold” flag recitation or comparable script;
- Survivors of the deceased need to provide material and request it be read by the volunteer honor guards; and
- Volunteer honor guards will accept requests for recitations that reflect any or no religious traditions, on an equal basis.

Veterans with a discharge other than dishonorable, their spouses and eligible dependent children can be buried in a national cemetery. Other burial benefits available for all eligible veterans, regardless of whether they are buried in a national cemetery or a private cemetery, include a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and a government headstone or marker.

**Flu Shots Available
At Togus VAMC**

Togus VAMC will have a Flu Clinic on Saturday, November 10, 2007 from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Flu vaccine shots are available to all veterans currently enrolled in the Togus VA Healthcare Division (includes Maine Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC)).

Veterans should check in at the front desk in the lobby of Building 200 (main hospital) and will need to present their VA ID card. There will be an allergy form to complete and please wear short-sleeved shirts. Veterans who receive their Primary Care at a CBOC can get the flu shots at Togus, but they can also directly contact their CBOC for flu shots at their CBOC facility. FMI please call the Flu Clinic Hotline at 623-8411, ext 4744 or 1-877-421-8363, ext. 4744.

Donations

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Oliver Brown, Harpswell Post 171	\$60.00 – VAVS
PDP Lois Worcester	\$25.00 – Maine Troop Greeters Comm.
Oakland Post 51	\$500.00 – Healing Field
Dana McIntire III	\$20.00 – Healing Field
Jim Kennie	\$20.00 – Healing Field
John O’Leary	\$15.00 – Healing Field
Terrie Starbird	\$40.00 – Healing Field
Michael Doran	\$15.00 – Healing Field
Maine Trappers Assoc., Union River Chapter	\$20.00 – Healing Field

Kudos

Bill Sawtelle, Milo Post 41 was named Citizen of the Year by the Town of Brownville.

Gray Post 86 for their donation of \$100.00 to Opportunity Farms for Boys and Girls in New Gloucester.

Directory Changes

Pg. 31, Scarborough Post 76, Commander, William Coulthard, 137 Sandbar Rd., Windham 04062 (892-8969)

Pg. 53, Bar Harbor Post 25, Commander, Jeana Durost, P.O. Box 1055, Northeast Harbor 04662 (244-3929)

What's Happening?

Marine Corps Birthday Celebration: Nov. 10, Damariscotta Post 42, 6 p.m. Pot Luck supper and birthday cake. There is no cost, but please bring a food item with you if attending. All are welcome.

Balloon Release To Honor Veterans: Nov. 10, Togus VA Hospital grounds, 11 a.m. Kennebec Valley Young Marines are hosting their 3rd Annual Balloon Release. Anyone may attend to release a free balloon and you are asked to arrive at 10 a.m. FMI please call 441-4192.

District Meetings

16th District – So. Aroostook: Nov. 3, Easton Post 187, 1 p.m.

17th District – No. Aroostook: Nov. 4, Frenchville Post 145, 1 p.m., dinner

13th District – Penobscot: Nov. 4, Newport Post 105, 12 p.m. lunch, 1 p.m. mtg.

8th District – Sagadahoc: Nov. 8, Topsham Post 202, 6:30 p.m.

10th District – Somerset: Nov. 12, Skowhegan Post 16, 6:30 p.m.

12th District – Hancock: Nov. 13, Bucksport Post 93, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. meeting

9th District – Kennebec: Nov. 14, Gardiner Post 4, 7:30 p.m., refreshments to be served

14th District – Piscataquis: Nov. 17, Dexter Post 53, 6:30 p.m. supper

3rd District – Androscoggin: Nov. 18, Sabattus Post 135, 2 p.m.

15th District – Washington: Nov. 18, Machias Post 9, 2 p.m., dinner to follow.

11th District – Waldo: Nov. 18, Palermo Post 163, 2 p.m.

5th District – Oxford: Nov. 20, Bethel Post 81, 7 p.m.

Sick Call

Lois Worcester, Past Department President, Bangor Nursing and Rehab. Ctr., Texas Ave., Bangor 04401

**Sons of The American Legion
Detachment News**

The Healing Field subject has taken a lot of space in this letter over the last month or so, but that is where we are at. We are getting to the finish of phase one. I would like to invite everyone to attend the Field or Fields of their choice. Hopefully all Detachment Officers will attend at least one ceremony. All of the information is in this publication and almost all of the Detachment Officers are involved at least a little bit so I know we will have a good turnout on Veterans Day. Again this is just a warm up for the main event when we put all of these "Healing Fields" together to create one huge display of American Flags!

The flags have been delivered and the entire 2,680 will be assembled at Northern Pride Lane in Bath. We are looking for volunteers to help with this portion of the project on Saturday November 3, 2007 at 9 a.m. The next phase will be on the 10th of November and that will be when the five locations will be posting their flags. Bath will again be at 9 a.m. at the Mcmann Field Complex on Congress Ave. in Bath. Volunteers will be needed to insert the reinforcement rod into the ground and to immediately cover that rod with a flagstaff. Finally on the 17th of November we will need to retrieve those flags and the reinforcement rods to store them for Memorial Day 2008.

I would like to offer my services to any squadron or post that would like to speak with me or know a little bit more about the Sons. You can contact me by calling 443-6159. I can talk on any subject that involves The Sons of The American Legion and I am not at all shy about speaking on a subject that would promote our organization.

Don Allisot
Detachment Commander

Best Wishes,

Ron Sailor
Department Adjutant

Are You A Snowbird?

(Example - you live in Maine from April-October and Florida from November-March)

Does your Post have one or more members who are snowbirds, moving between two different addresses each year? Did you know that National can automatically change their address so that they never miss an issue of their Magazine, their renewal notices or any other mail from National? If you have members who would like to take advantage of this service, please let us know by having them complete the information below.

NOTE: *This service works only if the member moves between the same two addresses at the same time each year.* The member must provide a summer & a winter address and the approximate dates they move to/from each. Once their membership record is set-up for our "snowbird" service, the member won't need to notify us when they move unless they change either address entered below. Since most mailings from National are printed weeks in advance, please allow 6-8 weeks for the initial change to take affect.

Name _____

9 digit Member ID # _____ - _____ - _____

ADDRESS 1 (SUMMER)

I will be there from _____ to _____

ADDRESS 2 (WINTER)

I will be there from _____ to _____

Member's Signature _____ Date _____

This information should be mailed directly to the address below (your Post should also be notified): **The American Legion, IT/Data Services, P.O. Box 1954, Indianapolis, IN 46206**
The completed form can also be faxed to (317) 860-3001.

****Make additional copies of this form as needed****