

THE MAINE Legionnaire



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OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF MAINE

31 Pages

Be The One Comes to Maine

The mental health crisis across the United States has become a silent epidemic throughout our communities, with veterans among the most adversely affected. According

to the 2020 Maine Veteran Suicide Data Sheet, there were 228 suicides in Maine that year, 38 were U.S. veterans — numbers American Legion Post Commander and State Judge Advocate Julie Flynn and National Eastern Division National Security Chairman, Debra Rumery, could not ignore. Together, they have taken the lead on an initiative that cuts through the stigma and encourages open, honest conversations about mental health and suicide prevention.

Together, Flynn and Rumery have spearheaded the Maine Be The One program for the American Legion's Nationwide Be The One training initiative. They have also created a class structure that aligns with the VA S.A.V.E. program, and they spend many weekends traveling the



Be The One Training: Auxiliary National Eastern Division National Security Chairman Debra Rumery, left, and Gray Post 68 Commander and Dept. Judge Advocate Julie Flynn, right, have taken the lead on an initiative that cuts through the stigma and encourages open, honest conversations about mental health and suicide prevention.

Photo by Jose Leiva

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2025 American Legion State Oratorical Winner: Caroline S. Straw of Cape Elizabeth, a senior at Cape Elizabeth High School receives her 1st place awards from State Commander Tricia Thurston at the State Oratorical Contest held Feb. 8 at the Maine State HQ facility in Winslow. Caroline represented District 2 and So. Portland Post 35 during the state competition winning \$1500. In May, Caroline will travel to Michigan to represent Maine in the National Finals for a chance to win up to \$25,000. Left to right, State Oratorical Judges Angela Armstrong and Sean Currie, State Commander Tricia Thurston, Oratorical Winner Caroline Straw, Oratorical Judge Kirk Schaub, and Oratorical Judge/Past Department Commander Kirk Thurston.

Topsham Post 202 Hosts Winter Classic Softball Tournament

The Winter Classic Softball Tournament comes from a place of humble beginnings. Eleven years ago, three members of The Corey E. Garver American Legion Post 202 wanted to do something to help Maine veterans who were struggling with everyday life. Some were homeless, while others struggled with mental illness and addiction. These brave men and women were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice so that citizens of this great nation maintained their freedom. From this beginning, the Winter Classic Softball Tournament became Post 202's way of giving back to our brothers and sisters.

Eleven years ago, only \$1,000 was raised. Because of the support of many businesses, teams, musicians, and various people, our total for this year is approaching \$30,000, bringing our cumulative 11-year total to over \$100,000.

The success of this tournament would not be possible were it not for many businesses, teams, and families that have donated cash or auction items to raise money for this worthy cause. Gratitude also goes to the many volunteers who have spent countless hours, not for the recognition, but only to help our Maine veterans with a hand up when needed. There are no words strong enough to convey gratitude for all Post members and the community have done.

In closing, a photo was just forwarded to us from a team captain. It is a photo of Veteran CJ Barlett from "Team Grateful." It is a poignant representation of what all of us at Corey E. Garver American Legion Post 202 represents.

Submitted by Post 202 and Dept. Finance Officer Mary "Tally" Brown



Supporting Veterans: Veteran CJ Barlett, Team Captain of "Team Grateful" stands with an American Flag at the annual Winter Classic Softball Tournament on Sat., Feb. 18 in Topsham, where American Legion members came together to support a worthy cause. This event is designed to raise money to be donated towards an organization that works directly with homeless veterans within the state of Maine.

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RENEW ONLINE TODAY!

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with the camera on your phone
or visit:

WWW.LEGION.ORG/RENEW



Commander's Comments

Follow Legionnaires, It was great to see everyone who attended Mid-Winter Conference in January. My hope that 2025 continues to bring you endless joy, good health, success, and cherished



**PATRICIA
"TRICIA"
THURSTON**

moments with your friends and families.

As we continue into 2025, let us remember to check in on our members, veterans and their families. Your call can mean the world to them, especially if they are in need of support or just need someone to talk to. Invite them to a special event or meeting your Post is having. Include them in some way. Support them in feeling welcomed.

I want to personally thank all those who have supported The American Legion Family Project for Mission Working Dogs. Your personal donations sent in as well as all Post, Squadron, and Unit events for this project are greatly appreciated. I cannot wait to present the final check to Christy to support MWD. We still have a few months to go for this project. Please support if you are able to.

You may have taken an officer's position within your Post and when you did, you should have been given a charge. Look back on that charge and see if you are indeed holding up the commitment of your new leadership role which is to uphold the organization's values and mission. The installation charge is a reminder of the core values of The American Legion, including advocating for veterans, supporting their families, and contributing to the community.

Think about the following information. My hope is that it helps in some way to lead you in a positive direction into 2025 for The American Legion. Make your Post something your members want to belong to.

Ideas taken from the Officer's Manual: Initiation ceremonies are good membership stabilizers. Keep working on membership, especially by contacting those who became delinquent Jan. 1. January is a good time to present flags and copies of the flag code to local schools. Check dates for post, district and state Oratorical contests. As of Jan. 30, we had only one contestant to compete for State Oratorical. I know it is getting tougher to find students to compete. Don't give up! We need to keep trying to revive the Oratorical Contest. March is Community Service Month, so now is the time to plan initiatives and projects. A community assessment can reveal areas

where additional effort is needed most. All months are also listed in the Officer's Manual to give thoughts and ideas of things that can be accomplished monthly. Before you know it, Dirigo State will be upon us. Start getting the word out to schools and businesses to support the process. Being proactive for this program has proven it to be successful.

Support the Department and our 1st Vice Commander Leroy McKenzie with membership. He has worked very hard to keep you all informed of membership totals, given ideas and more to support you. Please don't sit on membership. Process it and send it in! If you are not receiving these updates, please reach out to your Districts to find out why.

At our conference in January, our Service Officer Carl brought up a very important topic. The topic was the fact that we are getting away from acknowledging our Legionnaires and the hard work they do for the Legion and our communities. He gets very few submissions for Service Officer of the Year. We all know you have service officers in your Posts and Districts who are doing amazing work. Take the time to do a write up to submit their name for this award. Let's flood Department with submissions. While we are on the subject of awards, remember to submit the names and write ups for all those who are going above and beyond for the many categories we have for awards. It can be mind-boggling when the committees go to review the write-ups and find one or two to consider. Let's do this and get recognition to those who are doing the work and are deserving of the award.

I was wondering if you are all aware of the meaning behind each clause of our Preamble we recite before "every" meeting. If not, here you go! You can find the following information and so much more on legion.org

THE AMERICAN LEGION PREAMBLE "For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a 100-percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

Each of the 10 clauses of the Preamble, though brief, has a world of meaning.

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY,

[More on "CMDR'S COMMENTS" Page 4](#)

A 'First' Look

Hello everyone. Wow, this year is flying by faster than I can keep track of. I mean seriously, we are already less than 5 months until State Convention. Where has the time gone?

I want to start by thanking each one of you for everything that you do. I know a lot of times it seems that we are not thanked for the hours we spend volunteering in this amazing organization, but I want you to know that every hour that you spend fighting to get those memberships and renewals do not go unnoticed. Without each of you, The American Legion Department of Maine would not be what it is today. We are truly blessed to have you all volunteering. Rest assured that we could not do it without each of you. So thank you.

To all of you who attended Mid-Winter Conference in Brewer, thank you for taking the time during the snowy weather to spend the day with us. There were a lot of informative speakers, and I know personally, I took home knowledge that I did not have before. It was great to see



**LEROY
MCKENZIE**

so many familiar and fresh faces there. That just goes to show how much we all care about The American Legion. For those of you who were not able to attend, we hope that you can attend the State Convention in June.

I was honored to be able to sit and speak with National Vice Commander Robbins and talk a little bit about membership and our membership plan. He said that we were doing a great job and to keep that up as we head into our next stretch. While we did not reach our 80% target goal, we were extremely close and for that I am very grateful. Our next target goal of 85% will be due on Wed., Feb. 12th. Once again, I believe in my heart of hearts that we can make this goal.

The membership plan for February states that we should continue contacting members on our Post delinquent list as well as continue working on the DMS expired lists from 2021, 2022, and 2023. Some of the monthly challenges include holding a 4 Chaplain Ceremony, celebrating Presidents Day, to begin planning The American Legion's birthday, and to start working towards the March target goal of 90%. That date will be March 12.

Let's remember as we step into this new year, I want to take a moment to encourage each of you to continue working on our

[More on "A 'FIRST' LOOK" Page 7](#)

A 'Second' Look

I want to thank all who ventured out in the snow to attend Mid-Winter Conference 2025. We had an amazing group of attendees. There was a lot of information provided to everyone, so please make sure you are passing this along to all others in your posts and districts. There were a lot of guest speakers, including Cristy Gardner, who spoke on Mission Working Dogs. Julie Flynn spoke on BE THE ONE and Dirigo State, and I spoke on reports which will be coming to you soon.

Posts will soon be getting the Annual Post Data Report from Headquarters, which is due to the Department no later than April 15th.

Consolidated Post Report (CPR): You can send this report two ways: you can go to www.mylegion.org to submit, or use the paper method. The CPR may



**JOSEPH "JOE"
MICHAUD**

be the most beneficial document the post will complete. The Post's information combined with other Posts, is used when the National Commander and others testify on Capitol Hill as mandated by our federal charter. This form is due to Department by May 29, and to National by July 1.

Notification of Post/Squadron Commanders & Adjutants Form: Submitted as soon as new officers are elected for the current year, but no later than July 1. The Post Adjutant is to complete and submit to Department, even if the Post does not have a Squadron.

Post Officers Form: This form must be filled out even if there are no changes from the previous year. The form is due to the Department by July 1.

District Officers Form: This form is to be filled out by the district adjutant and submitted to the Department by July 1, even if there are no changes for the previous year.

The last three reports can be found on the Department's website at www.mainelegion.org under

[More on "A 'SECOND' LOOK" Page 7](#)

NEC Update

He 110 Legionnaires.

It was great to see some of you at the Mid-Winter Conference on Jan. 11. Despite the weather not fully cooperating, the attendance, I think, was good. There was a lot of information put out and we were the host to our regional National Vice Commander Chuck Robbins from the state of New Jersey. He told me he had a great visit and our hospitality hit the top.

As we start a new calendar year, we all should look back on the past calendar year and be very thankful of the accomplishments we have achieved through-out the department from the mid-winter conference last year, to the state convention held in June, to all the meetings of the committees in the department. We have had a great group of officers who lead the department. I have said before we are not movie stars or high-profile individuals—we are just ordinary people accomplishing extraordinary things. Let's keep up the great work. We have to work together to keep on reaching the top.

In a couple of months, the National Executive Committee will be meeting for the Spring Meetings on May 5-8 in



LLOYD WOODS

Indianapolis. The committee will be doing the business of our great organization and like the Department Executive Committee of the State of Maine. The committee has a set of rules that each member should have to refer to, if and when asked.

Each member of the committee is assigned to a committee as a liaison committee chair or a member of the committee. These assignments are made at the national convention effective at the conclusion of the convention. There are some duties to go along with being assigned to the various committees. Any information received would be brought back to the respective departments for dissemination to the members.

As you may know, the individual seeking the high office of National Commander for the coming 2025-2026 is from the state of Kansas. His name is Dan Wiley. I have been on the NEC Sub-Committee of Resolutions with Dan and know him well. He has scheduled to visit Maine at our department convention this coming June. As previously been done, we are asking for donations to help support his quest to gain that position. Many departments do this and have done so when our own Tony Jordan ran for the office. If you can, please consider a donation to this campaign.

Thank you for all you do, have done and will continue to do. If I can be of any assistance, please contact me at lloydwoods12@gmail.com or 207-557-4971.

“PROUD TO SERVE”

On the Agenda

MARCH 2025 MEETINGS

- District 1 – York:** Mar. 15, Biddeford Post 26, 12:00 p.m.
- District 3 – Androscoggin:** Mar. 17, Sabattus Post 135, 6:30 p.m.
- District 5 – Oxford:** Mar. 19, Norway Post 82, 7:00 p.m., Meeting & Election of District 5 Officers, Refreshments After
- District 9 – Kennebec:** Mar. 12, Gardiner Post 4, 6:00 p.m.
- District 13 – Penobscot:** Mar. 2, Brewer Post 98, Meeting 2:00 p.m.
- District 14 – Piscataquis:** Mar. 15, Brownville Jct. Post 92, 12:00 p.m. Lunch, 1:00 p.m. Meeting

APRIL 2025 MEETINGS

- District 2 – Cumberland:** Apr. 8, Gray Post 86, 7:00 p.m., Social Hour at 5:00 p.m. Past, Commander Dinner 6:00 p.m., Officer Elections
- District 3 – Androscoggin:** Apr. 21, Turner Post 111, 6:30 p.m.
- District 5 – Oxford:** Apr. 16, Rumford Post 24, 7:00 p.m., Installation of District 5 Officers, Light supper at 6:00 p.m.
- District 9 – Kennebec:** Apr. 9, Richmond Post 132, 6:00 p.m.
- District 12 – Hancock:** Apr. 10, Blue Hill Post 85, Dinner at 6:00 p.m., Meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- District 13 – Penobscot:** Apr. 6, Old Town Post 75, Meeting at 2:00 p.m.
- District 14 – Piscataquis:** April 19, Dexter Post 53, 12:00 p.m. Lunch, 1:00 p.m. Meeting
- District 17 – N. Aroostook:** Apr. 6, St. Francis Post 180, 12:00 p.m. Meal, Mtg. at 1:00 p.m., Officer Nominations

MAY 2025 MEETINGS

- District 2 – Cumberland:** May 18, Yarmouth Post 91, 2:00 p.m. Lunch at 1:00 p.m., Post Everlasting, Swear in Officers
- District 5 – Oxford:** May 21, West Paris Post 151, 7:00 p.m., Supper at 6:00 p.m.
- District 9 – Kennebec:** May 14, Clinton Post 186, 6:00 p.m.
- District 12 – Hancock:** May 13, Ellsworth Post 63, Dinner at 6:00 p.m., Meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- District 13 – Penobscot:** May 4, Howland Post 97, Meeting at 2:00 p.m.
- District 14 – Piscataquis:** May 17, Greenville Post 94, 12:00 p.m. Lunch, 1:00 p.m. Meeting
- District 16 – So. Aroostook:** May 3, Caribou Post 15, 12:00 p.m. Elections
- District 17 – N. Aroostook:** May 11, Madawaska Post 147, 12:00 p.m. Meal, Meeting at 1:00 p.m., Elections

Be The One Challenge Coin & Lobster Lapel Pin Order Form

Be The One Challenge Coin and Lobster Lapel Pin order forms are now available for your Post to utilize, giving members multiple ways to order! Simply print and provide the forms at your Post.

[Click Here To Download The Form](#)



American Legion Post 24 to Honor Vietnam Era Veterans at the Vietnam Era Veterans Luncheon



**184 Congress St., Rumford
Sunday, March 23, 2025**

Schedule of events 10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Refreshments, haircuts, lunch, and relaxing while visiting with other Vietnam Era Veterans who have served.

Lunch approx. 12:30 p.m.
Free raffles and more!

You do not need to be a Legion member to attend.

This event is planned for all Vietnam Era Veterans and is at no charge to them. Please plan to stay for group pictures.

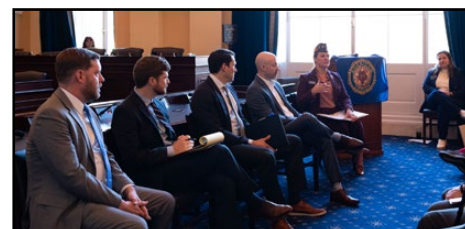
Please share with all Vietnam Era Veterans!

Please contact Tricia Thurston at 207-357-3289 to RSVP.

Historic Legion Gathering on Capitol Hill

Legislative Commission and Council prep for congressional visits in the hearing room of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

In what is believed to be a historic first, The American Legion Legislative Commission and Council conducted their national Washington Conference meeting Monday in the hearing room of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs at




Washington Conference: Legion members gather in Washington, D.C. on Mon., Feb. 24 on Capitol Hill to meet with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Photo by Hilary Ott, The American Legion

the Cannon Office Building on Capitol Hill.

To that point, American Legion Legislative Commission Chairman Matthew Shuman asked the assembled advocates to soak it in. “I encourage you to take a moment, look around, and feel the weight of this space,” he said. “This where the fate of veteran health care is debated. This is where the doors to better benefits can be opened or slammed shut. This has been the birthplace of policy that has changed lives for the better and the battlefield where flawed legislation has been stopped before it could become law. Every brick in this room, every chair, every microphone – everything in this room – has witnessed the shaping of veterans policy in America...” **Click Here to Read the Full Article:** www.legion.org/information-center/news/washington-conference/2025/february/historic-legion-gathering-on-capitol-hill



**THE MAINE
Legionnaire**

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■ "CMDR'S COMMENTS" (Continued from Page 1)

WE ASSOCIATE OURSELVES TOGETHER...This is the introduction. It declares that The American Legion recognizes the influence of Almighty God in all worthwhile endeavors and declares the allegiance of Legionnaires to both God and Nation. First things have been put first. All that follows is in conformity.

TO UPHOLD AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA...The Constitution of The United States is the written bulwark of our free way of life and representative government. It is our guarantee of liberty, freedom, justice and democracy. Members of The American Legion bore-arms went to wars to defend and uphold this document of freedom.

TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER... Without law and order, liberty would become license. Law and order protect our pursuit of happiness, one of our God-given rights. Members of The American Legion served in wars to uphold law and order among nations. It is just as important to maintain the due processes of law in our domestic affairs. It binds Legionnaires to obey the laws of the land and to support the constituted authorities in enforcing those laws. It means the citizen must never take the law into his own hands!

TO FOSTER AND PERPETUATE A 100 PERCENT AMERICANISM... Americanism is the gist of the American ideals of freedom, justice, individual rights and unfenced-in opportunities. It embraces all the freedoms we cherish and all the rights that are guaranteed to us. It is the very opposite of hatred, bigotry and intolerance. Americanism is the creed that has blazed the world-wide trail for justice, fair play, decency, belief in God,

private enterprise, universal education, and progress in all human endeavors. It puts a premium on the virtues of loyalty, patriotism, hard work and thrift.

TO PRESERVE THE MEMORIES AND INCIDENTS OF OUR ASSOCIATIONS IN ALL WARS... Service in defense of America is the greatest experience in the lifetimes of all veterans. Recalling the highlights of that service means more than flashbacks to tense moments of excitement and danger in battle, the grime of muddy trenches, the perils of sub-infested oceans, the combats in the wild blue yonder. It means also the un-erasable recollection of the comradeship, the bravery of pals, the teamwork, the sacrifices, the miseries and hardships of military campaigns shared in common. It means the bond that binds all ex-servicemen and women together in mutual affection, respect and gratitude. It also means keeping green forever the memories of the supreme sacrifices of gallant American patriots, sacrifices necessary to the winnings of wars. It means faithful annual observance of Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

TO INCULCATE A SENSE OF INDIVIDUAL OBLIGATION TO THE COMMUNITY, STATE AND NATION... Always interested in building a better nation, the founders of The American Legion believed that such building must start first with the individual in his own community. So they made it one of the cardinal principles of The American Legion to inculcate that sense of personal obligation to the community, state and nation into the individual citizen. That means educating the citizen-young, old and future-in his and her responsibility to be active in making the hometown a better place in which to live, in discharging the duty of voting in elections, in paying taxes promptly, in contributing

to community chest funds and to blood banks. The word "inculcate" means "to impress by frequent admonitions" and "to enforce by frequent repetitions." Like the duties themselves, the reminders that they remain to be carried forward, are never finished.

TO COMBAT THE AUTOCRACY OF CLASSES AND MASSES...This clause places the Legionnaire on the side of right in opposing autocracy by either class or mass when this threatens. In a democracy such as ours, composed as it is of all nationalities, races, creeds and economic groups, there are bound to both classes and masses. Indeed, the masses are composed of classes-but all groups within the mass must feel assured that in this nation, reason and fairness will prevail in all human activities and relations. There must be no hyphenated Americans-just Americans all.

TO MAKE RIGHT THE MASTER OF MIGHT...All wars from the veterans of which The American Legion draws its membership were started by dictators who wanted their might to be the right. If human freedom is not to perish from the earth, right must always be master of might. The rights of small nations must be protected against the tyranny that powerful neighbors may seek to impose on them just as the rights of minorities in our society must be protected and respected. Our belief in enthroning right over might is the main essence of our ideological conflict with Communism today. Legionnaires are pledged by this clause always to stand with the right, protect the weak and preserve the liberties of the individual. This concept is the basis of The American Legion's continued advocacy of a strong national preparedness so as to achieve the ideal situation that right will be backed by adequate might.

TO PROMOTE PEACE AND GOOD WILL ON EARTH...Until all the world becomes a good neighborhood, Legionnaires must continue the effort to promote peace and goodwill on earth. It is in pursuance of this founding ideal that The American Legion has supported from the beginning and seek to strengthen the United Nations organization. Obliquely, The American Legion also contributes to this ideal by firmly supporting a strong national defense to discourage breaking of the peace by aggressor.

TO SAFEGUARD AND TRANSMIT TO POSTERITY THE PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY...On this ideal of safeguarding and transmitting to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy, all of the youth-training programs of The American Legion are built. All Americans can be proud that in our international relations we have tried to live by the golden rule, the mark of justice. We have granted to others, as we prize it ourselves, the great boon of freedom. Through the Monroe Doctrine, we call a halt to foreign imperialism in the

Western Hemisphere. We gave freedom to the Philippines. These principles are part of the American heritage. Legionnaires are pledged to protect and preserve that heritage.

TO CONSECRATE AND SANCTIFY OUR COMRADESHIP BY OUR DEVOTION TO MUTUAL HELPFULNESS...The last or 10th clause of our Preamble is the most important ideal expressed in our Preamble. It marked a new concept in America-a concept that made The American Legion the greatest force for social betterment in all the history of the United States. Let us be factual and examine this.

At the close of World War I, America was just emerging from its lusty era of rugged individualism. It was an era when the individual hammered out his own destiny and progress with little or no help from the government. An honest facing of the facts brings out that American society was then a cold society insofar as any organized public hands of helpfulness were concerned. The individual who fell upon evil times was left to private charity which meant mostly the churches and the Salvation Army. There were no public resources or services to help the unfortunates.

When the veterans of World War I came marching home, they found the nation utterly unprepared to care for the combat casualties of the war. The wounded, the shell-shocked and the sick were lodged in poor houses, jails, asylums or what-have-you.

Veterans of World War I were much more closely knit than those of World War II. They trained in the same camps, fought on the one great front. Those who came home un-scarred were appalled by the plight of their less fortunate comrades. They felt a concern for them and their dependents which was a new and dramatic action aspect to what the country had known as friendship. This concern formed the bond among the charter members of The American Legion and gave them a great and noble cause to fight for-the adequate care and protection of their disabled comrades and dependents, the war widows and orphans.

They faced a monumental task. Laws had to be drafted and enacted by the Congress to provide compensation for the war-handicapped, to build hospitals and to get protection for the widows and orphans upon whom the war had laid its heaviest and cruelest hand.

The American Legion wrote such laws, had them introduced in the Congress, went out over the land to arouse the conscience of the people of America and mobilize support for its legislative aims. It did both with a sacrificial fervor that overcame all obstacles.

The Congress enacted the laws, it provided the administrative machinery, it appropriated the funds, it built hospitals. Then to bring about a single

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■ "CMDR'S COMMENTS" (Continued from Page 4)

responsibility for the carrying out of all veteran laws and to achieve a unification of these government services, The American Legion put through Congress the legislation to create the Veterans Bureau which has become the Veterans Administration of today. Over the years, a great network of government hospitals was built and a great structure of veteran legislation enacted which made the American veterans the best cared for on earth. The rehabilitation program of The American Legion for the World War I veteran brought about in its successful development a great awakening of social responsibility in America.

When the New Deal Program was being developed, the government planners took a look at what The American Legion, through its vast rehabilitation program, had done for the veteran of World War I and they decided to do the same thing for all American people.

So out of the rehabilitation brain child of The American Legion, there came the Social Security System with its retirement benefits and old age assistance programs for all the people. The planners took a look at The American Legion program of temporary emergency aid to needy children of veterans and there was born with the support of Legionnaires—the state and federal program of aid to dependent children all children.

This is how we can hail The American Legion today as an unparalleled force in these United States for social betterment. American Legion concepts and its ideal of devotion to mutual helpfulness warmed up the whole social climate of America. Today, America is extending its helpful hands all over the world through our assistance programs of foreign aid.

It all came about because the veterans of World War I came home enriched with wonderful ties of friendship and gave those ties a meaning by consecrating them to the ideal of mutual helpfulness.

The American Legion Preamble has been the beacon light of The American Legion for more than 100 years. It has been amended only twice in all that time. The last amendment consisted of removing reference to the "The Great" and adding the "All". It makes the Preamble read today "All Wars," so as to embrace all wars.

I hope this interpretation helps in better understanding our Preamble. It is important that your Post and District is reciting it before every meeting.

I appreciate all you do! You all make a difference in one way or another. Remember that "YOU ALL MATTER." I hope to see you all soon. Remember all upcoming events are listed on our Department website: www.mainelegion.org. Check them out and plan to attend and support.

Thank you for reading.

Department Commander
Patricia "Tricia" Thurston



Women Veterans Luncheon: The 11th Annual Women Veterans Luncheon was held at Rumford Post

on Sat., Nov. 16, 2024. There were around 60 veterans who attended, along with those at resource tables and our amazing Legion Family volunteers.

Commander's Project 2024: Mission Working Dogs

Department Commander Patricia Thurston asks that each Post and Legionnaire support her goal.

Their MISSION

To improve the lives of their community members who are living with a disability by providing them with properly trained service dogs to help them live more independently despite a physical disability and by providing therapy dogs which will bring mental well-being to the people of Maine such as those in nursing homes, hospitals, and schools.

Their VISION

At Mission Working Dogs, we train purpose-bred dogs to aid individuals with disabilities so that the handler can live a life to the fullest and more independently.

Their GOAL

Service dogs can assist those with physical disabilities such as mobility impairments by fetching dropped items, opening doors, and turning on and off lights. They can also help individuals with PTSD by learning to recognize an increase in anxiety, carrying medications, and providing deep pressure therapy to calm or redirect the handler. Dogs working as facility dogs are often trained to recognize a patient's affected side in the case of a stroke and to approach on the side the patient is able to pet with or throw the ball. Patients are able to work on fine motor movements in petting or caring for the dog as well as gross motor skills playing fetch with a dog that's able to bring the ball exactly to where the patient needs, such as on a side table or directly into their hand, rather than on



the ground or trying to play tug with it inappropriately.

Their PLAN

Service dogs are generally trained for approximately two years and undergo a wide range of assessments on their physical health,

temperament, and tasks or skills to make sure they can properly support their handler throughout life.

Their HOPES & DREAMS

Past service dogs from our trainers are helping their handlers live longer and more independent lives. Therapy dogs from their program work in schools providing emotional support, laughter, or even a listening ear for reading programs. Students in behavioral programs have also benefited from becoming "junior handlers" and working on their own patience and compassion while learning to work with the dogs to help others.

If you would like to support Commander Thurston's project, please mail checks to:

The American Legion Dept. of Maine

Attn: Commander's Project

5 Verti Drive

Winslow, ME 04901-0727

Please place in the memo line of the check: *Commander's Project 2024-2025.*

To donate with a Debit or Credit Card, please call 207-873-3229 or visit: www.mainelegion.org and click on the DONATE button and make sure to type "Commander's Project" in the Note section.

Legionnaire Surprised with Two Tickets to Super Bowl

Maine's Matthew Jabaut presented the tickets by New England Patriots quarterback Drake Maye on behalf of USAA.

"What's your favorite sport?" I asked Matthew Jabaut, The American Legion's National Veterans Employment & Education Commission chairman.

"Football!" he answered emphatically.

"Well, that's interesting, because there's been something I've been meaning to ask you ..." I started.

That's when a meaty hand found its way onto Matthew's shoulder. Startled, especially given that he was in mid-interview with cameras running everywhere, he turned around to come eye-to-eye with New England Patriots quarterback Drake Maye.

"Oh my God ..." was his response as he jumped to his feet to greet the man

he'd watched all season on television.

"On behalf of USAA, I'd like to offer you two tickets to the Super Bowl!" Drake said with a huge grin on his face.

From there on out, my work was done, and the wonderful staff from USAA and The American Legion took over. Matthew gave Drake a tour of the historic Portland Maine Post 17, which has been in place since 1919. We saw photos of John Wayne visiting the post. We learned that Whitney Houston filmed a movie there. Drake then threw the football with Matthew, complimenting both his throwing and catching skills, which we will likely never hear the end of (he's texted fellow Patriots fans Mark Seavey and myself twice about it already). But then, after soaking in a little bit of time for

[More on "SUPER BOWL" Page 7](#)



New England Patriots Quarterback: Matt Jabaut, left, catches a football thrown by New England Patriots Quarterback Drake Maye, right, after Drake presented Matt with two tickets to the Super Bowl on behalf of USAA.

PACT Act, Year 2: Claims Warnings and Advice, and “the Foundation” the Measure Laid

SVA Conference attendees hear from American Legion and VFW experts on challenges and opportunities for today’s veterans seeking benefits and help after toxic exposure.

The landmark PACT Act of 2022 opened eligibility for VA health care and benefits to some 3.5 million veterans who previously did not qualify for federal support. So far since then, VA has approved more than 1 million claims from those who have suffered from toxic contamination while serving in specific areas at specific times as members of the U.S. Armed Forces, primarily in the post-9/11 era.

A panel discussion Saturday, Jan. 4, shared with attendees of the Student Veterans of America’s 17th National Conference some of the opportunities, lessons and threats that have emerged since the expansion of federal accountability to those who were exposed and sickened while serving in uniform.

Representing The American Legion in the discussion was Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division Policy Analyst Andrew Petrie. He was joined by Veterans of Foreign Wars Assistant Director of Field Operations Cindy Noel, a longtime provider of free VA claims assistance. The discussion was moderated by Kristina Keenan, VFW’s incoming legislative director, who gave an overview of the PACT Act and described it as “a first step” in delivering federal accountability to toxic-exposed veterans.

She explained that the PACT Act aggregated multiple pieces of legislation that addressed “not only burn-pit exposures but radiation exposures from post-World War II, hypertension due to Agent Orange exposure, K2/Uzbekistan, uranium exposures ... but the purpose of the PACT Act was to address mostly Iraq and Afghanistan burn-pit exposures. I say that because since the passage of the bill in 2022, our organizations have received a lot of feedback from veterans saying, ‘You left us out.’ The bill was not intended to cover every single toxic exposure out there, but to be a first step to addressing burn pit and particulate matter exposure in those areas and resolve some of the past exposures that had not yet been addressed. And thirdly, to create a framework for VA, going forward, to constantly be researching and addressing new toxic exposures.”

Marine Corps veteran Petrie, a former SVA chapter president and survivor of a life-threatening toxic-contamination cancer, spoke mainly on the health-care side of the PACT Act; dozens of diseases and adverse conditions became listed as presumably service-connected through the measure, including three new ones approved a week before the veterans gathered in Colorado Springs.

Following the session, Petrie said that work is now under way to identify and count “veterans who were left out of the PACT Act. I am thinking there may be a PACT Act 2.0 in the future, or something along those lines, maybe not something as big as the PACT Act, getting it in little pieces that are not so heavy in funding, not so scary for Congress.”

The PACT Act of 2022, he explained, “laid the groundwork and set us on a path in which we can continue to move forward and ensure that any potential future exposures – because we know that, unfortunately, there’s going to be more as time goes on – the process will become less arduous, with quicker turn-around, so there is not a 40-year wait, like Agent Orange, to be connected to a veteran’s service. So, they can potentially deal with those issues and be compensated for those disabilities they have endured, rather than at the end of their life.”

Noel, an Air Force veteran, has been a claims rep for over a decade and assisted with a claims clinic at the SVA’s conference. She offered the students critical advice about filing for VA benefits and appealing decisions, as well as a warning about so-called “claims sharks” in the private sector who charge veterans for services offered free by service officers trained by organizations like the VFW and The American Legion and accredited by VA.

Noel said aggressive private companies often operate illegally in the VA claims representation space, leaving many veterans with diminished benefits, debts and, worst of all, no results or accountability. “What they do is they promise servicemembers and veterans this large payout, and they can’t back it up,” Noel told the students. “It’s absurd. They are promising big, and they are not able to do anything.

[More on "PACTACT" Page 7](#)

Judge Advocate

Your Constitution and Bylaws: this article is a recap of the training provided at the Mid-Winter Conference.

“Your Constitution and Bylaws informs and educates members of a Post or District on the importance and power of properly written, reviewed, and updated documents, policies, and procedures. Constitution and Bylaws are your basis for governance. Preparing and adhering to updated Constitution and Bylaws will ensure a more successful organizational process and provide the structures to follow at all levels of our organization.

Your Constitution rarely changes; however, you should review them often to be knowledgeable in order to teach members. Your Bylaws should be reviewed annually and amended every 4-6 years or as needed.

No two Posts are alike. One Post may have an emphasis on Americanism programs, while another may support the local food pantry. With the changing needs or your community and members, the Bylaws should always be fluid.

To update the Bylaws of the Post, a proposed amendment must be presented to the appropriate governing body (usually a Post meeting), debated, and then voted on by members, with the necessary majority required for approval; any changes made must comply with the National American Legion Constitution and Bylaws and Department Constitution and Bylaws, and may need to be further reviewed by the Department level if necessary.

Key Points to remember:

Initiating change: A member or



JULIE FLYNN

group of members can propose a Bylaw amendment by submitting a written resolution outlining the proposed change.

Notice period: Most Bylaws require a set period of advance notice to members before a vote can be taken on an amendment. (30 days in advance, all members get written notification prior.)

Post level review: The proposed amendment will typically be discussed and debated at a regular post meeting.

Voting requirements: A majority vote of members present at the meeting is usually needed to approve a Bylaw amendment.

Department level review: Depending on the nature of the change, the amendment may need to be reviewed and approved by the Department leadership as well. You can always email me a copy for review.

Transparency and communication: Ensure all members are informed about proposed amendments and have access to the proposed changes well in advance of the vote.

Parliamentary procedure: Following established parliamentary rules, such as Roberts Rules of Order, can help guide the amendment process.

Lastly, send Department copies of all important paperwork. As we know, leadership changes often, and the next wave of officers and members may not have a copy of these papers. Department will archive a copy and keep on file. This is not only for Bylaws, but also for deeds, newsletters, historical letters, etc.

I hope you have found this useful and informative.

Department Judge Advocate
Julie Flynn



Mid-Winter Conference: Left photo, the 3rd Place 2024 Hard-Copy National Historian Contest Award is presented to Camden Post 30 at Mid-Winter Conference on Jan. 11 in Brewer. Left to right, Dept. 2nd Vice Joseph Michaud, Dept. Commander Tricia Thurston, Camden Post 30 Commander Rev. Dave Franclemont, Dept. Historian Jeff Sukeforth, and Dept. 1st Vice Leroy McKenzie. Right photo, left to right, Dept. Chaplain Danielle Begert, Dept. Commander Tricia Thurston, and Dept. Judge Advocate Julie Flynn.

"A FIRST LOOK"

(Continued from Page 2)

membership plan, to continue making buddy checks, and to continue to stress the importance of focusing on renewals while not forgetting to try to recruit new members by showing our brothers and sisters that we care. Show them all that we are invested in each other. We can bring an unparalleled value into being a Legionnaire by doing so. Members are not just maintaining a connection to this organization that we love, but we are all making an investment in its future. New memberships and renewals ensure that we can continue offering the resources, the programs, and the opportunities that bring us together and have helped us grow as we have done for over 105 years. Beyond that, memberships are a reflection of the trust and belief that we all place in our mission. Every time we renew our own membership, we are saying we believe in what we are doing and want to be a part of the journey

"A SECOND LOOK"

(Continued from Page 2)

FORMS/APPLICATIONS. These reports are important. The information contained in them goes into updating the Department Directory and mylegion.org.

Thank you for allowing me to serve

First Vice Commander
Leroy McKenzie

"PACT ACT"

(Continued from Page 6)

(Accredited VSOs) file claims for free. We're accredited by VA. We actually review medical records. We actually know the law. We know what (veterans) can claim."

Noel explained that veterans have to "do the legwork" to get their initial VA claims filed correctly to avoid delays and disappointment. That means the veteran must collect all possible evidence – medical and military records, even documentation about employment missed due to a condition and e-mail threads – in order to file efficiently and get an answer in a short period of time. "It's so important to get it right the first time," Noel said. "I don't like to go back and forth with VA. I don't think anybody wants to do that."

And, she added, whenever a claim or appeal is denied, or a service-connected disability rating comes in lower than expected, VA lists the reasons and missing information that the veteran would need to get a decision upgraded or changed. Veterans need to read those explanations carefully and meet the conditions to make their cases for a change, she said.

Petrie added that indeed, "sometimes VA makes mistakes." In those cases, veterans can then file a notice of dis-

ahead. A Legionnaire's renewal means we can dream bigger, we can achieve more, and we can continue to make a difference.

Please do not forget to take the time to look at the Legion Plus App. It is a step-by-step PowerPoint tutorial to sign up new members that was put together by the Department Commander of Maryland, and it is one of the simplest and quickest ways to sign up a new member. If you would like more information, please reach out to me.

Remember, together we are stronger, more impactful, and ready to tackle whatever challenges come our way. As always, if you are a card-carrying member of The American Legion, membership is your responsibility as well. So, let's all work together and get those memberships turned in and more importantly, processed.

See you soon and once again thank you for all you do!

First Vice Commander
Leroy McKenzie

as your Department of Maine Second Vice Commander. I'm looking forward to seeing you at your Posts and the upcoming State Convention in June.

Keep up the great you all do for The American Legion and your communities.

Department Second Vice
Joseph Michaud

agreement or a supplemental claim. "Just because VA said something doesn't always make it true, or in accordance with your evidence," Petrie told the students. "Remember, you're your own best advocate. VA, they're doing their job, and they're trying to their best job. But at the end of the day, who's going to fight better for you? Nobody but yourself."

Noel echoed that point, noting that VA decisions will come faster or more accurately, when a veteran works with an accredited service officer to ensure all the correct documentation accompanies a claim. Incomplete documentation is the primary reason for long delays or unsatisfactory results, she said. "Do your legwork. This is your claim."

And while accredited service officers are working night and day against a hurricane of new claims since the PACT Act, Petrie, Noel and Keenan said free representation is available and more sensible than looking to the private sector and paying for it. If a VSO service officer has too heavy a docket, Petrie suggested county or city veterans division for assistance, or simply try another VSO who may have openings.

Legion.org
By Jeff Stoffer
January 06, 2025

"SUPER BOWL"

(Continued from Page 5)

himself with Drake, he switched gears and did what Matthew always does - he educated everyone about the Legion.

So while a very classy Drake Maye took the time to shake hands, speak with and take photos with every single veteran present, Matthew talked about the Legion's veteran assistance programs, youth programs and history. I think somewhere in there he may have even paid for Drake to join the Sons of The American Legion, but I'm not sure because at that point, Matthew had Drake pinned in a corner with no way of escaping until he passed a 37-question test on the Legion.

While that's obviously a joke, it's very obvious why USAA and The American Legion chose Matthew for this honor: From the second I landed in Maine, until the second I left (even after he realized I was there as a decoy and not primarily to interview members of the Maine Legion), he put me to work.

The day before Drake Maye gave Matthew two Super Bowl tickets, I ar-



New England Patriots Quarterback Drake Maye, left, and **National Executive Committeeman Alternate Matt Jabaut, right, pose with two Super Bowl LIX tickets on Jan. 8 at Portland Post 17.**

Photo Courtesy USAA

rived in Portland with my three-man crew. Fifteen minutes later, we were on a two-hour drive to a post that Matthew was proud of and wanted interviewed. Three hours later, we were on our way to another that was 45 minutes away. We left there at 9 p.m., and Matthew had a third he wanted us to visit, but thankfully, Department of Maine Adjutant Jason Hall saved us and told him maybe it was time to call it a night.

Matthew was a little frustrated, worried that some of the great Legionnaires from his state wouldn't get their time in the sun, but he acquiesced only after we agreed to visit that post and two others the next day after we interviewed him at Post 17. So we did.

And when Drake Maye finally left, and the excitement of the Super Bowl tickets given to him by USAA was absorbed, he suddenly got very serious. "You're still going to go visit those posts and interview them, right? It's really important to them."

"Of course we are," I responded. We loaded up the vehicles and followed Matthew around the great state of Maine until night fell, all the fast food restaurants were closed, and we welcomed the next day.

There are a lot of great members of The American Legion that probably deserve two tickets to the Super Bowl for the incredible work they do for their posts, their states and their communities. But I will tell you this: Matthew Jabaut left no doubt that he was one of them.

Congratulations to Matthew. Thanks to Jason Hall, to Joe Rich from Post 17, to Drake Maye from the New England Patriots and his lovely bride-to-be for giving all of us so much of your attention, and to USAA for looking out for the men and women who look out for veterans. It was a fantastic event.

Click Here to Watch the Video: www.facebook.com/share/p/18j4tjN-MY/

Legion.org
By Nick Palmisciano
January 24, 2025

Attending Super Bowl an 'Unbelievable' Experience for Maine Legionnaire



Superbowl: Dept. National Executive Committeeman Alternate Matt Jabaut, right, attends Super Bowl weekend in New Orleans with his fiancée, U.S. Navy veteran Caroline Yarmala, left.

Matthew Jabaut attended Super Bowl 59 in New Orleans via The American Legion and USAA's Salute to Service... **Click Here to Read the Full Article:** www.legion.org/information-center/news/news/2025/february/attending-super-bowl-an-unbelievable-experience-for-maine-legionnaire

Service Office Update



**SERVICE OFFICER
CARL CURTIS**

Hello from the Service Office. I have been asked a lot of questions about survivor benefits lately, so I decided to cover it in this article. There seems to be a lot of confusion out there and I am hoping this may clear some of that up. Please remember that if you have a question, please call my office to get the answer.

The first benefit I will talk about is VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation. It is a tax-free monetary benefit paid monthly to either the surviving spouse, dependent child, or parent. The VA will determine who will be granted the benefit. To be eligible for this benefit we must look at the veterans cause of death. It must be determined that the cause of death was service connected or caused by service. There are three ways to meet this requirement. The first way is if the Veteran passes away on active duty, active duty for training or inactive duty training. The second is if the Veteran passed away as a result of a service-connected injury or disease. The third is if the Veteran did not die as a result of a service-connected injury or disease but were totally disabled by a service-connected disability for 10 years prior to death or 5 years if rated directly from release from military or 1 year if former POW. The monthly base payment for DIC effective December 1, 2024, is 1,653.07 per month.

The second benefit is Survivors Pension. A VA Survivors Pension offers monthly payments to qualified surviving spouses and unmarried dependent children of wartime Veterans who meet certain income and net worth limits set by Congress.

As you know there has been a lot of changes to presumptive conditions and locations not just for Vietnam era but the Gulf War Veterans with the signing of the PACT act. With these changes there may be surviving spouses out there that are now qualified for benefits that were not before.

PLEASE READ AND RESPOND TO YOUR MAIL FROM THE VA!

APPEALS OF CLAIMS.

The appeals process is no longer the strict structure it was. If your decision was after the 19th of February, you fall under the AMA. There are now five lanes you can choose from. The first two are at the regional level. They are called supplemental review and higher-level review. Then there are three ways to appeal directly to the Board of Veterans Appeals. They are direct, evidence only, and hearing. The time limit is now one year from each decision.

Contacting the DSO for Assistance by Telephone - Please just leave your name, phone number, and who you are working with.

Financial Assistance. Keep in mind that requests

for financial needs should be directed to your town/city for general assistance (GA), and either a local Legion post for a possible fundraiser or the American Legion Department Headquarters. In addition, we can make referrals to other service organizations, **but we do not have the funds to pay rent, mortgage, credit card bills or other ongoing bills. If you have children, mention TFA to the Department Adjutant when you call to see if you are eligible to apply.**

PSO Training Seminar. You do not have to be a Post Service Officer to attend training. You just have to care and want to make a difference. The next PSO training will be March. Please be on the lookout for its listing on the Department Facebook page or the Leadership Ledger.

PSO Contact Information. Post Service Officers, as a minimum, please send us your full name, Post,

frustrating to the veteran to keep resubmitting the same claim as it will most likely be denied.

NEW WAYS TO APPLY FOR VA HEALTHCARE

Sign up for VA Healthcare. Sign-up for VA Healthcare can now be done three ways! The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today it has eliminated paper signature requirements for veterans wishing to enroll in VA health care. Effective immediately, VA has amended its enrollment regulations to allow veterans to complete enrollment applications for enrollment in VA health care by telephone without the need for a paper signature.

By adding this telephone application option to VA's regulations with this amendment, VA will now offer three ways to enroll. This option provides Veterans a convenient third enrollment option.

1. Paper - VA Form 10-10 EZ.
2. Call 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Mon-Fri between 8 am and 8 pm, EST.
3. Online at www.vets.gov!

TOGUS VA WOMEN'S CLINIC. If you haven't already heard, there is a Women Veterans Clinic here at Togus. It specializes in women's health issues. Please keep in mind that there are medical conditions that may be claimable for the children of women veterans who served in certain areas and/or on certain ships that are presumptive for Agent Orange. If you are a woman veteran, it is a good idea to give us a call or look for more information on www.va.gov.

PLEASE USE THE DSO TO TRANSMIT YOUR CLAIMS/EVIDENCE TO THE VA THIS ENSURES A PAPER TRAIL AND EVIDENCE IT WAS SUBMITTED! You can either mail it or drop it off in the office!

DSO CONTACT INFORMATION. We are located at Togus VA Medical Center, Building 205, Room 318. You can contact us by telephone at 207-623-5726, Fax at 207-621-4821, or by email at carl.curtis2@va.gov, or julie.kern@va.gov. We are here

to assist you Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., on Friday the hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. We are closed on Federal Holidays and Patriot's Day. Just a reminder, it is always a good idea to make an appointment rather than drop in as we may be seeing other veterans and would hate to miss you. That said, you are always welcome to stop in the DSO Office.

REQUESTING A DSO PRESENTATION AT YOUR AREA/DISTRICT OR SPECIAL EVENT.

If you are interested in having us speak at your area, district meeting or event, just contact us to set up a time and date! Requests are handled on a first come first serve status, subject to the availability of travel funds. Please set aside at least **30 minutes** of your agenda for the presentation.

Attention

Post Service Officers



We Want You...

at our next Post Service Officer's Training Seminar

**For More Information
or to Sign up**

**Contact the Department Service Office
at**

**carl.curtis2@va.gov
or call: 207-623-5726**

To make a seminar reservation!

telephone number (your phone number will not be released) and email address. The purpose is so that members of your post can contact you for local assistance and also so that I can contact you, by phone or email, if we hear from a member in your post that needs assistance.

INTENT TO FILE. Some veterans are not ready to file a claim or are looking for additional information. In that case, you can execute an Intent to File with our office. That is NOT a claim for benefits. You have 1 year to file your claim; one year period! Failure to file in one year starts the clock on your claim from the day you file. **DO NOT FORGET TO FOLLOW UP AND FILE YOUR CLAIM!**

NEW AND MATERIAL EVIDENCE. VA claims that are denied and have not been appealed within the appropriate time frame require "New and Material Evidence" to be reopened. It is sometimes futile and

■ **"BE THE ONE"**
(Continued from Page 1)

state to deliver their two-hour training. "We developed the training for Maine in January 2024, and so far, we have trained 200 people this year," Rumery says. "We plan on doubling that in 2025."

When Flynn and Rumery decided to take on Be The One for Maine, there were no second thoughts or considerations. Flynn, a veteran herself, and Rumery, a veteran family member, take their long-standing responsibility seriously. The training they created for this program has been recognized five times on a national level since its creation.

"Being a veteran family member, it's our job to make sure our veterans are safe," Rumery says. "It's why we are here."

Ask the Question

The training Rumery and Flynn have created covers myths about suicide and misinformation that leads to the stigma around mental health. It also takes a deeper dive into the VA S.A.V.E. program and the importance of each step: know the Signs, Ask the questions, Validate the experience, and Expedite the veteran to help.

"While delivering this program, we've found 90% of people didn't know it was ok to ask the question 'Are you thinking of suicide?'" Flynn says.

Research has shown that asking someone if they are thinking about suicide does not give them the idea to want to die by suicide. In reality, it opens the door to a safe space for them to talk about their thoughts and feelings and get information on sources that can help. Be The One training gives people the knowledge and permission to ask the questions that could save someone's life.

Listen with Empathy

Empathetic listening is a skill that only comes naturally to some. According to Flynn and Rumery, you need to use your ears, eyes, and heart to listen empathetically. Listening to others this way opens you up to seeing and feeling the world the way they do and responding in a helpful way. When responding empathetically, it's important to acknowledge their feelings with a respectful tone, saying things like "What you're feeling is valid" or "That sounds really hard."

Flynn and Rumery's Be The One training gives attendees the awareness and skills needed to be effective, empathetic listeners for their loved ones.

Listening and responding with empathy can make a person feel valued and connected. Human connection and a safe space with an empathetic listener can be a lifeline for those struggling with a feeling of isolation that is often



Leading The Way: Auxiliary National Eastern Division National Security Chairman, Debra Rumery, left, and Department Judge Advocate Julie Flynn, right, in front of a Be The One training banner.

Photo by Jose Leiva

associated with suicidal thoughts.

Be The One to Save Someone

Maine's Be The One program, while geared towards helping save the lives of veterans, is not just for veterans or American Legion members. Anyone in the community is welcome to attend a training. Flynn and Rumery schedule four to five trainings a year for Legion members, leaving space in their schedule for others to request a training session.

Flynn and Rumery provide detailed, informative training that covers the VA S.A.V.E. program, empathetic listening, and even giving out gun locks when needed. An article on news.va.gov suggests if you put distance – like a gun lock – between the thought of suicide and the means to complete it, minds can be changed. Lives can be saved.

According to the same source, cable locks, trigger locks, and gun safes are all tools that can slow down the process and create distance between thought and action. Often, making the decision to attempt suicide and taking the action happens in a small window. Any tool used to help lengthen that window could save lives.

Flynn and Rumery's training provides knowledge of, resources for, and access to these life-saving tools.

"We are not trained psychologists; we are simply American Legion members that want to save our veteran's lives with an effective program," Rumery says.

Be The One training is more than an initiative or mission. Every training is a call to action for everyone to take responsibility for providing a safe space, an empathetic ear, and the resources to save lives.

Be The One - LA Metro Magazine
By Jessica Gendron-Labbe
Jan 13, 2025

Honor Flight Maine 2025

Honor Flight Maine will be hosting three charter flights in 2025:

Flight #1 from Bangor International Airport: **Apr. 25-27**

Flight #2 from Portland International Jetport: **June 27-29**

Flight #3 from Portland International Jetport: **Sept. 5-7**

Flight #4 from Bangor International Airport: **Oct. 10-12**



All Maine Veterans interested in going on a trip should go to HonorFlightMaine.org to apply. The site also contains applications for those wishing to be Guardian for a Veteran and for Volunteers. Honor Flight Maine is an all volunteer organization. Over 300,000 veterans have participated in their Honor Flight, and not one of them has paid a penny for their seat.

DIRIGO STATE PROGRAM



Colby College

4000 Mayflower Drive, Waterville, ME 04901

Sunday, June 15, 2025 - Friday, June 20, 2025

Registration: Sunday, June 15 at Noon

Graduation: Friday, June 20 at 3:00 pm

Cost per student is \$400

The forms that need completion and mailed to The American Legion, Department of Maine along with a check in the amount of \$400/student are: [Dirigo State Application](#), [Parental Consent](#), [Medical Authorization](#), and [Performing Arts \(if participating.\)](#)

Checks should be made payable to The American Legion, Department of Maine and mailed to The American Legion, Department of Maine, Attn: Dirigo State, 5 Verti Drive, Winslow, ME 04901-0727

For more information, please contact Dirigo State Director Matthew Leclair 207-693-7389 | dirigostateme@gmail.com or Dept. Adjutant Jason Hall 207-522-5471 | jason@mainelegion.org

Dirigo State Volunteers Needed!

BE THE ONE

2025 Training

2025 Training Dates:

April 19 | August 16 | October 18 | December 20

Where: Dept. of Maine Training Room
5 Verti Drive, Winslow, ME 04901

For more details on the Be The One campaign visit: betheone.org

To reserve your spot or for questions, email: betheonedeptme@gmail.com

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MAINE

OFFICIAL CALL FOR

ONE HUNDRED & FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

In accordance with Article IV of the Constitution and By-laws of the Department of Maine, The American Legion, the One Hundred and Sixth Annual State Convention is hereby called to convene in Brewer, Maine, June 6-7, 2025.

The first business session will be called to order at 12:00 p.m. daylight savings time, on the afternoon of Friday, June 6, 2025, with the final business session scheduled for Saturday morning, June 7, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. All general business sessions of the convention will be held at Jeff's Catering & Event Center, Brewer, Maine.

PURPOSE

The convention is called for the purpose of electing department officers for the ensuing year; to elect delegates and alternates to the 2025 National Convention to be held in Tampa Bay, FL; to receive reports of all department officers and standing committees; to consider the resolutions and actions of subordinate bodies and to transact any other business properly brought before the convention.

REPRESENTATION

Each post is entitled to one delegate and one alternate, and one additional delegate and alternate for each one hundred members or fractional part thereof paid up to May 7, 2025. A post with less than 15 members is not entitled to any delegates. All department officers, district commanders, and past department commanders, in good standing, shall be entitled to vote and have all the rights of delegates in the convention. These officers and past department commanders are delegates-at-large and must not be named as post delegates.

Alternate delegates are entitled to a seat in the convention but will have the right to vote only in the absence of the duly elected delegates. The decision of the selection of alternate delegates to represent absent delegates is a matter of decision within the respective delegations. All Legionnaires, Auxiliary members, Sons of the American Legion, and guests are invited to attend the convention as guests but have no voice or vote unless delegates.

RULES OF ORDER

The rules of procedure at the Department Convention shall be those set forth in Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised.

MEETINGS

The Resolutions Committee shall hold a public hearing on all resolutions submitted in accordance with the Constitution and By-laws at Jeff's Catering & Event Center on Friday,

June 6, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. All delegates and alternates and members of The American Legion are invited to attend the session. Following this public hearing, the Committee on Resolutions will go into an executive session to vote on resolutions to be brought before the body.

The Department Executive Committee will hold the first meeting at Jeff's Catering & Event Center on Sunday, June 8, 2025 at 8:00 a.m. All department officers, district commanders, and past department commanders are requested to attend.

CREDENTIALS

Each post will fill out the credential

paid by sending a check made payable to The American Legion, 5 Verti Drive, Winslow, Maine 04901-0727 or by visiting www.mainelegion.org.

NOMINATION AND ELECTIONS

At the first session of the Department Convention on Friday, June 6, 2025, nominations shall be made for the offices of Department Commander, Department Adjutant, Department First Vice Commander, Department Second Vice Commander, Department Finance Officer, Department Historian, Department Americanism Officer, and Department Sergeant-at-Arms.

Nomination of officers shall be made by registered delegates elected to repre-

will cast ballots immediately. Delegate's card, badge, convention registration, and your 2025 membership card must be displayed during voting.

Ballot Boxes will close promptly at 9:15 a.m.

UNIFORM OF THE DAY

The uniform of the day during the convention sessions will be The American Legion cap. Only the official representative of another veterans group may wear the cap of that organization in the convention hall.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

The department chaplain of The American Legion will conduct a Memorial Service to be held just prior to the conclusion of the Saturday session, June 7, 2025. Posts wishing to have deceased members included in the Post Everlasting Ceremony are requested to submit a list of the honored dead to Department Headquarters. Lists must include the name of deceased comrades and conflicts served. If your post files a Post Everlasting list for The Maine Legionnaire and said list is up to date, a second list is not necessary.

LAW AND ORDER

Order will be maintained at all times in the convention hall under the direction of the department sergeant-at-arms and his/her assistants. Delegates, alternates, and members attending the convention are requested to be courteous to all speakers and visitors to the convention.

PRESS

The department adjutant's staff will maintain press facilities during Convention sessions. The department adjutant must approve all communications from the Department Convention.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

A formal installation ceremony will be held Saturday, June 7, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. All department officers and district commanders will be sworn into office at that time and will automatically become members of the Department Executive Committee.

RAFFLES OR SALES ITEMS

There will be NO sales items or raffles at the Department Convention without the specific permission of the department adjutant.

This call will be read in all posts and district organizations and posted up on the bulletin boards of all posts. This call is being sent to the officers on record. If new officers have been elected, please transmit this information to them.

Official:

Jason Hall, Department Adjutant
Patricia Thurston, Department Commander

THE AMERICAN LEGION

106TH ANNUAL

STATE CONVENTION

June 6-7, 2025

Jeff's Catering and Event Center, Brewer
PLAN NOW TO ATTEND!

blank submitted by the department adjutant and return same to the Department Headquarters listing the delegates and alternates elected to represent the post. All delegates' registration must be prepaid.

All credentials must be verified by the Credentials Committee, which will be in session at Jeff's Catering & Event Center, Brewer, Maine, from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 7, 2025.

The department adjutant shall issue to each post, 30 days prior to the convention, a statement of the number of 2025 membership cards, accompanied by state and national dues, received at Department Headquarters on May 7, 2025. Listed with the membership report will appear the number of delegates allowed for each post.

Credential reports should be filed with the department adjutant as soon as possible to allow for inspection and checking, thus correcting any errors.

If there should be any changes in personnel on the list of delegates or alternates, corrections should be made with the Credentials Committee. Delegates must be registered with the convention in order to vote (1975 Convention Mandate). A registration fee of \$10 for each delegate and alternate may be

sent the posts of the Department or by delegates-at-large attending the convention. Nominating speeches are limited to three minutes. There will be no seconds to nominations authorized (DEC Mandate Jan. 20, 1991)

All candidates for elective department office must file with the department adjutant, prior to May 7, 2025, a letter of intent to seek office and furnish a copy of discharge papers, which makes them eligible for membership in The American Legion. The ballots for the Department Convention will be pre-printed indicating those candidates who have filed for office. Any candidate declaring after May 7, 2025, or nominated from the floor of the convention, will be a write-in candidate. Blank spaces will be left for write-in candidates. (DEC Mandate Jan. 27, 1985).

VOTING

Delegates may get ballots from the Credentials Committee at Jeff's Catering & Event Center on Saturday, June 7, 2025. The Credentials Committee will be in session for one hour on Saturday morning, June 7, 2025, from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Each delegate will go to the convention hall during the hours specified and secure ballots. No ballots will be issued after 9:00 a.m. Delegates

Resolutions to Be Presented by May 1

All resolutions to be presented for action at any Convention shall be presented to the office of the Department Adjutant on or before May 1 of the subject year. Said resolutions shall be published and printed in the official organ of the Department of Maine, The American Legion in the next issue following said date of May 1. Resolutions must be presented to the Department Adjutant's office in writing, dated and signed by the Commander and Adjutant of the sponsoring groups or Chairman and Secretary of sponsoring committee. Resolutions may be presented by two-thirds majority of the Resolutions Committee meeting at the convention.

Candidates Deadline: May 7

Anyone wishing to run for a Department Office must submit a letter of intent and a copy of his or her discharge papers making them eligible for The American Legion to the Department Adjutant's office on or before May 7, 2025 to be included on the official ballot at convention in June. If you wish to be included in The Maine Legionnaire, the above information, plus a photo of you must be at Department Headquarters by April 19, 2025. Also be advised that the Department Constitution and By-Laws state: All current and future Department Officers elected at the Annual State Convention will within forty-five (45) days following the conclusion of the Annual Department Convention, take the "American Legion Extension Institute Course" and successfully complete said course. Previous graduates of the course upon providing confirmation would be exempted.

What a Delegate Should Bring to the Annual State Convention

This is a short reminder to all legionnaires attending the 106th Annual State Convention in Brewer, June 6th and 7th. If you are a delegate or alternate to this year's convention, please remember to bring your current American Legion membership card or PUFL card. Attendees should go to the registration table immediately upon arrival to pick up your delegate or alternate name tag. Only registered delegates are allowed to vote or address the convention. The official uniform of The American Legion is the Legion cap.



How to Print 2025 Membership Cards in MyLegion

American Legion post and squadron group leadership can print a current membership card for Legion and Sons of The American Legion members.

To start:

1. Go to your My Account page in www.mylegion.org.
2. Enter My Groups to access



3. Click on "View Members."
4. Search the member and click on their name from the list to view Member Profile.
5. Click "Membership Cards" and click on the link to view and print card image.

Humanitarian Sought

The Humanitarian Award Committee is again seeking nominations for the annual Humanitarian Award. The Humanitarian Award, considered one of the most prestigious awards bestowed by The American Legion, is presented annually at our State Convention.

An American Legion Post must endorse applicants for the annual Humanitarian Award. Accomplishments of the individual must be over and above his or her usual vocation; in most cases his or her deeds would not be in their chosen field of endeavor; but consideration would be given to someone whose activities in their field of work was far in excess of what one would expect in that field.

Applicants may be male or female, veteran or non-veteran, legionnaire or non-legionnaire. A majority vote of the Humanitarian Award Committee will be final.

If an individual was previously submitted and not selected, please submit it again. We will consider anyone who has not received the award previously. Nominations should be received by May 1, 2025. Nomination forms can be obtained by contacting The American Legion, Department of Maine, 5 Verti Drive, Winslow, Maine 04901-0727; Tel: 207-873-3229; e-mail: legionme@mainelegion.org or on the web at www.mainelegion.org under Forms/Applications.

Legionnaire of the Year Sought

Is that exceptional Legionnaire, the one with unquestionable leadership ability, a member of your post? Do you have that member within your post that seems to stand above the rest in all phases of your post activities? Does he or she aspire to higher positions within The American Legion?

If your post has that member who would qualify for the honor and prestige for the Past Department Commanders Award, why not submit their name and resume? Being chosen for this award is indeed a great honor. When in doubt, ask those who were previously chosen. It is a title you will be known for during

your entire Legion career. Maybe your post has previously sent a candidate for this award who was not chosen. Why not submit the name again? There are no rules stating how many times you can apply. Your candidate could be this year's winner.

The deadline for applications is May 1, 2025. Applications can be obtained through Department Headquarters or online at www.mainelegion.org.

Send completed applications to The American Legion, State Headquarters, Attention: Past Department Commanders Award Chairman, 5 Verti Drive, Winslow, Maine 04901-0727.

Scholarships Available

Applications are now available for the Department of Maine Children and Youth Scholarships, the Daniel E. Lambert Memorial Scholarship, and the James V. Day Scholarship. Any post, individual or school who would like to receive a copy may obtain one by visiting www.mainelegion.org located under Forms/Applications or by contacting us via email at legionme@mainelegion.org or by phone at 207-873-3229.



Attention District Commanders and Post Adjutants

[MyLegion.org](http://www.mylegion.org) training lessons are available at State Headquarters.

If you are interested in learning how to use the site, please call The American Legion, Department of Maine Headquarters at 207-873-3229 Ext. 2 or email rachael@mainelegion.org to set up an appointment.

Training lessons last between 1-2 hours.

Legion Baseball Team Registration is Open

Registration for the 2025 American Legion Baseball season is open at baseball.legion.org.

Teams registered after May 15 may be subject to a department late fee through the final deadline of June 1. Please note that each American Legion department may set an earlier deadline for registration.

To learn more about your specific department's state fees and deadlines, contact your department chairmen at www.legion.org/get-involved/youth-programs/baseball/contacts/scott-bishop.

As part of NEC Resolution No. 17 October 2023, and the education and training requirements of Public Law 115-126, the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017, all adult participants (coaches, managers, volunteers and players, 18 years of age or older)

must complete the Abuse Awareness course either through Protect Youth Sports or USA Baseball. All adult participants (coaches, managers, volunteers and players, 18 years of age or older) must also have a completed and passed background check. Visit www.legion.org/get-involved/youth-programs/baseball/american-legion-baseball-resources to download the American Legion Baseball Risk Management Guidebook.

www.legion.org/information-center/calendar/legion-baseball-registration-opens
Jan. 31, 2024



The American Legion Baseball Scholarship

The American Legion awards between \$22,000 and \$25,000 in scholarships to deserving baseball players each year. Each Department Baseball Committee may select a player from its department to receive this scholarship. The American Legion will award several scholarships each year depending on the number of applicants and interest earned from the trust fund.

Award Amounts

Department Baseball Scholarship Winners receive \$500.

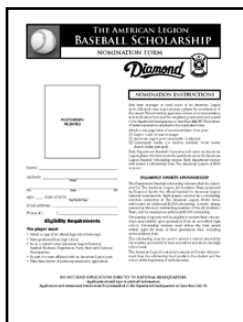
Each certified Department Baseball scholarship winner shall be considered for The

American Legion All-Academic Team sponsored by Diamond Sports, annually.

Eight players selected by a scholarship selection committee at The American Legion World Series will receive an additional \$2,500 scholarship.

A ninth player, selected as the most outstanding member of the All-Academic Team, will be awarded an additional \$5,000 scholarship.

All-Academic Team winners will retain their \$500 scholarship from their department.



Scholarship recipients will be eligible to receive their scholarships immediately upon graduation from an accredited high school. Scholarship winners must utilize the total award within eight (8) years of their graduation date, excluding active military time.

Print the application by visiting www.legion.org/get-involved/scholarships/the-american-legion-baseball-scholarship

Learn more about American Legion Baseball, visit www.legion.org/baseball.

Maine Blind Camp

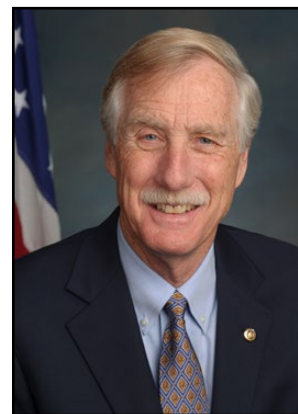
When/Where: July 27 - Aug. 2, 2025 at Camp Lawroweld in Weld. Visiting day will be Wed., July 30. Members of The American Legion Family are welcome to visit the camp, meet with the campers, eat lunch and dinner, and attend the talent show at 7:00 p.m.

What is Blind Camp?: An ongoing program, which provides funding for campers at the Maine Camp for the Blind in Weld. Donations go to State Headquarters to be forwarded to Maine Blind during the annual State Convention.



A Message From Senator King

Maine proudly boasts one of the largest concentrations of veterans in the country — a community that represents family members, neighbors, and friends from Presque Isle to Wells. And while they have certainly sacrificed for our country, I want to share how Congress is returning the favor to make their post-military lives easier and more comfortable. It's not only our patriotic duty, but also just one small way we can say "thank you."



SENATOR
ANGUS KING

As we begin the new Congress and Presidential Administration, we must prioritize the role of "advise and consent" when it comes to confirming the President's cabinet-level nominations. As a member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, I have had the privilege of meeting with Doug Collins, a former Congressman from Georgia, selected by President Trump to serve as the Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA). During our conversations, I have made him aware of the concerns I've heard from Maine's veterans. My position on cabinet nominees has always boiled down to two priorities: the candidate needs to be experienced and capable, and believe in the work of the department or bureau they would be leading. I am eager to work with Mr. Collins to ensure we are providing for veterans here in Maine and across the country. While we might have some different viewpoints when it comes to policy, I know we both agree that the brave men and women who served deserve that same service in return.

In fact, every year approximately 200,000 servicemembers transition out of military service into civilian life. It doesn't matter if you've served three years or thirty years, this time can be full of uncertainties. After years of structure and order, the transition to the civilian world can feel like a difficult journey without a game plan.

That's why I will be encouraging leadership to swiftly take up the *TAP Promotion Act* and the *Welcome Home Veterans Act* — two bills that would provide support to veterans applying for their well-deserved benefits and connect them with community-based veteran organizations. It's my goal to work with my colleagues to get these priorities over the finish line. Both of these bills have strong bipartisan support and I look forward to expanding that support as I work with my col-

leagues to deliver for our veterans.

I also want to share that I am working on bipartisan legislation that would help veterans have a smoother transition into the VA health care system once they leave active duty status. We're not reinventing the wheel here; it's a simple ex-

pansion of a previous pilot program that pre-registers transitioning servicemembers for VA health care. Once our servicemembers leave active duty, the VA will then reach out to finish the enrollment process, but only if the veteran still wishes to enroll in VA health care. This bill is another way in which we can guarantee our men and women in uniform experience a warm handoff during this pivotal life event.

I am also continuing to collaborate with my colleagues like my friend Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS), who is now the Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Senator Moran and I have worked closely together on bills to address brain injuries impacting our servicemembers and veterans. Already, we are working to push forward our bipartisan mental health bill in the new session of Congress. *The Precision Brain Health Research Act* would direct the VA to work with researchers to study the impact of repetitive low-level weapon blasts on veterans' mental health. Brain injuries are a far too common, yet still misunderstood condition, that often go undetectable for years. In Maine, we know all too well the horrible tragedies that can occur when brain injuries and mental health issues are left untreated. We have a responsibility to ensure we are exploring every option when it comes addressing and caring for these invisible injuries.

At the end of the day, my goal is to always ensure veterans' voices are being heard both in Maine and in D.C. We owe our veterans our very best, just as they gave to us during their career of service. If you have any questions or need help accessing benefits, you may contact my offices across Maine and in Washington, D.C.

Senator Angus King

Making Veterans a Priority in the New Congress

I hope your 2025 is off to a great start. I was grateful to spend the holidays with Izzy, Rosemary, and Shirley at home in Maine and am excited that work has finally begun in the new Congress.

Last session ended in a bit of a holding pattern for legislating as we entered the new year with a temporary government funding deal that maintains existing spending levels through mid-March. Though that deadline is still weeks away, I'm already focused on advocating for a budget that gets the VA more of the resources that Maine's veterans need.

I've also begun securing bipar-



CONGRESSMAN
JARED GOLDEN

tisan cosponsors for my own legislation, identifying good ideas from other lawmakers to support, and talking with groups and constituents such as the Legion and people like you to ensure the House is focused on the right priorities for Maine veterans.

There's plenty in the works on that front, and I'm eager to share more publicly in the coming weeks — especially when it comes to supporting the mental health of veterans transitioning back into civilian life.

In the meantime, much of the bandwidth in my offices is being used on helping Maine veterans who need

help overcoming challenges with federal agencies. I strongly believe that one of the most effective ways a representative can help their constituents is by intervening directly on their behalf, and I'm going to bat for individual Maine veterans and their families however I can — whether that's delivering delayed benefits, accessing personal military records and documents, or anything else in between.

I'm proud of the team I've hired to take on these issues, and I hope you'll reach out if you have your own problem I can help you with — service-related or not. You can send my office an email at golden.house.gov/contact/email-me, or call or visit me at any of our locations:

Bangor Office: 6 State Street, Suite 101, Bangor ME 04401. Phone:

(207) 249-7400

Caribou Office: 7 Hatch Drive, Suite 230, Caribou ME 04736. Phone: (207) 492-6009

Lewiston Office: 179 Lisbon Street, Lewiston ME 04240. Phone: (207) 241-6767

Washington Office: 1107 Longworth HOB, Washington DC 20515. Phone: (202) 225-2943

Thanks as always to everyone at the Legion for all you do to fight on behalf of our veterans, including by keeping me informed of your work and how I can help. Your mission is near and dear to my heart, and my staff and I hope you'll continue reaching out on the issues that matter most.

Member of Congress Jared Golden

A Message From Senator Collins

Maine is home to more than 109,000 veterans, one of the highest percentages per capita in the entire country. I am proud to serve a state that is home to so many of our nation's heroes.

Since joining the Senate Appropriations Committee in 2009, including my time serving as Ranking Member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, I have advocated for our nation's veterans and for the brave men and women who serve today. In my new role as Chair of this powerful committee, I will continue to champion funding to support the patriots who make such tremendous sacrifices for our nation.

As we strengthen our national security to meet today's challenges, we must never forget the sacrifices made in the past to defend our freedom. Last December, I, along with a bipartisan delegation of Senators, represented our nation at ceremonies in Belgium and Luxembourg to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. I was honored to lay a wreath at a memorial in Bastogne, Belgium.

Taking part in that tribute meant so much to me. My late father, Don-



SENATOR
SUSAN COLLINS

ald Collins, was a World War II combat veteran who earned two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Star. He had just turned 19 when he was wounded twice in the Battle of the Bulge. After his military service, he did what distinguishes our veterans — he returned home, quietly and modestly, raised a family, worked hard, and continued to serve, in his case as Mayor of Caribou and in the Maine Legislature.

My father was a true patriot, who loved his country. Attending the memorial commemorating the historic battle where he was wounded 80 years ago was deeply moving and a reminder of the courage and sacrifices made by our Greatest Generation to preserve freedom and democracy. It was a great honor to have this opportunity to pay tribute to him and the hundreds of thousands of American troops who fought valiantly in the Battle of the Bulge to help secure peace for future generations.

To better ensure other veterans enjoy a meaningful and productive life after their service like my father, it is important that we ensure our veterans receive the full range of sup-

port they have earned through their service.

To that end, this January, I was pleased to attend the White House signing ceremony for the Social Security Fairness Act, bipartisan legislation I authored that restores Social Security benefits for millions of Americans. This long-overdue law repealed two provisions — the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) — that unfairly reduced the Social Security benefits that many veterans or their spouses have earned.

Here is one example of how those provisions unjustly denied earned benefits. Catherine Sjogren from Bangor had to reenter the workforce at age 72 after retiring from teaching for many decades, despite the fact that her husband, a Navy veteran, paid into Social Security for 40 years. When he passed away, the GPO reduced Catherine's widow benefits by two-thirds. She did not have the financial security any longer to remain retired, and the GPO penalty left her with few choices but to return to work. No veteran or their spouse should be forced into the hardship that Mrs. Sjogren faced. Like all public employees, veterans and their families should receive the full Social Security benefits that they have earned. The So-

cial Security Fairness Act will help make that a reality.

Recently, I was honored to have my longstanding efforts to support servicemembers and their families acknowledged when I was awarded the Army Distinguished Public Service Medal, the highest public service award by the U.S. Army. Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth conferred the award in recognition of my continued support for the Army, and it was presented to me by Lieutenant General Paul Chamberlain at a ceremony on Capitol Hill.

Receiving this award from the U.S. Army is a tremendous honor, and I am grateful to Secretary Wormuth and the leadership of the Army for this recognition. Throughout my Senate service, maintaining a strong national defense has been one of my highest priorities. This commitment not only enhances our national security at a time when we face the most dangerous global security environment in 50 years, but it also supports good-paying jobs at Bath Iron Works, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Pratt & Whitney, and elsewhere across the State of Maine.

I will continue to stand with the heroes who secure the safety of all Americans. Thank you for your service to our country. It is an honor to serve you in the Senate.

Senator Susan Collins

Legionnaire Insurance Trust Accidental Death Plan

Your valued status of The American Legion Family makes you eligible for LegionCare no-cost-to-you Accidental Death Insurance coverage. Help protect your family from the financial impact of covered accidents in your car, at home, on the job, on vacation... anywhere you might be.



Pays regardless of any other insurance

Your Legionnaire cash benefits are also paid regardless of any other coverage you might have through work or that you may have set up on

your own

That means you can rest assured your loved ones will collect the full amount of Legionnaire cash benefits they're entitled to. It's an easy way to help make sure your family could get a fresh start — instead of worrying how they'd pay the bills — if a covered accident takes your life.

Plan underwritten by Securian Life Insurance Company.

Watch the video below at www.vimeo.com/946785549 or visit www.thelit.com/accident-protection to learn more.



Member Benefits

Up to \$100,000 in cash benefits to help pay for groceries, car payments, or to help your loved ones make ends meet.

If you suddenly fell victim to a deadly accident, your family might very well need a financial cushion to make ends meet. That's why you're guaranteed eligibility to add \$25,000, \$50,000, or up to \$100,000 in accidental death coverage.

Help protect your family from the financial impact of covered accidents in your car. At home. On the job. On vacation. Anywhere you might be. Your Legionnaire accidental death benefits give you a world-wide, 24-hour safety net against the financial impact of a variety of accidents.

WINTER SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS

Congratulations to the Following Sweepstakes Winners!

Winners of the Winter Sweepstakes Raffle Drawn at The Annual Winter Conference in Brewer, ME on Jan. 11.

Grand Prize winner of \$1500 was awarded to Robert L Dewitt, Millinocket Post 80; \$500 to Donald Lizotte, Brunswick Post 20; \$300 to John Brungardt, Camden Post 30; and \$200 to James C Hutchinson, Mechanic Falls Post 150.



CONGRATULATIONS!



Subscribe To Our Emails and receive instant email updates including our bi-weekly newsletter "The Leadership Ledger" and The

Maine Legionnaire newspaper by visiting <https://form.jotform.com/RachaelJ/maine-al-email-subscription-for>

Legionnaire Benefits

As a Member of the Legion Family, You Know How Important It Is to Help Protect Those in Need ...

Now We Can Help

The LIT Plans can help with

- Hospital HELP Plan
- Cancer Care
- Accidental Death Protection
- On-The-Move Travel Accident
- Emergency Assistance Plus
- Medicare Supplement Insurance
- Health Insurance
- Dental Insurance
- Long-Term Care
- Lifeline Medical Alert Service



ENDORSED BY YOUR AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT



- **Hospital HELP Plan** — Provides benefits for hospital stays including intensive care, cardiac care, care for cancer, rehabilitative facilities, and V.A. hospitals.*
- **Cancer Care** — Provides important protection and a daily benefit if you are hospitalized due to cancer.*
- **Accidental Death** — Helps provide financial protection for you and your family. Up to \$5,000.00 LegionCare AD coverage at no cost to Legionnaires is available; (activation required).* You can also purchase additional Accident coverage up to \$100,000.00.
- **On-The-Move Travel Accident** — Provides up to \$200,000.00 coverage when fatally injured in a covered accident while traveling, plus \$500.00 per day if a covered accident lands you in the hospital.*
- **Emergency Assistance Plus** — Provides you with 24/7 emergency medical and travel assistance services should something happen to you or your family while traveling away from home.
- **Medicare Supplement Insurance** — Supplements your Medicare Coverage at group rates.
- **Health & Dental Insurance** — Request a quote on various Health & Dental Insurance Plans designed with you in mind.
- **Long-Term Care** — Can help provide home health care, supervised adult care, and more.
- **Lifeline Medical Alert Service** — Provides fast access to help in the event of a fall or medical emergency so you can live confidently and independently.

To Learn More and Enroll, Visit

www.TheLIT.com

For Questions Call 1-800-235-6943

*The Accidental Death, Cancer Care, Hospital Help Plan, and On-The-Move Accident Insurance Plans are underwritten by Securian Life Insurance Company, St. Paul, MN. Plans may not be available in all states. These policies contain limitations and exclusions. Please visit www.TheLIT.com to review plan details.

If You're a Member In Good Standing With Your Department of The American Legion...



Endorsed by Your Department of The American Legion

You are eligible for LegionCare; \$5,000.00 in Accidental Death Insurance at NO COST TO YOU if a covered accident occurs while traveling on official Legion business*, or \$1,000.00 at NO COST TO YOU for all other covered accidents. This has been arranged on

your behalf by Your Department of The American Legion.

As soon as your enrollment is received, LegionCare will take effect. Your acceptance is guaranteed, so mail your coupon today.

For immediate coverage, enroll online at www.TheLIT.com/No-Cost-LegionCare

Cut out this section and mail it in today to enroll in LegionCare.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ MEMBERSHIP CARD NO. _____

EMAIL _____

MAKE SURE YOU INCLUDE YOUR DATE OF BIRTH SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Cut it out

Have you filled out *all* the above information?
Please mail to: Legionnaire Insurance Trust • P.O. Box 26720 • Phoenix, AZ 85068-6720
© 2015 AGIA 100135 A3713 38796

Complete details of the coverage are contained in accident only Master Policy MZ0933569H0000A/0001A underwritten by Transamerica Premier Life Insurance Company Cedar Rapids, IA. This plan is not available in all states.
*For Purposes of the Legionnaire Insurance Trust, a member of The Legion Family, with current year's dues paid, could be eligible for the \$5,000 Accidental Death benefit if he/she is traveling to, attending, or returning from an official function at which the Legionnaire represents his/her Post, District, Department, or National Organization in an official capacity.

Why Your Membership Matters

Family, Community, and Purpose
The American Legion stands as a beacon of inclusivity and camaraderie, offering a welcoming embrace to veterans and their families from all walks of life. Serving as more than just a gathering place, it fosters a sense of belonging and understanding within the veteran community, transcending differences, and uniting individuals under a shared bond of service. Legionnaires and their family members can also be eligible for a myriad of financial grants during times of financial hardship, natural disasters, or even for educational scholarships.

Renew for Benefits

Accredited American Legion service officers are specially trained to provide expert assistance, free of charge, to veterans and their families. Your membership also helps support American Legion

Department Service Officers nationwide who assist veterans in preparing claims and obtaining their full military health-care benefits through the VA.

Continued Advocacy on Capitol Hill

The American Legion is the nation's most influential, effective, and dependable advocate of veteran affairs fighting for better active-duty pay, improved housing for active-duty families and helping to ensure that the VA's medical system can properly care for veterans.

Stay Informed

Our nation's leaders speak directly to citizens on the pages of The American Legion Magazine. The American Legion's organizational goals are promoted using the words of talented writers, professional journalists and world leaders.

Keep your benefits coming!
RENEW TODAY

Membership Management in MyLegion.org



MyLegion.org is a one-stop-shop for managing your American Legion membership.

Within the **My Account** section, members can easily manage their subscriptions to e-newsletters and The American Legion Magazine. There are a variety of e-newsletters to subscribe to such as the Dispatch, American Legion Online Update, Flag Alert, Legion Riders and more. Members also can renew their

membership, print a current membership card, view member-only discounts, manage their personal profile and receive information on giving opportunities. Overall, **MyLegion.org** provides a hassle-free way for members to stay informed on matters related to their American Legion membership, with options tailored to their preferences and needs.

www.MyLegion.org

Join Sons of The American Legion

Eligibility Requirements

All male descendants adopted sons, and stepsons of members of The American Legion, and such male descendants of veterans who died in service during the period of April 6, 1917, through November 11, 1918, or any time from December 7, 1941, to date, who served honorably, as set forth in Article IV, Section 1, of the National Constitution of The American Legion, or who died subsequent to their honorable discharge from such service, shall be eligible for membership in the Sons of



The American Legion. **Print an application** by visiting www.legion.org/about/american-legion-family/join-sons-of-the-american-legion

* Membership applications can be delivered to an American Legion Post near you. There is a good chance that Post will have its own Squadron. If not, someone at the Post should be able to tell you where to find a Squadron near you. You can always contact SAL National Headquarters for information about finding a nearby Squadron.



USAA is proud to be the Preferred provider of Insurance and Financial Services to The American Legion. Please visit usaa.com/legion or call 877-699-2654.

Life's Too Long Not to Belong



Research shows that being active and enjoying time with friends is good for your health.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 1

Sanford Post 19; Biddeford Post 26; Limerick Post 55; York Post 56; Old Orchard Post 57; Kennebunk Post 74; Berwick Post 79; North Berwick Post 87; Saco Post 96; Kezar Falls Post 123; Bar Mills Post 120; Alfred Post 134; Wells Post 143; Kennebunkport Post 159; Dayton Post 177; Eliot Post 188; Lebanon Post 214; Wilton Post 117; Rangeley Post 120

Spirit of America Tribute Awarded to Post 79's Andy Buckman

There are several reasons why we are proud to call Maine home: it is where America begins, it is our Vacationland, and for a time, it was even "the way life should be" as posted on I-95 signage welcoming visitors and residents alike. But another lesser-known reason: every year the Spirit of America Foundation (SOA) tribute is presented in the name of 100+ Maine municipalities. In many of them, like in

Berwick, Boards of Selectmen choose their town's tribute recipient.

It is no surprise that Andy Buckman, Maine's 2024 Legionnaire of the Year was Berwick's SOA recipient. Andy's dedication to his community is truly remarkable. His passion for the Legion and his hometown since 1968 shines through in his numerous contributions. Named Citizen of the Year in 2021, Andy's leadership has been instrumental in organizing significant community events, notably the annual Car Show, now in its eleventh year. This event, boasting approximately two hundred cars, alongside music and food, has evolved into a hallmark of summer's beginning.

Additionally, Andy spearheads the 5K Race, a vital fundraiser for the Legion. To date, Berwick's American Legion Post 79 has donated over \$50,000 to the community. Andy actively supports initiatives like the Citizen of the Year Dinner, Veteran's Park and is always willing to lend a hand or dedicate his time to support anything that benefits the people of Berwick, or any veteran. His exemplary volunteerism serves as an inspiration that shows the impact one person can have in shaping a small Maine town like Berwick for the better. Sincere congratulations Andy, we salute you!



Award Recipient: Berwick Post 79 member Andy Buckman is awarded the Spirit of America Tribute.

Kennebunk Post 159 Extends Heartfelt Gratitude

Kennebunkport Post 159 extends its heartfelt gratitude to everyone who came out to support the Nov. 22, 2024 Turkey Shoot & Dice Roll. Thanks to you, we were able to present a monetary donation to a Wells family who lost their home and possessions in the Nov. 18 fire and donated eight turkeys to Kennebunk's COS (Community Outreach Services).

"Community engagement" is one of our Legion's values, and so after the community joined us for our annual

Turkey Shoot, it only seems natural to give our proceeds back to help local families in need. Our mission includes enhancing the well-being of our communities as well as enhancing the well-being of our Veterans," said American Legion Post 159 Commander Andrew Welch. To learn more about American Legion Post 159 in Kennebunkport, please call and leave a message at (207) 967-2400; we'll get back to you promptly with answers to your questions.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 2

Portland Post 17; So. Portland Post 35; Gorham Post 60; Westbrook Post 62; Bridgton Post 67; Scarborough Post 76; Freeport Post 83; Gray Post 86; Yarmouth Post 91; Standish Post 128; Harrison Post 139; Peaks Island Post 142; Windham Post 148; Naples Post 155; Portland Post 161; Falmouth Post 164; Portland Post 168; Westbrook Post 197

So. Portland Post 35 Packs Thanksgiving Baskets for Veterans

Once again, this year, Post 35 packed Thanksgiving Baskets for local Veterans in need. Each year we contact the following organization in order of importance: U.S. Coast Guard, Veterans Service Center, and VA.

This year, there has been an uptick in requests from the Coast Guard as I am sure the economy has affected our servicemen and women. Additionally, unlike last year, the Veterans Service Center has moved from Portland to So. Portland, and we have reached out to them also. Last on our list is the local VA Center in Portland. Last year, they got the bulk of the baskets, as no one else requested our support.

These baskets are a complete meal for a small family and basically have everything for a meal and all the fix-

ings, plus sugar and flour, as well as a 10-12lb frozen turkey to top off the basket. Because of the economy, the cost of our baskets has jumped from \$20 in 2019 to \$50 now. We have increased our budget for these items and depend on donations from members who usually donate a case of this or that each time. The Local Odd Fellow has donated 100lbs of good old Maine potatoes each year, which we break down into 5lb bags to go into each box. Thanksgiving and Christmas boxes are identical, except at Christmas we throw in candy canes. The South Portland Food Pantry provides us with plenty of "banana boxes" to make a handy and manageable receptacle for our "food stuff."

Submitted by Post 35 Adjutant Michael R. Pock



Thanksgiving Baskets are prepared for distribution to local veterans in need by So. Portland Post 35.

So. Portland Post 35 Oratorical Contest

Stewart P. Morrill Post 35 in South Portland held their annual Americanism Oratorical Contest at the Post, at 413 Broadway in South Portland.

After canvassing the local high schools, two applicants were presented to the Americanism Committee. The Straw family from Cape Elizabeth

represented CEHS in our contest. Like last year, the Straw family stepped up to provide contestants. Last year, it was Teresa competing against her younger sister Caroline. This year, it was Caroline competing against her younger brother Gideon. Both contestants gave an admirable performance, but in the end, Caroline won in the point tally.

Post 35 held a very well-organized Oratorical and would like to thank the many people involved. Post Commander Bob Hughes, Post Chaplain Spletts-toesser, Post Finance Officer Johnson, and Post Adjutant Pock represented the Post. Timekeepers were Mary Neal and Betty Spletts-toesser. Judges were Post 128 Commander Kathy Thompson, District 2 Americanism Officer Barbara Howard, and Post 35 Finance Officer Matt Johnson.

Others in attendance were the Straw Family members and Department Americanism Officer Liam Nedredd.

Contestant information was forwarded to District 2 Americanism Officer Kathy Thompson for preparation for the District 2 Oratorical Contest by the secretary of the Post 35 Americanism Committee.



So. Portland Post 35 Oratorical: Left to right, Americanism Officer Wes Spletts-toesser, 1st Place Winner Caroline Straw, 2nd Place Winner Gideon Straw, and Post Commander Bob Hughes.

Photo by Post 35 Adjutant Michael R. Pock

Submitted by Post 35 Adjutant & Americanism Committee Secretary Michael R. Pock

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 2 continued



Westbrook Post 62 Welcomes Guest Speakers at the Post Business Meeting held Wed., Feb. 5. Guest speakers in attendance were Westbrook Police Department Chief Sean Lally, Westbrook Police Department Patrolman Aaron Webster, and District 2 Commander Gene Connolly.

Photo by Rebecca Boaz, Westbrook VAC Member and Preble Street Advocate for homeless veterans



Westbrook Post 62 Business Meeting: Stephen W. Manchester American Legion Post 62 held its first Business Meeting of 2025 on Wed., Jan. 8. They welcomed Westbrook Mayor David Morse and Economics Director Daniel Stevenson as guest speakers. Front row, left to right, Westbrook Mayor David Morse, Post 62 Commander Dennis

Marrotte, Post 2nd Vice Commander Edward Symbol, and Westbrook Economic Director Daniel Stevenson. Back row, left to right, Post 62 1st Vice Commander Philip Spiller, Jr., Post Chaplain Philip LeClerc, Post Adjutant Gary York, Post Service Officer Harry Gorham, Post Sgt.-at-Arms Michael Thomas, and Post Treasurer Gerry Doyon.

Photo by Post 62 Member Zachary Leland



Westbrook Post 62 Wreath Placement: A clear, snowless, and frosty day welcomed Westbrook citizens, young and old alike, at Woodlawn Cemetery's Veterans Rest to place balsam wreaths with red bows on shepherd's hooks for the U.S. Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, Merchant Mariners, Navy, Space Command, and all MIA/POWs. Left photo, Westbrook Mayor David Morse attaches a wreath in honor of the Air Force and salutes. Right photo, Westbrook High School Junior Grace Gauvin, a member of the Blue BLAZES Marching Band, performs TAPS and sings our National Anthem.

Photos by Westbrook Post 62 Commander Dennis Marrotte

Westbrook Together Days: McGyver Chair of the Volunteer Westbrook Safe Mobility and Access Committee (aka WSMAC) Kim Tarbox, with WSMAC Mascot "Walnut" at the Westbrook Together Days held May 31 - June 1, 2024.

Kim's ventriloquism has children at the event believing "Walnut" is talking to them about safety. Above their heads is a copy of the local free weekly newspaper, The American Journal, with a front page interview by Bob Lowell, about Kim and Michael Thomas, both Westbrook citizens. Michael is the Sgt.-at-Arms of Westbrook's Stephen W. Manchester American Legion Post 62. On Mar. 2, 2024, at Westbrook's Winterfest, Michael and Kim both jumped into the Presumpscot River and saved a



12-year-old boy from drowning. Michael and Kim both received plaques from Post 62 for their "no hesitation" jump into the near freezing water, saving the boy's life.

Photo by Westbrook Post 62 Commander Dennis Marrotte



Christmas Toys from donations collected by Westbrook Post 62 at Profenno's Restaurant on Monday, Dec. 9, 2024. Left to right, Post 62 Commander Dennis Marrotte, Elizabeth Dellinger with Profenno's Restaurant, and Past Post 62 Commander Roger Barr.

Photo by Profenno's Customer

Gray Post 86 Receives Wreaths Across America Donation

On Nov. 2, 2024, during the Gray Post 86 Bean Supper, Dan Liberty of The Liberty Foundation donated \$2,000 to the Post's Wreaths Across America campaign. Post 86 officers in attendance were Commander Julie Flynn, Adjutant Richard Flynn, Second Vice Charles Kupfer (Local Wreaths Across America Coordinator), and Sons of The American Legion Commander Vincent Plummer.

The Liberty Foundation's donation was graciously accepted by Post 86 Vice Commander Kupfer, and as he stated, "This donation puts us into next year's campaign."

Post 86 will lay wreaths at the Gray Village Cemetery on Dec. 14, 2024. A brief ceremony will be held at noon in the cemetery and wreath laying will commence after the ceremony. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Wreaths Across America Donation: Gray Post 86 accepts a donation of \$2,000 from The Liberty Foundation for its Wreaths Across America campaign.



Left to right, Sons of The American Legion Squadron 86 Commander Vincent Plummer, Post 86 Second Vice Commander Charles Kupfer, Daniel Liberty, Post 86 Commander Julie Flynn, and Post 86 Adjutant Richard Flynn.

Photo by Laura Cram

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 2 continued



Naples Post 155 Certificate: A certificate of appreciation is presented to Culinary Arts Instructor Eric Botka at a Veterans Luncheon held at the Lake Region Vocational Center in Naples on Nov. 8, 2024. Left to right, District 2 Commander Eugene Connolly, Brent Brown, Eric Botka, Ross Graham, and Cathy Merrill.

Photo by Post and Squadron 155 Historian Ross Graham

Naples Squadron 155 Certificate: Squadron 155 Adjutant Tony Campbell, left, and Squadron Chaplain Dan Lajoie, center, present a certificate for 40 years of continuous membership to David Keith, right, during a Sons of The American Legion meeting at Post 155 on Aug. 13, 2024.

Photo by Post and Squadron 155 Historian Ross Graham



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 5

Rumford Post 24; Buckfield Post 58; Lockemills Post 68; So. Paris Post 72; Bethel Post 81; Norway Post 82; Dixfield Post 100; Oxford Post 112; Fryeburg Post 137; West Paris Post 151; Peru Post 199

2025: A Most Auspicious Year

Following Department Historian Jeff Sukeforth's report at the Mid-Winter Conference, held at Jeff's Catering & Event Center in Brewer, when he invited attendees if there were any questions, District 5 Adjutant Harry G. Orcutt, upon being acknowledged, stood and stated he did not have a question, but rather an observation. He stated that 2025 was a most auspicious year, being the 250th anniversary of America's struggle to be a free and independent nation. In this year, beginning on April 19, 2025, the first conflicts of the Revolution, the Battles of Lexington and Concord will be commemorated. On June 11 and 12, 2025, the first American Naval victory of the Margareta over HMS Henrietta at Machias will be remembered. The British retaliated against this victory on Oct. 18, when a small fleet attacked and burned the township of Falmouth (modern day Portland), destroying 300 structures, leaving more than 1,000 of its residents to face the oncoming winter without shelter. June 14 is the anniversary of the founding of the U.S.

Army, then styled the Continental Army. Though the first American Navy and Marine detachments were founded by George Washington and manned by the Continental Army two months before the founding of the Continental Navy, the U.S. Navy first chose its foundation to be April 30, 1798 during the Adams Administration, as that was when the U.S. Congress, under the Constitution, authorized the Department of the Navy. When Admiral Zumwalt commanded the Navy, he established the Naval foundation date as being Oct. 13, 1775, when the 2nd Continental Congress created the Continental Navy. The Congress authorized two ships to be purchased or constructed and be armed. When that was accomplished, manned by Naval personnel, the majority of ships which had been created by Washington, were transferred to the new Naval Command, and their discipline, tactics, and instructions as created by Washington were adopted.

One wonders if Zumwalt's decision to adopt the Oct. 1775 date had anything to do with the fact that U.S. Ma-

rine Corps always declared their foundation date to be Nov. 10, 1775, when two battalions of 300 men each were authorized by the Continental Congress and were recruited by Samuel Nicholas, of Philadelphia, in the city's Tun Tavern, one of two pubs that Nicholas owned. Nicholas, nominated by John Adams, is considered to be the first Commandant of the Corps.

Returning to the Continental Army, its first major Battle was fought on June 17, at Charlestown, styled the Battle of Bunker Hill. The Bunkers previously owned two hills, one of which was purchased by Mr. Breed, and upon that hill is where the battle was fought. Styled an American defeat because the British occupied both hills after a long day of fighting, the British lost so many officers and rank and file, that when Lord North received word of the "victory" he is said to have proclaimed, "Twenty more victories such as that and there will be no British Empire."

Two weeks later, at Cambridge Common, the newly appointed commander of the Continental Congress, Orcutt's distant cousin, George Washington took command of the Army on July 3. In September, Washington dispatched Col. Benedict Arnold, with a force of 1,100 Continentals to capture the Canadian cities of Montreal and Quebec. Arnold suffered losses along the line of march. Anyone driving down present-day Route 95 from Maine towards New Hampshire, at mile 24, on the left, or coming up from NH on the right, will observe a small, fenced-in cemetery. Each of the graves therein is that of a patriot soldier of the Arnold expedition.

Washington also dispatched then Col. Henry Knox on Nov. 17, 1775, to retrieve 60 tons of cannon and munitions from Fort Ticonderoga, which had been

captured from the British in May under the joint command of Benedict Arnold with a force of Continentals and Ethan Allen of the Green Mountain Boys. Knox's birthday, June 25, 1750, will be celebrated this year at Thomaston, Maine on its 175th anniversary.

The events of the American Revolution, the adoption of the first American Government under the Articles of Confederation from 1781 to 1787, superseded by the U.S. Constitution on Sept. 17, 1787, and Washington's inauguration as First President of the Nation on April 30, 1789, will all be remembered and worthy of celebration between now and 2039. As noted throughout this narrative, Maine has an important role in that celebration, and its American Legion Department and Posts should be in the forefront of hosting events. As I have stated on other occasions, besides the municipalities on Maine's coast, and the towns of Freyberg, Wattertown, Bethel, and Rumford in its Western Mountains, all of which existed before 1775, the other boroughs, villages, towns, and cities of the state were founded after the Revolution by soldiers, sailors, and marine veterans whose promised bonuses were largely redeemed with land grants. Just visit any of the cemeteries of Maine with more than a few occupants, and the truth of the statement is amply attested.

And though we should be enormously proud that our Republic is approaching 250 years, it should be remembered that the Roman Republic existed for 500 years. Benjamin Franklin said upon the adoption of the Constitution, when asked what government had been created for the people, "A republic, if you can keep it." Let us never forget. Let us remember!

Submitted by Post 68 1st Vice Harry Orcutt

Ice Cream Social in November at South Paris Veterans Home

By tradition, before its August meeting, Oxford County District 5 held a Resident BBQ at the South Paris Veterans Home. In 2024, it had to be canceled because China's viral scourge was infecting a number of residents and staff. The scourge had abated by Nov. 18, 2024, but as it was too cold to hold an event on the Home's outdoor patio. District 5, determined to do something for the residents, held an indoor Ice Cream Social at 16:00 hours, prior to its monthly meeting, instead. The 15 residents who attended enjoyed vanilla or chocolate ice cream cups, along with traditional, chocolate/chocolate, or vanilla Oreo cookies. The Home provided fruit punch. Oxford Post 112 Sgt.-At-Arms Dale Denbow, Rumford Post 24 Chaplain Louis Marin, and

Locke Mills Unit 68 Secretary Susan Vacca served the residents at their tables, while District 5 Adjutant Harry Orcutt replenished the treats, utensils, and napkins, and poured the punch. The Social was a light repast, as the residents' supper began at 17:00 hours.

At 19:00 hours, District 5 held its November meeting in the same multipurpose room in which it hosted The Social.

This year, we hope to be able to host our Annual Resident BBQ so that more residents and District 5 Family Legion can participate in what is truly a memorable banquet.

[More on "ICE CREAM SOCIAL"](#)
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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 5 continued

■ "ICE CREAM SOCIAL" (Continued from Page 18)



Ice Cream Social Volunteers: District 5 Officers, Left to right, Oxford Post 112 Sgt.-At-Arms Dale Denbow, Rumford Post 24 Chaplain Louis Marin, Locke Mills Unit 68 Secretary Susan Vacca, and District 5

Adjutant Harry G. Orcutt of Locke Mills Post 68 help run the Ice Cream Social at South Paris Veterans Home.

District 5: Christmas Party, Mission Working Dogs, and Certificate of Appreciation

Following a buffet potluck supper, with a meat and cheese platter, bread, condiments, and beverages provided by Locke Mills Post 68, and potato salad and desserts provided by attendees, the District 5 meeting was called to order. The Roll Call of Posts was postponed, as the host post, Jackson-Silver 68 had invited Christy Gardner, Founder and President of Mission Working Dogs, and Mary Day, recipient of Post 68's Certificate of Appreciation.

The preferred breed for service working dogs is the Golden Retriever, as they have a relatively long life, averaging about ten years. After two

years of training, each dog is capable of understanding about 150 commands. It costs about \$48,000 to train each dog, of which their prospective veteran handler raises \$5,000 to be matched with their service dog. The rest of the funds are covered by donations. Thus far, Mission Working Dogs has placed 42 service dogs with veterans in need.

Donors who raise \$2,500 can name a dog. Those who raise \$5,000 are recognized as sponsors. Training begins with puppies. They are trained at Mission Working Dogs in Oxford, and with Department of Corrections prisoners, who are mostly veterans, in both the men's and women's prisons.

Mission Working Dogs, located at 152 Moxie's Place, Oxford, ME 04270, has recently completed cabins where recipients are housed as they bond with the dogs in a structured program.

Visitors are welcome to tour the program with visiting arrangements made by calling 207-713-0259 or messaging at www.missionworkingdogs.org.

In the District 5 meeting that followed, the attending posts voted for a \$500 donation to Mission

Working Dogs, which was sent to Department and acknowledged by them as having been received.

Christy then demonstrated with each of the two dogs she brought with her the various commands the service dogs are taught to assist those they serve and to help normalize their daily lives.

Following Christy's presentation, Mary Day, a recently retired Greenwood U.S. Postal Service delivery employee, who gave many



Mission Working Dogs: Founder and President of Mission Working Dogs Christy Gardner delivers her presentation with a Service Dog while an attentive District Adjutant records her speech.

years of dedicated reliable service to the town's residents, was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation and gift card by Post 68. Mary is the daughter of WWII veteran Leroy Day, who was a 70+ year member and Past Commander

of Post 68, and who attained 104 years before entering the Post Everlasting.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all the Posts of Oxford County District 5!



Command Demonstration: Left photo, Past District 5 Commander James Lowell, back right, and District 5 1st Vice and Americanism Officer Gloria Hall, back left, observe Christy Gardner, front left, demonstrating commands with her Service Dog. Right photo, Christy's service dog awaits its next command as the audience is curious as to what is next in a most interesting demonstration.



Group Photo: Left to right, District 5 Chaplain Louis Marin, District 5 Commander Randall Jack, Christy's own Service Dog, Christy Gardner, and District 5 Adjutant Harry G. Orcutt.



Post 68 Certificate of Appreciation: Mary Day, left, receives Post 68 Certificate of Appreciation from Post 68 1st Vice Harry G. Orcutt, right.

Buckfield WWII Honor Roll Monument Gets New Topper

In a timely addition, just before Veterans Day 2024, the corroding top of Buckfield's WWII Veterans Honor Roll Monument was replaced by John D. Long Post 58, who hired Mike Spugnardi owner of Spugnardi Signs, of Turner, a construction-artisan, to

fabricate and install a new top for the monument.

The Post conducted its Veterans Day Ceremonies at the High School, one of the highlights of which was the patriotic and martial music provided by the school band.



New Monument Topper: Left photo, Mike Spugnardi and assistant install the new WWII Veterans Honor Roll Monument sign. Right photo, left to right, Buckfield Post 58 Adjutant Gloria Hall, Artisan Mike Spugnardi, and Post 58 Commander James Lowell.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 5 continued

Veteran Buddy Checks: the 1% Looking Out for the 1%

The American Legion Posts are all in achieving the goals set forth in a Veterans Administration recommended program known throughout the veteran organization community as “Buddy Checks.” It is, in a manner of speaking, the 1% looking out for the needs of the 1%, meaning that a veteran volunteer from an organization contacts another veteran who has served to find out how they are doing, and to determine if they are in need of any assistance. The veteran being contacted can be an individual who was a service friend, a member of the same veterans’ organization, or is known to be a veteran residing in the organization’s outreach community. Such contacts can be made in person, by phone, by email, or by letter.

When it is determined that the veteran being contacted does need assistance, the nature of what is needed dictates the response of the contacting veteran who has a toolkit of resources from which to draw.

Given this description of what a “Buddy Check” entails, what follows is an actual example demonstrating the value of the program.

Jackson-Silver Post 68 of Locke Mills regularly conducts Buddy Checks through its email list that covers two-thirds of its membership. Past Post Commander Kelly Bickford, presently one of two Post Service Officers, conducts frequent checks with the remaining one-third members who do not use email. This past month, Kelly discovered that a 51-year member of the Post was no longer ambulatory and now required a very expensive electric wheelchair. The 2nd Post Service Officer, who is also 1st Vice and Past Post Commander, put out the word, and within a day The American Legion Department of Maine said that they had such a chair in storage. Accompanied by the Post Chaplain, the 1st Vice picked up the chair at the Department from Department Adjutant Jason Hall. The recipient was not home when delivery was attempted, but the chair was delivered the next day by both the Post Chaplain and Post Sgt.-at-Arms. It’s all about teamwork.

Oxford County, as one example in Maine, according to the last U.S. census, has about 4,000 veterans residing within its territory. Yet fewer than 800 vets share the comradeship and support received as members of American Legion Posts. The percentage of veterans nationwide is

about 1%. In Maine it is about 7% of the population. Age wise, the majority of Maine veterans are Vietnam era, which means they are in their upper 70s and low 80s. Most posts celebrate when they acquire a member 50 years old or under.

Legionnaires who are on post email lists receive, for the scant cost of maintaining active membership, a wealth of information relating to the benefits they have earned through their national service. As with the others who require direct contact, post volunteers do their utmost to share benefit information, learn of any special needs, and find resources to meet those needs. That’s what the Buddy Check program is all about.

It is an axiom with abundant proof, that individuals who are active in mutually caring and supportive organizations not only live longer than those who are not, but also themselves enjoy self-worth in sharing like experiences. Spouses and children who belong to The American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion contribute to the sense of a greater family. Together, they continue to be of service to the community in which they reside, and by extension, to the Nation, and derive the satisfaction of this service.

Most Legion posts have Auxiliaries. The Auxiliary member can now be a male or female spouse, or also be a grandmother, mother, sister, descended, or adopted child or grandchild of a veteran who served in WWI, or since Dec. 7, 1941. At the National American Legion Convention in 2018, a resolution was passed stating that as 1,600 military personnel have been killed on active duty between declared conflicts, The United States has been in a perpetual state of war since the unprovoked attack on Pearl Harbor, which was the advent of WWII. The Congress of The United States agreed to the resolution and passed the Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for Nation Service (LEGION) Act on June 11, 2019.

The American Legion Auxiliary exists to support the Four Pillars, which are the stated goals of The American Legion. These are, as adopted in 1919: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. Each of these pillars encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our nation’s veterans, its service members, their families, the youth of

America, and ordinary citizens. These programs make a difference in hundreds of thousands of lives each year.

In the American Legion Auxiliary Chaplains Manual, duties of the Chaplain include “visiting members and veterans in nursing homes and hospitals” and “visiting members and veterans who are shut-in at home.” These are activities in which other Auxiliary members participate, and Legion members may also assist the Auxiliary in carrying out these programs. Such was the case this past pre-Christmas season of 2024, when my wife, Secretary of Unit 68, and I, a Past-Post 68 Commander, visited with both shut-ins and a still-active member in a nursing home to deliver Unit 68 Christmas gift packages.

The shut-ins we visited were Stanely and Ruth. We learned from them that when they purchased their home 20 years or so ago, though it is a one-story structure, they anticipated that as they aged, moving about their residence would probably become more difficult. They subsequently added many internal features to aid them to address the needs of daily living. Even with all they anticipated, they now realize that at that time, being still fit and active, there were aspects of their present needs that were not met. One of which was exiting their house through their entry door.

The Veterans Administration (VA) installed a metal ramp with rails, so that in a wheelchair, Stanley could safely exit his home. He told us that the electric wheelchair that our Department of Maine provided him with was truly the Cadillac of chairs. In it, he can scoot anywhere in his home with ease. The only drawback is that when he and Ruth go out, the chair cannot be collapsed and is too heavy to be placed in their SUV. When they are out and about, if they visit a place where it is available, Ruth has to ask that a wheelchair and attendant be provided, because even if she could secure a wheelchair, she would not be able to push him where he needed to go.

There are electric chairs that are available that are lighter and fully

collapsible. However, most of them cost in the neighborhood of \$3,000, an amount that is likely prohibitive to retirees in the nation’s aging population. Apparently, such chairs are not among the benefits that the VA can provide to all those they serve. For the VA to provide such a chair, the veteran would likely need to have a service-connected disability. However, Department Service Officer Carl Curtis says there are some alternatives. For instance, for someone on Medicare, their doctor can prescribe an electric chair, which Medicare will then pay for. Another option is charitable organizations that receive donated used chairs from families where the user no longer needs it. The bottom line is to not lose hope and to keep reaching out, as in “seek and ye shall find.”

On another note, in our conversation, Ruth indicated that one of their favorite former activities that they can no longer enjoy is the weekly Friday night Bingo at Jackson-Silver Post 68. It is but one of many competitive and social activities that the Post regularly runs, some others being Cornhole and Texas Hold’em tournaments, Supper Dances, Memorial and Veteran’s Day Ceremonies, other Patriotic dates on the calendar, and Birthday, Wedding, and Celebrations of Life by arrangement. In addition, the Post conducts collaborative events with other community organizations that share like mission statements with those of the Legion. A highlight of most Post sponsored events is the excellent food at reasonable prices, professionally prepared and served by the Unit 68 Post Canteen. These, and similar activities, are not exclusive to Post 68, but are also the norm at most Legion Posts.

Wherever the veteran resides in Maine, information on membership at an American Legion Post is available by email at: legionme@mainelegion.org, or by phone at: (207) 873-3229, or in writing at: The American Legion Department of Maine, 5 Verti Drive, Winslow, ME 04901-0727. Come on down and join us!

Submitted by Post 68 1st Vice Harry Orcutt



Electric Wheelchair Donation: Post 68
Chaplain Tim Twitchell, left, and Department Adjutant Jason Hall, right, load the electric wheelchair onto Tim’s Pickup truck.

[More on “BUDDY CHECKS”](#)
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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 5 continued

"BUDDY CHECKS"

(Continued from Page 20)



Ready To Deliver: Left to right, Department Adjutant Jason Hall, Post 68 1st Vice Harry G. Orcutt, and Post 68 Chaplain Tim Twitchell with chair loaded, and getting set to move out.



Veteran Receives Electric Wheelchair: The electric wheelchair is delivered to Stanley, front center, and his wife Ruth, left. Tim Twitchell, left, brought the chair to them.

Photo by Post 68 Sgt.-At-Arms Al Lake

Veterans Day 2024

Oration at Locke Mills Post 68

For more than a decade, I have authored in detail and with numerous photos, the Veterans Day Ceremonies at Jackson-Silver Post 68. The ceremonies followed a program that provided participants and guests the schedule of events from opening to conclusion. In 2019, I created a script for the Commander to utilize that contained opening remarks and introductions to the events detailed in the program outline. In 2021, the script was expanded to also include the prayers of the Post Chaplain and an Oration, usually presented by the Post Commander or Adjutant. If either did not present an Oration, a guest Orator was indicated in the script.

This year there was such an Orator, as about one week before the Post Ceremony, while working outdoors, I was bitten by either an arachnid or some other unidentified insect. This resulted in my hospitalization from the 9th to the 12th of November, causing me to miss the Veterans Day Ceremonies at the Post. In my absence, an excellent and moving Oration was presented by the Unit 68 President's middle school son. The photos taken on that occasion were provided by Unit 68 Auxiliary.

I am happy to report that my own health is vastly improving, and I sincerely hope to be able to report the activities at the 2025 Post 68 Veterans Day Ceremony, especially if the Oration is of the quality as that of our 2024 program. (I also plan to begin using insect repellent and recommend the same to all!)

Post 68 Commander William

Bickford's introduction to the presenter of the 2024 Oration:

Our next speaker is Ship's Leading Petty Officer Theodore Crockett, of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Dan Healy Division out of Kittery, Maine. He is the grandson of fifty-year member of Post 68, Butch Crockett, and his wife, Auxiliary member RoseAnn Crockett. SLPO Crockett will be reading an essay submitted as part of the Auxiliary's local essay contest held this past spring, whereby youth were challenged to write about someone who died in service to our country.

It should also be noted that Teddy is the son of Post 68 Judge Advocate Jarrod Crockett, and Unit 68 President Paige Crockett.

THE ORATION

"Let me begin by thanking all the members of the American Legion and especially, the great ladies of the Auxiliary, for allowing me to share a few brief words with you today. I also thank you, the audience, for coming here today to honor our nation's courageous servicemembers for putting their life on the line to keep traditions like this alive. It means a great deal to me to be part of this ceremony and solemn duty to honor our nation's veterans. Earlier this year, the Auxiliary invited local students to participate in an essay contest. The topic for the essay contest was to write about an American who died in military service to our country and what inspiration that offers to you personally or to future generations. In answering these questions, I was guided by sentiment and the memories

of those in my family. I pray I did them justice.

Though Chester Hopkins was just a mere farm boy from Western Maine, he willingly put his life on the line to keep his beloved America free. His story has been told to me since I was a little boy because he was a close friend of my grandfather. I believe that partially the reason I was told this story is to keep his story alive and to inspire me. And inspire me it has, and now I will share it with others.

Chester Hopkins was born on Dec. 25, 1946 and later was raised on what was known as a "state farm" in yesteryears away from his parents. An athlete through all four years of high school, he enlisted in the Marine Corps prior to graduation in 1965, and shipped out soon after. Serving in the First Marine Division, Fifth Battalion, Fifth Marines, he rose to the rank of Corporal and received ten different medals including the Purple Heart and the Combat Action ribbon. On May 12, 1967, in the Quang Tin province of South Vietnam, Hopkins stepped on a landmine and was killed.

Chester Hopkins was not a national hero who had parades thrown for him or buildings named after him, he was just an average twenty-year-old kid who felt he needed to serve his country and sacrifice in the same manner as previous generations of Americans. Having died without a wife or child, and coming from challenging family circumstances, it is entirely possible he may only be remembered as a name etched on a memorial. And this inspires me to keep Chester Hopkins' legacy alive seeing there is no one else to make his sacrifice known. This also inspires me to serve my country to the best of my ability, even if there are personal risks involved.

Chester, as a senior in high school, wrote a poem called, "A Mere Farm Boy" about a farm boy like himself going to war and dying overseas, not knowing he would soon meet the same fate. And since he had no offspring to keep his story alive, the torch was passed to me and now I pass the torch to you for the same purpose."

Submitted by Post 68 1st Vice Harry Orcutt
Oration by Teddy Crockett, Eddy Middle School, 6th Grade, May 5, 2024



Accomplished Public Speaker, Oxford County Judge of Probate Jarrod Crockett, gives last minute advice to his son before the Oration at Post 68.



Veterans Day Oration: Nationally recognized Ship's Leading Petty Officer, U.S. Naval Sea Cadets Teddy Crockett delivers his Oration.



Familial Support: Left photo, Post 68 member and Grandfather of Teddy, Gordon "Butch" Crockett, left, SLPO Teddy Crockett, center, and Post 68 Judge Advocate Jarrod Crockett, right, pose for a photo at the podium. Right photo, the "Crockett Clan" contributes their all to the Post 68 Veterans Day Ceremonies.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 5 continued

Locke Mills Unit 68 at the South Paris Veterans Home Christmas Gift Shop

Auxiliary Unit 68 President Paige Crockett reports that the Christmas Gift Store at the South Paris Veterans Home was open in time for the residents to "shop" for brand new donated gifts in time to have them wrapped and either hand delivered or mailed to family and loved ones. The tables were overflowing. The hall was transformed with Christmas decorations, holiday music, and merry "elves" helping the residents do their shopping. Units had the option of providing gifts or money. Auxiliary Veterans Home Representative Patty

Hackett deserves a gold star for doing additional shopping to make sure all tables were full to overflowing!

Multiple District 5 Auxiliary Units participated in the endeavor: Rumford Unit 24, Locke Mills Unit 68, South Paris Unit 72, and Norway Unit 81. Other Legion Auxiliary Units from nearby counties may have also participated. The Jackson-Silver Unit 68 volunteers included two Junior members, one sibling, and two students from Oxford Hills Comprehensive High School.



Unit 68 At South Paris Veterans Home: Left to right, Ellen DeMaio, Santa's representative Elf Deb Brown, Junior Member Helen DeMaio, Junior Member Jocelyn Crockett, Ann Crockett, Paige Crockett, and Foster Crockett (sibling.) The Reindeer in front is Service Dog Moses.



Building Community: Unit 68 Vice President Deb Brown, right, asked resident Bill Johnson, left, how often he had been visited since becoming a resident of the Veterans Home. He replied, "never." Deb now looks in on him, as she is a frequent visitor. His photo is included with his permission.



Christmas Gift Assistant: Ellen DeMaio and her faithful assistant stand ready for their next assignment at the South Paris Veterans Home Christmas Gift Shop.



Gift Wrapping: Selected gifts are wrapped by volunteers and prepared for delivery.

5th Annual FEZtival of Trees at Locke Mills Post 68

For the third year, Kora Shrines Oxford County Shriners held their enormously successful FEZtival of Trees as guest event producers using Jackson-Silver Post 68's Great Hall on the weekend of Dec. 13-15, 2024. The photos below are a tour of the fully decorated 23 trees set up in a U pattern about the Hall. Each tree was loaded with useful products, toys, gift cards, and/or store or restaurant coupons. Santa and Mrs. Claus were available for photos, and beginning at 09:00 hours on Saturday, Mrs. Claus (our very own Unit member) conducted a story time. All trees were raffled off on

Sunday, and Mrs. Claus, having bought an armload of tickets, took home two trees to her North Pole residence. As the other trees were picked up by lucky winners, all the decorations, signs, extension cords, furniture, and so forth were loaded into an enclosed trailer reminiscent of a circus takedown as it moves out of town.

During the take down and pick up of trees, the Post is closed except for Veteran Service emergencies, as there is no room for those ticket purchasers who are curious as to whether their ticket has been drawn.



FEZtival Of Trees: The Jackson-Silver Post 68 Great Hall is decked out with Christmas Trees to raffle off at the FEZtival of Trees event.



Canteen: Unit 68 Secretary Susan Vacca sets up the Post 68 Canteen serving table at the FEZtival of Trees.



Ticket Table: Kora Noble Dick Dean, left, and Lady Joan Dean, right, set up at the Tree Raffle ticket table at the entrance of the Locke Mills Post 68 Hall.



Consultation: Left to right, 2024 Kora Potentate Paul D. Gardner, Chief Rabban and incoming 2025 Potentate Michael J. Zubiante, and Oriental Guide Barry Irish conversing at the FEZtival of Trees event.



FEZtival Group Photo: Left to right, Locke Mills Post 68 Chaplain Tim Twitchell, Post Sgt.-At-Arms Al Lake, Mrs. Claus (a.k.a. the Reverend Sondra Withey, Unit 68 member, whose Lockes Mills Union Church holds the Post's Four Chaplains Ceremony the first Sunday in February), 1st Vice and Aleppo Shrine Harry G. Orcutt, Harry's wife and Unit 68 Secretary Susan Vacca, Santa (a.k.a. Rod Withey, Post 68 and Kora Shrine member), Unit 68 member Deb Brown, and our irreplaceable Unit 68 Kitchen Manager and Chaplain Marleen Twitchell.

[More on "FEZTIVAL" Page 23](#)

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 5 continued

■ "FEZTIVAL"

(Continued from Page 22)



"FEZtive" Entrance: Left photo, the decorated Locke Mills Post 68 entrance during the day. Right photo, the entrance lit up at nighttime.



Bethel Post 81 Veterans Day Social: In Maine's idyllic mountain village of Bethel, Mundt-Allen Post 81 holds a Coffee and Doughnuts Social to begin their Veterans Day activities.



Post 81 Veterans Day Ceremonies: Following the social, the Post adjourned to hold its annual ceremonies at the village's stunning Veterans Honor Monument in Honor Roll Park. Dedicated on Memorial Day 2022, the monument of gray and black granite holds the 1,335 names of men and women from Albany, Bethel, Grafton, Mason and Riley who either enlisted from or were honorably discharged back to these towns upon the end of their service. More than 40,000 hours were spent compiling and authenticating the service records of those listed. As it is an honor roll, all those who honorably served in every conflict from the Revolutionary War to the present are represented.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 6

Rockland Post 1; Vinalhaven Post 18; Camden Post 30; North Haven Post 33; St. George Post 34; Thomaston Post 37; Warren Post 218

St. George Post 34 Happenings and Events

March 2024

Post 34 had its first meeting of the year in March. LED lighting and a new oil tank were installed, and the furnace and chimney were also repaired. \$500 was donated to the Auxiliary for all they do for our Post and \$200 was donated to the Dept. Commander's project. Dues were increased to \$35.

The Post sent letters of support to the town of South Thomaston for a grant

to develop New Woodland Property. Also, to the superintendent of the St. George school for a grant to develop the Makerspace Learning Center.

April 2024

This year's Ballpark Flag Honoree is Ray Emerson.

We donated ten Easter hams to the St. George community. We also discussed preliminary plans to have two Wreaths Across America Ceremonies to encompass all cemeteries. One at the

Wiley's Corner Church, and the other at the Tenants Harbor Baptist Church. \$100 was donated to the Maine Blind Camp, \$400 was donated to support a high school student to attend Dirigo State, and \$500 was donated to Post 34 Auxiliary Unit.

Additionally, all currently serving officers agreed to serve for another year.

May 2024

Post 34 updated its By-laws and Constitution in May 2024.

The Post placed flags on veterans' graves prior to Memorial Day and provided a Color Guard for Boots on the Ground Ceremony at the Henry Knox Museum.

\$100 was donated to the Masons to support their Memorial Day Breakfast. The Post also had a successful Memorial Day Parade with ceremonies.

June 2024

Post 34, along with Camden Post 30, participated in the annual Rockport Donut Festival Parade.

Our Educator of the Year nominee, Kelly Webber, of the St. George School, was selected and honored at State Convention. We also attended a special ceremony at the St. George School honoring Kelly Webber, their teacher of the year.

The Post held Flag Day and a Flag Retirement Ceremony on June 14, 2024. Post members also attended the District 6 meeting, held at Camden Post 30.

\$100 was donated to Honor Flight Maine and \$100 was also donated to the Maine YMCA Military Scholarship Fund.

July 2024

Post 34 provided Color Guard for Thomaston's Fourth of July Parade.

The Post also received an award from the Department for supporting the goals of The American Legion through our community activities.

Rifle Detail Funeral Honors were provided for USA veteran Robshaw and for USCG veteran Balsley.

The Post provided Color Guard for the St. George Days event and voted for \$300 to support Wreaths Across America.

August 2024

In August, Post 34 provided Rifle Detail Funeral Honors for USN veteran Bill Lawry.

The annual Post Picnic was held and was well attended.

The Auxiliary holds a food drive the first Saturday of each month to support our local food pantry.

September 2024

In September, Post 34 attended POW/MIA Recognition Day with Camden Post 30.

The Post donated \$50 to the St. George community "Night Kitchen," a new hot water heater was installed, and Post 34 members attended the Rockland Post 1 Everlasting Ceremony. We also had attendees at the Department Fall Conference.

October 2024

A donation of \$50 was made to the Good Shephard Food Bank, as well as a \$50 purchase of a 3x5 banner for Flag Day, and the \$50 purchase of a new banner to promote The American Legion.

At the end of October, the Post's Halloween Event saw over 200 children/parents in attendance.

November 2024

In November, our Post attended a St. George School Veterans Day assembly, where all veterans were honored, and students were given patriotic handouts about our flag (cost \$203.74.)

Post 34 members attended the District 6 meeting, held at Camden Post 30, and a \$500 donation was made to the Boothbay Veterans Emergency Temporary Shelter.

December 2024

Post 34's final event for 2024 is our annual Wreaths Across America Ceremony in December.

Submitted By Post 34 Adjutant Steve Pomakis

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 8

Brunswick Post 20; Bath Post 21; Harpswell Post 171; Topsham Post 202; Phippsburg Post 216

Brunswick Post 20 Conducts Wreaths Across America Ceremony

State of Maine folks and Brunswick Post 20 held Wreaths Across America State House Ceremonies on Monday, Dec. 9, 2024 at 12:00 noon. It was a great day for sure. This event takes place in all 50 U.S. states at noon on the Monday of Wreaths Across America week. This is the fourth year Brunswick Post 20 has been conducting this event, with Post 20 Commander W.

David Watson leading the way. A big thank you to all who worked to make this happen, especially the members from the Harpswell Post 171 Honor Guard. Thank you to Travis Mills Foundation, keynote speaker 1SG Chris Roseberry, VFW Department of Maine Commander Anthony Kimble,

[More on "POST 20 WAA" Page 24](#)

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

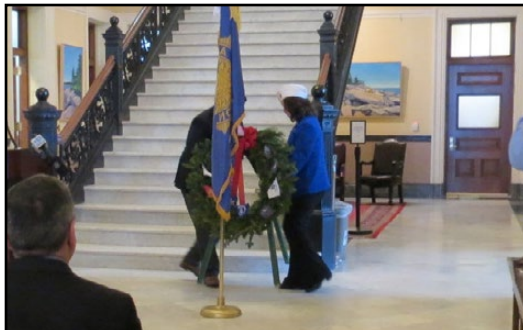
District 8 continued

"POST 20 WAA" (Continued from Page 23)

and Mid-Coast Veterans Council of Maine Commander Roger Stevens. Also thank you to The American Legion

Department of Maine Commander Tricia Thurston and VFW Department of Maine Commander Anthony R. Kimble, who worked together in presenting the Veterans Wreath.

Submitted by Post 20 Member Richard Barter



Veterans Wreath: Left photo, the wreath is on display at the Wreaths Across America Ceremony. Right photo, VFW Department of Maine Commander Anthony Kimble, left, and The American Legion Department of Maine Commander Tricia Thurston, right, place the Veterans Wreath.



Speakers: Left photo, Travis Mills Foundation keynote speaker, 1SG (Ret.) Chris Roseberry speaks at the Wreaths Across America Ceremony on Dec. 9, 2024. Middle photo, Mid-Coast Maine Veterans Council Commander Roger Stevens at the podium. Right photo, VFW Department of Maine Commander Anthony Kimble also speaks at the ceremony.



Honor Guard: Harpswell Post 171 Honor Guard at the Wreaths Across America Ceremony.



Honor Flight Maine attends the Wreaths Across America Ceremony with Brunswick Post 20.



Brunswick Post 20 Plaza Wreath Presentation: Brunswick Post 20 held a Wreaths Across America event in Brunswick to coincide with the national Wreaths Across America Day event held Sat., Dec. 14, 2024 nationwide. Wreath placing was conducted

by Post members. Left to right, Jeff White, Jo Donahue, Post 20 Commander W. David Watson, Fred Swab, and Sean Crean.



Wreath Preparation: Tom Creehan, center, unpacks and places the Veterans Wreaths with fellow Post 20 members.

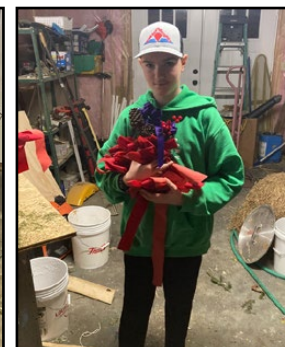
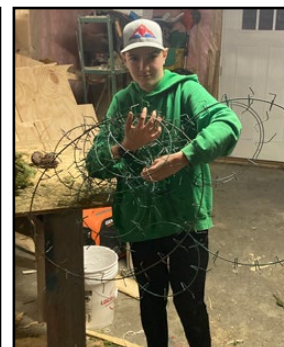


Mission Accomplished: Wreaths are placed in the Veterans Plaza by Brunswick Post 20 members.

Brunswick Post 20 Recycles Wreaths

Some days things just come together. Members at The American Legion Brunswick Post 20 place veterans' wreaths at the Town of Brunswick Veteran Monuments during the holiday season to coincide with Wreaths Across America week. By doing so, the Post is making sure to never forget those who served during this special time of year. What does one do with the product (wreath) once the season of remembrance has passed? The wreaths will definitely brown up, but it got the Post thinking, if our government at

Arlington, our nation's cemetery, can recycle 265,000+ wreaths, the Post here in Brunswick could certainly do the same with its two dozen or so wreaths. The wheels got turning and Post member Richard Barter heard about a young man who is working on badges for Scouts and would like a chance to help out. One phone call led to another and Sawyer Baldwin stepped up to help out. Wreaths were taken apart, and brush, metal frames, and ribbons were also recycled. Thank you, Sawyer, for answering the call.



Wreath Recycling: Left photo, Sawyer Baldwin, left, and Brunswick Post 20 member Richard Barter, right, transfer the wreaths. Middle and right photos, Sawyer Baldwin dismantles wreaths at home to be recycled.

Brunswick Post 20 Fundraiser

Brunswick Post 20 is requesting donations to replace the Memorial Plaque on "The Rock" at Brunswick High School. The Plaque to be replaced honors Brunswick "Dragons" who paid the ultimate to protect our way of life during the Korea and Vietnam Wars. Thanks to fellow "Dragon" Steve McCausland, we have located a "Dragon" not listed on "The Rock." Harold Schock, a Dragon of the Class of 1962, paid the ultimate price in Vietnam in Oct. 1965. Our research to date, shows that Harold was the first "Dragon" to die in the Vietnam conflict.

Our goal, at present, is to raise \$6,000. This goal amount will be used to replace the Korea-Vietnam Plaque and refurbish the World War 2 Plaque, with an unveiling goal date of May 23, 2025.

Donations may be made to: The Brunswick School Department, 20 Barrows Street, Brunswick, Maine, 04011 or by scanning the QR Code, right, with your phone.



Memorial Plaque Replacement Fundraiser: Left photo, "The Rock" Memorial Plaque at Brunswick High School. Right photo, Vietnam Veteran Harold Schock whose name will be added on the new plaque.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 8 continued



Harpswell Post 171 Veterans Day Ceremony: Members of Harpswell's John Leo Murray Jr. American Legion Post 171 pay tribute to all who served honorably in the U.S. military during a Veterans Day ceremony at Harpswell Center on Nov. 11. Left to right, Chuck Kapela (bugler), Past Cdr. Bob Weber, Rifle Squad John Hill, Bill O'Connell, Tom Guerra, and Amy Ferrell holding U.S. flag.

Photo by B. Cameron



Taps: Chuck Kapela plays Taps as members of The American Legion Harpswell Post 171 color guard stand by after firing a salute during a Veterans Day ceremony in Harpswell. Left to right, Chuck Kapela, John Hill, Bill O'Connell, and Tom Guerra.

Photo by B. Cameron

Phippsburg Post 216 Happenings & Events

As fall arrived and the holiday season started, Phippsburg American Legion Memorial Post 216 continued to stay busy and added several new events for this year.

One of the new events was their participation in the town's annual Halloween "Trunk or Treat" on Oct. 31, 2024 at the Town Hall parking lot. They decorated Post Adjutant Young's one-ton truck and donned full costumes to hand out candy to the kids.

In November, members of Post 216 went to the Plant Memorial Home in Bath and visited with veteran residents for Veterans Day. At the same time, Post Adjutant Mike Young was the guest speaker for the Hull, MA Veterans Ceremony, where his son (and fellow Legionnaire), Justin Young is the CO of CG Station Point Allerton.

Members gathered on Sun., Dec.

8, 2024 to decorate the inside and outside of Town Hall and the Veterans Memorial Park. Post 216 members assisted the Town in preparation of its annual Town Hall Open House where Santa arrives by fire truck to visit with the local children.

The evening of Dec. 14, 2024, the Post also held its annual Christmas Dinner for members and their families at the Small Point Baptist Church. Donations were made to Brunswick Post 20 to help provide Christmas boxes to active-duty members serving abroad and to the Bath Senior Citizens' "Willy Knitters," who knit afghans for veterans at Togus.

On Dec. 15, 2024, the Post set up a recruiting table at the Phippsburg Sportsmen's Association's Open House where both Legion Post 216 and VFW Post 7738 meet.

Halloween



Halloween Trunk Or Treat: Left to right, Post Commander Ken Kellogg (a.k.a. "The Farmer"), Post Judge Advocate Fred Libby (a.k.a. "The Candyman"), Post Adjutant Mike Young (a.k.a. "Stitches the Clown"), Comrade Dave Barnes (a.k.a. "Disco Pirate"), and Comrade Jim Wallace (a.k.a. One-Eyed Ninja Pirate") take part in the town's "Trunk or Treat."

Photo by Chilloa Young

Decorated Truck: Post 216 Adjutant Mike Young's truck is all decked out in Halloween attire.

Photo by Post 216 Adjutant Mike Young



Election Raffle



Raffle Table: Comrade Keith Sikora, left, and Post Commander Ken Kellogg, right, man the Post Raffle Table outside the Town Hall during the November Presidential Election.

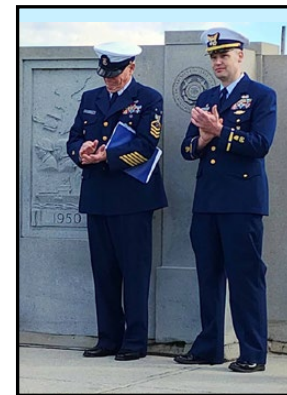
Photo by Post 216 Adjutant Mike Young

Veterans Day



Veterans Day Visit: Left to right, Comrade Dave Barnes, CH Richard Spear, and Comrade Keith Sikora visit with veterans at the Plant Memorial Home in Bath.

Photo provided by Deb Reddinger



Veterans Day Ceremony: Phippsburg Post 216 Adjutant and Guest Speaker Mike Young, left, and his son CWO3 and CO of Coast Guard Station Point Allerton Justin Young, right, attend the Hull, MA Veterans Day Ceremony.

Photo by Chilloa Young

Decorating Town Hall and Veterans Memorial Site for Christmas

Post 216 Christmas Decorating: Left to right, Comrade Bob Belben, Comrade Bill Turek, Comrade Keith Sikora, Post Commander Ken Kellogg, Comrade Jim Wallace, Post Chaplain Richard Spear, and Comrade Chuck Mainville decorate the Town Hall and Veteran's Memorial Park for Christmas.

Photo by Post 216 Adjutant Mike Young



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 8 continued

Christmas Dinner

Christmas Dinner: Members of Phippsburg Post 216 and their families enjoy fellowship at the Christmas Potluck Dinner held at the Small Point Baptist Church.

Photo by Post 216 Adjutant Mike Young



Christmas Attire: Left to right, Evie Libby, Post Adjutant Mike Young, and Post Judge Advocate Fred Libby show off their Christmas attire at the Christmas Potluck Dinner.

Photo by Chilloa Young

Meeting Activity



Continuous Service Awards: Left photo, Post Commander Ken Kellogg, left, presents Comrade Gary Flemmings, right, with his 14-Year Continuous Service Certificate at the Oct. 10, 2024 Post Meeting. Middle photo, Comrade Bill Turek, left, receives his 7-Year Continuous Service Certificate from Post Commander Ken Kellogg, right, at the Nov. 14, 2024 Post Meeting. Comrade Gary Flemmings looks on in the background. Right photo, Comrade Rob Martinez, left, receives his 4-Year Continuous Service Certificate from Post Commander Kellogg, right, at the Nov. 14, 2024 Post Meeting.

Photo by Post 216 Adjutant Mike Young



Post 216 Recruiting Table: Post Commander Ken Kellogg, left, and Post Adjutant Mike Young, right, man a Post 216 recruiting table at the Phippsburg Sportsmen's Association Open House. Legion Post 216 and VFW Post 7738 both meet at the facility.

Photo by Reggie Read

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 9

Augusta Post 2; Gardiner Post 4; Waterville Post 5; Hallowell Post 6; Winthrop Post 40; Oakland Post 51; Togus Post 90; Vassalboro Post 126; Richmond Post 132; So. China Post 179; Litchfield Post 181; Clinton Post 186; China Post 195; Monmouth Post 204; Augusta Post 205



Hallowell Post 6 Repairs Flagpole: Members of Hallowell Post 6 repair flag poles at the Post on Jan. 22. Left to right, Post Chaplain Dan West, David Dodge, Post 2nd Vice Louis Gipson (seated), Post 1st Vice Bill Meehan, Post Commander Maureen Malley, and Post Adjutant Gerald Stuart.



Hallowell Post 6 Wreaths Across America Ceremony: On Dec., 14, 2024, members of Goodrich-Caldwell Post 6 took part in the Wreaths Across America Ceremony at the Maine Veterans Cemetery in Augusta by laying wreaths on the graves of our fallen comrades. Left to right, Post Sgt.-At-Arms John Mosher, Post 1st Vice William Meehan, and other members in attendance included David Dodge, along with Lou and Barbara Gipson.



Veterans Day School Visit: Goodrich-Caldwell Hallowell Post 6 received an invitation to the Hall-Dale Elementary School on Nov. 8, 2024 for veterans to come and share their experiences in the military and to read books to the students. There were four post members who attended: Post 6 Commander Maureen Malley, Post 1st Vice William Meehan, Post Adjutant Gerald Stuart, and George Fargo. We started out meeting in the library, where the fifth-grade students introduced themselves, had amazing questions, and shared their excitement about moving to Junior High next year. We were then escorted to our room assignments to meet the students, share our military careers, and answer some very intriguing questions. Thank you, Hall-Dale Elementary, for this wonderful opportunity.

Post 6 Pearl Harbor Remembrance: On Dec. 7, 2024, a wreath of remembrance is placed by Goodrich-Caldwell Post 6 Adjutant Gerald Stuart at The Legion Memorial in the Hallowell Cemetery in remembrance of those lost and wounded during the attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec 7, 1941.



Hallowell Post 6 Veterans Day Celebration: Goodrich-Caldwell Post 6 held its Veterans Day Celebration with a breakfast served by Boy Scout Troop 647 Alumni for all veterans and their families. Top photo, a ceremony was held at 11:00 a.m. at the Hallowell Cemetery with John Morris as the featured speaker. Bottom photo, left to right, Past Post Commander Gerald Stuart, Guest Speaker John Morris, retired U.S. Naval Captain and former State of Maine Commissioner of Public Safety, and Diane Stuart enjoy the breakfast.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 9 continued



Hallowell Cemetery Flag Detail: On Sat., Nov. 16, 2024, fifteen members from the Hall-Dale Boys Varsity "State Champions" soccer team and some of their supporting parents, along with Hallowell City Mayor George LaPointe and State Representative Dan Shagoury, help pick up all the flags from the grave sites of our fallen veterans.



Oakland Post 51 Veterans Day Parade: Veterans from Decker Simmons American Legion Post 51 attend the Veterans Day Parade on Nov. 11, 2024 in Waterville. Left to right, Mark Spencer, Wally McKenney, Jeff Flye, Tina Zabierek, John Palmer, and Patrick Linehan.

Local Modern Woodmen Members Honor Hometown Hero

Local volunteer Jeff Meader, Oakland, Maine, was recently recognized for countless hours of service to the community during a Modern Woodmen of America member event on Nov. 18, 2024.

Meader was honored through Modern Woodmen's Hometown Hero program for his dedication to the Sons of The American Legion and American Legion Post 51, where he serves as Assistant Finance Officer. Jeff's attention to detail, willingness to accept any challenge, stick-to-it-iveness and willingness to volunteer are a major key to the success of Decker Simmons Post 51.

As part of the Hometown Hero program, members of The Capitol District Modern Woodmen Chapter presented Meader with a certificate and a \$100,00 award grant to be donated to the charitable organization of the honoree's choice. Meader selected The American Legion Post 51 Entertainment Committee to receive the donation.

"Volunteers form the foundation of a strong community," says Patrick

Linehan, local Modern Woodmen volunteer leader. "Modern Woodmen's Hometown Hero program gives us the chance to thank those who selflessly give their time to make the world a better place."

Coordinated by local Modern Woodmen members, the fraternal financial services organization's chapters and youth service clubs provide opportunities for members to take part in social and educational activities and volunteer projects to meet local needs.

For more information or to get involved, contact Linehan at 207-465-4800 / Patrick.r.linehan@mwarep.org.

Modern Woodmen was founded in 1883 as a fraternal benefit society. The organization supports members, families and communities with a unique blend of financial services, fraternal programs and local-impact opportunities. Learn more at www.modernwoodmen.org.

*Securities offered through MWA Financial Services Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Modern Woodmen of America.

Oakland Post 51 Plaque: Oakland Post 51 Assistant Finance Officer Jeff Meader, left, receives a plaque from local Modern Woodmen volunteer leader Patrick Linehan, right, at a Modern Woodmen of America event on Nov. 18, 2024.



Oakland Post 51 Receives Plaque Of Appreciation: President of United Bikers of Maine Shawn Nava, along with other members of U.B.M, presented a plaque of appreciation to Commander Jeffery Flye and American Legion Post 51 for help and support of their organization. When U.B.M. needed a place to hold their monthly meetings, Post 51 stepped up and offered their hall. Many members of Post 51, Sons of The American Legion, and American Legion Riders also belong to the U.B.M. Left photo, President of United Bikers of Maine, Shawn Nava, left, presents a Plaque of Appreciation to Post 51 Commander Jeffery Flye, right. Right photo, members of the United Bikers of Maine.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 11

Belfast Post 43; Unity Post 50; Winterport Post 138; Stockton Springs Post 157; Palermo Post 163; Brooks Post 183



Palermo Post 163 Craft Fair: Malcolm Glidden Post 163 in Palermo held their annual craft fair on Oct. 26, 2024. The craft fair is held in memory of Pauline York, a longtime Auxiliary member of Post 163. Every year, the proceeds from this craft fair sponsors four students to attend the Dirigo State Program and also goes towards Christmas gifts for veterans in nursing homes. Front row, left to right, Chelsea Hunter, Michelle Johnson, Mary Haskell, Nancy York, Linda Morgan, and Tony Horak. Back row, left to right, Deanne Stearns, Allison Kibbin and Clayton York.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 11 continued



Palermo Post 163 Wreaths Event: The annual escort for Wreaths Across America through Maine was Dec. 7-8, 2024. Palermo Post 163 Commander Paul Hunter received a message from Department Adjutant Jason

Hall that there would be a stop at Erskine Academy on Dec. 8. Jason said for us to show what The American Legion family can bring to a stop, and let's show up in force. We saw many Legion caps at the event. Post 163 and 179 members posed for a photo before lining up to welcome the whole procession into the Erskine gymnasium. Left to right, Cindy Senkbeil, Al McKay, Bonnie Hunter, Tony Horak, Duane Alexander, Chelsea Hunter, Post 163 Commander Paul Hunter (behind Chelsea), Tom Sepulvador, Post 179 Commander Neil Farrington (behind Tom), Michelle Sepulvador, and Rick Fischer.



Cemetery Wreath Placements: Malcolm Glidden Post 163 and Auxiliary Unit 163 of Palermo spent Sat., Dec. 14 placing wreaths at veterans' headstones at four local cemeteries in Palermo and China. The wreaths came from Wreaths Across America. They were honored to do this service for the veterans at Christmas. They placed wreaths for veterans from the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Civil War, WWI, WWII, and all the way to veterans who stood guard during times of peace. Top photo, Unit 163 member Chelsea Hunter, left, and Post 163 Commander Paul Hunter, right. Bottom photo, left to right, Duane Alexander, Paul Hunter, and Joe LaMacchia.

Photo by Unit 163 Chaplain Bonnie Hunter



Veterans Dinner: Malcolm Glidden Post 163 and Auxiliary of Palermo held its Veterans Dinner on Oct. 27, 2024, where they provided ample amounts of food and drinks for the veterans who attended. Mainly Harmony provided entertainment for all to enjoy. They were thrilled to have Elizabeth Benesh, a 101-year-old veteran of WWII in their presence. Elizabeth served in the Coast Guard from 1943 through 1946. It was the Post and Auxiliary's honor to recognize area veterans for their service. Left to right, Post Commander Paul Hunter and Elizabeth Benesh.

Photo by Unit 163 Chaplain Bonnie Hunter



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 13

Bangor Post 12; E Millinocket Post 13; Corinna Post 73; Old Town Post 75; Lincoln Post 77; Millinocket Post 80; Orono Post 84; Howland Post 97; Brewer Post 98; Newport Post 105; Etna-Carmel Post 107; Corinth Post 115; Lee Post 160; Herman Post 200; Dixmont Post 201; Glenburn Post 211; Hampden Post 213



District 13 Sponsors Food Drive: Members of District 13 came and worked together to donate food as well as a cash donation to the Maine Veterans Project food drive to help our fellow veterans in need. The food drive was held from Nov. 12 – 17, 2024. Top photo, left to right, Unit 107 Vice President Jenn Mahon, Unit 107 Chaplain Liz Keene, Unit 107 President Arlene Luzzi, Unit 75 member Amanda Andrews, and Unit 115 President Tammy Gray. Bottom photo, left to right, Roger Gray, Mike Libby, Tammy Gray, Amy Wagner, Liz Keene, Roger Keene, Steve Luzzi, Amanda Andrews, Wayne Feero, Sheri Clerk, Kris Clark, Kim Lander, Ryan Simpson, and George Maxsimic.



Old Town Post 75 Pearl Harbor Remembrance: Old Town Post 75, Squadron 75, and local JROTC honor Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day with a ceremony.

Old Town Post 75 Giving Tree Donation: Post 75 Adjutant Harley Anderson, right, presents checks totaling \$1,150 from the Post, Squadron, and Auxiliary to go towards the Old Town Public Safety's holiday Giving Tree.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 13 continued



Corinth Post 115 Veterans Day Ceremony: The Veterans Day Ceremony was held at Hudson Veterans Memorial on Nov. 11, 2024. Left photo, left to right, Post Chaplin Fred Petros, Post Americanism Officer George Simmons (George also set up the static display of civil war era weapons, right photos), Post Sgt.-At-Arms Ralph Collins, Post Commander Roger Gray, and Air Force Veteran Scott Ludwig (who played TAPS) to conclude the ceremony.

complete with all the equipment, food, and a bonfire. The event is especially focused on families who have never been ice fishing. The look on a 5-year old's face as they pull a pickerel out of the hole is priceless and the only thanks we need. Warden White was a long-time member of Post 8 and Scout Leader. Since last year, the family of the late Wade Kearns has presented two lifetime fishing and hunting licenses to two kids. This year, 5-year-old Ruairi Bane and 6-year-old Cole Moore were the lucky recipients.



Lifetime Fishing And Hunting License: Navy Vet Bill Kearns, left, congratulates 6-year-old Cole Moore, right, for winning a lifetime fishing and hunting license, one of two presented by Kearns in remembrance of his late son, Wade.

Cherryfield Post 8 Battle Of The Bulge: Cherryfield Post 8 hosts the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. Left to right, Post 8 Adjutant and Bugler Peter Duston in WWII uniform, MSgt. Jon Gay, and Post 8 Commander, SSG, and Army Drummer Jamie Fox.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 14

Dover-Foxcroft Post 29; Milo Post 41; Dexter Post 53; Brownville Post 92; Greenville Post 94; Monson Post 116; Guilford Post 119; Sangerville Post 165



Dover-Foxcroft Post 29 Membership Awards: Dover-Foxcroft Post 29 Commander Adrienne Clarke, left, is presented with membership awards from last year's Department Convention by District 14 Commander Daniel Nutter, right, at a District 14 Meeting held in Dover-Foxcroft.



Cherryfield Post 8 Trunk Or Treat: Cherryfield Scouts help at Trunk or Treat co-hosted by Cherryfield American Legion Post 8, Troop 139, and Pack 139 Washington County Scouts.



Costumes: Post 8 Adjutant gets help from his buddies for Trunk or Treat co-hosted by Narraguagus Post 8 and the Scouts of Troop and Pack 139.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 15

Calais Post 3; Cherryfield Post 8; Machias Post 9; Eastport Post 11; Baileyville Post 23; Danforth Post 45; Pembroke Post 59; Lubec Post 65; Jonesport Post 108; Vanceboro Post 172; Topsfield Post 191

Cherryfield Post 8 Sponsors Ice Fishing Day

American Legion Narraguagus Post 8, the Cherryfield Scouts, and the Downeast Salmon Association continue to sponsor a free ice fishing day in Beddington on Clak Pond. Founded over 20 years ago by Legion members, Scouts, and Maine Warden Phil White, the event offers free fishing



Cherryfield Post 8 Helps Students at Cherryfield Elementary School Remember Veteran's Day. Post 8 Sgt.-At-Arms Jamie Fox, back left, beats out cadence for Scouts of Troop 139 as they post colors for the school's Veterans Day program. SSG Fox is a retired Army Drummer and a recent member of Post 8.



Cherryfield Scouts Render Honors to deceased veterans at Acadia National Cemetery in Jonesboro.

T a p s C o l u m n

<u>POST</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>CONFLICT</u>	<u>POST</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>CONFLICT</u>
Post 2 – Augusta	P R Thurlow	Korea	Post 69 – SW Harbor	Carroll W Lunt	Korea
Post 2 – Augusta	Michael L Edgecomb	Vietnam	Post 69 – SW Harbor	Donald E Degolyer	Vietnam
Post 2 – Augusta	Jeremy Dular	Persian Gulf	Post 72 – South Paris	Arthur E Hill Jr	Korea
Post 2 – Augusta	Paul M Gilbert	Korea	Post 76 – Scarborough	Robert L Coulthard	Vietnam
Post 4 – Gardiner	Robert E Atkins	Other	Post 76 – Scarborough	Douglas T Albert	Vietnam
Post 4 – Gardiner	Charles E Clements	Vietnam	Post 76 – Scarborough	Charles Temm	Korea
Post 4 – Gardiner	Robert W Foster Jr	Lebanon/Grenada	Post 76 – Scarborough	Lloyd E York	Korea
Post 4 – Gardiner	Jay A Hall	Vietnam	Post 77 – Lincoln	Durwood C Wilson	Korea
Post 4 – Gardiner	Fred L Pushard Jr	Vietnam	Post 78 – Strong	Craig V Starbird	Vietnam
Post 4 – Gardiner	Joel Palmer	Vietnam	Post 80 – Millinocket	Clifford W Durant	Korea
Post 5 – Waterville	Michael G Coyne	Vietnam	Post 81 – Bethel	Ira A Gibson	Lebanon/Grenada
Post 5 – Waterville	Robert Liberty Sr	Korea	Post 82 – Norway	Ralph S Moulton	WWII
Post 5 – Waterville	James A Rogers	Korea	Post 82 – Norway	George W Tibbets Jr	Korea
Post 5 – Waterville	William D Branch	Korea	Post 83 – Freeport	Everett Thurlow	Vietnam
Post 10 – Livermore Falls	John P Crowley	Vietnam	Post 84 – Orono	Arthur J Morin	Korea
Post 12 – Bangor	John E Wilber	Vietnam	Post 84 – Orono	Gerald J Ouellette Sr	Vietnam
Post 14 – Fairfield	Roger Chambers	Lebanon/Grenada	Post 91 – Yarmouth	Kenna L Small	Vietnam
Post 15 – Caribou	Richard Bechtel	Vietnam	Post 91 – Yarmouth	Donald W Hunt	Vietnam
Post 17 – Portland	Robert A Wright	Vietnam	Post 94 – Greenville	George C Murray Sr	Vietnam
Post 19 – Sanford	Louis G Melanson	Korea	Post 94 – Greenville	Ronald W Boyan	Vietnam
Post 19 – Sanford	Stephen Gilpatrick	WWII	Post 94 – Greenville	Donald G Anderson	Vietnam
Post 20 – Brunswick	William T Konzal	Vietnam	Post 94 – Greenville	Ben A Nye	Vietnam
Post 20 – Brunswick	Thomas R Nadeau	Vietnam	Post 94 – Greenville	Robert S McCarthy	Korea
Post 20 – Brunswick	William F Griffiths	WWII	Post 94 – Greenville	Thomas R Munn	Vietnam
Post 22 – Lewiston	Ralph L Baril	Korea	Post 94 – Greenville	William T Talcott Jr	WWII
Post 22 – Lewiston	Cheryl Gray	Vietnam	Post 94 – Greenville	Woodrouffe “Tony” L Bartley Jr	Korea
Post 23 – Baileyville	John Helmstadter	Other	Post 97 – Howland	Bruce M Curran	Vietnam
Post 24 – Rumford	John W Percival	Vietnam	Post 98 – Brewer	George E Mayo	Vietnam
Post 24 – Rumford	Glen C Tompkins	Korea	Post 99 – Bingham	Charles Mathieu	Vietnam
Post 24 – Rumford	Raymond E Surette	WWII	Post 102 – Stonington	Ronald P Dahlen	Vietnam
Post 24 – Rumford	Jeffrey P Chamberlain	Vietnam	Post 111 – Turner	Frederick M Cilley	Unknown
Post 24 – Rumford	Leo J Melanson	WWII	Post 115 – E. Corinth	George I Simmons	Vietnam
Post 24 – Rumford	Jon W Kowalzyk	Vietnam	Post 115 – E. Corinth	Paul D Brown	Vietnam
Post 26 – Biddeford	Marshall E Alexander	Korea	Post 118 – Mars Hill	Ray W Kinney	Vietnam
Post 26 – Biddeford	Donald J Koles	Korea	Post 132 – Richmond	Pamela Reynolds	Vietnam
Post 26 – Biddeford	Robert Stmichel	Vietnam	Post 132 – Richmond	Gordon R Frizzle	Vietnam
Post 28 – Farmington	Clifford F White	Korea	Post 133 – Fort Kent	William J Ayoob	Korea
Post 28 – Farmington	David C Blanchard	Vietnam	Post 133 – Fort Kent	Lucien J Theriault	WWII
Post 29 – Dover-Foxcroft	William D Richardson	Other	Post 134 – Alfred	Robert E Liberty	Korea
Post 29 – Dover-Foxcroft	Carl R Carpenter	Korea	Post 139 – Harrison	Jimmy C Dalgaard	Korea
Post 30 – Camden	Joel Powers	Vietnam	Post 149 – Waldoboro	Aloysius J ODonnell	Vietnam
Post 30 – Camden	William H Annis	WWII	Post 149 – Waldoboro	Howard A Kaler	Vietnam
Post 30 – Camden	Alan Thomas	WWII	Post 153 – Auburn	Larry B Pelletier	Vietnam
Post 34 – St. George	Robert P Cremonni	Korea	Post 159 – Kennebunkport	Robert A Schafer	Vietnam
Post 35 – So. Portland	John L Janosik	Vietnam	Post 161 – Portland	Michael P Nicolai	Vietnam
Post 35 – So. Portland	Richard A Tannoia	WWII	Post 171 – Harpswell	Joseph D Leblanc	Vietnam
Post 35 – So. Portland	Rafael Costales	Korea	Post 171 – Harpswell	Joseph Andrew	WWII
Post 36 – Boothbay Harbor	Reynold Hulse	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Richard L Anderson	Vietnam
Post 47 – Houlton	Charles Griffith	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Lyndon Bussell	Vietnam
Post 47 – Houlton	Thomas W Greenlaw	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Bob McCarthy	Korea
Post 49 – Van Buren	Louis H Morneault	Korea	Post 197 – Westbrook	Charles D Rose Jr	Vietnam
Post 49 – Van Buren	Donald R Cyr	Korea	Post 197 – Westbrook	Richard S Sullivan	Vietnam
Post 51 – Oakland	Brent Wakefield	Vietnam	Post 199 – Peru	Ronald A Duguay	Korea
Post 52 – Oakfield	Claude M Kenney	Vietnam	Post 205 – Augusta	Albert Spickler	Vietnam
Post 54 – Wiscasset	Blaine Hanna	Vietnam	Post 207 – Trenton	Harry G Moore	Korea
Post 58 – Buckfield	Philip Whitmore	Korea	Post 207 – Trenton	Charles E Farley	Vietnam
Post 62 – Westbrook	Gregory C Beane	Persian Gulf	Post 207 – Trenton	Richard L Butters	Vietnam
Post 62 – Westbrook	Roland J Bilodeau Jr	Vietnam			
Post 62 – Westbrook	Richard L Lowell	Persian Gulf			
Post 63 – Ellsworth	Charles E Mulhern Jr	Vietnam			
Post 63 – Ellsworth	Arthur Crawford	Vietnam			
Post 68 – Locke Mills	Delma F McMillin	Vietnam			

Attention: Next Deadline is April 11

The deadline for material, stories and/or pictures to be submitted for consideration for use in the **May 2025** issue of The Maine Legionnaire will be **April 11, 2025**.

Please be reminded that only those articles and/or pictures which are sent in proper form will be considered for publication.

Illegible stories or pictures that cannot be reproduced will be returned to you. A reminder that stories must be in story format; we are unable to compose your information for you.

As always, the editorial staff may edit all submissions at its discretion.

We are once again asking for input from all posts, auxiliary units, S.A.L. squadrons, individuals, etc. To make this

paper informative to you, it is imperative that we receive submissions from the membership.

Photo(s) should include the following: who is in the photo (left to right), what the photo is about, where the event took place, and who took the picture (optional). All photos will be returned for clarification and submission of the required information if the above mentioned is not provided. *Please note: blurry or pixelated photos will not be accepted.*

Anyone interested in submitting a guest editorial should contact The Maine Legionnaire business office at:

(207) 873-3229 or via email at: legionme@mainelegion.org or rachael@mainelegion.org

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Mid-Winter Conference Guest Speaker: National Vice Commander Charles "Chuck" Robbins, right, speaks at the Department of Maine Mid-Winter Conference, held on Jan. 11 at Jeff's Catering & Event Center in Brewer, while Department First Vice Commander Leroy McKenzie, left, and Department Commander Patricia "Tricia" Thurston, center, listen and take notes.

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Due to time constraints and staff limitations to fact check all material sent in, we depend on the honesty and integrity of those who submit material for publication and on the expertise of our members and readers to correct misstatements or misinformation whether intentional or not.