

# THE MAINE Legionnaire



MAY 2025

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OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF MAINE

32 Pages

## A Message From National Commander LaCoursiere

To my fellow Legionnaires in Maine,

This year is one of great change for our country, our nation and our veterans. As a non-partisan organization, The American Legion is eager to work with the new administration and Congress.

Shortly after confirmation to his new position, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Doug Collins said, "Together, we will

strengthen VA, so it works better for America's heroes. Let's get to work."

The American Legion welcomes all opportunities to innovate, strengthen and improve the healthcare system and benefits created to serve our nation's veterans and their families. Since the founding of The American Legion in 1919, we have achieved multiple legislative accomplishments. We found success by working closely with Congress, VA, the Pentagon and other arms of government at the federal, state and local levels.

The American Legion is America's voice for veterans. We are that voice not because of any statements that I make from national headquarters but because of the work performed daily in posts and communities throughout your department.

The California wildfires have devastated many in the Golden State and veterans have certainly been impacted. Additionally, hurricanes, floods and tornadoes have wreaked havoc on much of the southeast. American Legion Family members from coast-to-



NATIONAL  
COMMANDER  
JAMES A.  
LACOURSIERE JR.

coast collected supplies and relief items to support those in need. Donations to our National Emergency Fund increased as generous Americans reached into their pockets to help people who, in some cases, lost everything. I am asking that you continue to show compassion and remember that re-building and recovery doesn't take days or weeks, but months and years.

Stressful times require us to be even more vig-

ilant in conducting frequent buddy checks. Not only can a buddy check potentially save a life, but the interaction can strengthen bonds and foster close friendships.

The American Legion has no greater priority than the prevention of veteran suicide. I urge you to visit [www.BeTheOne.org](http://www.BeTheOne.org) for the latest about our mission to save lives. On our website, you can read about The American Legion's partnership with Columbia University. We have joined forces with their mental health experts in developing training to interact with and respond to veterans who may be in crisis. You can register on the website for a free online training session. Facilitators use role-play and open discussion to identify warning signs for high-risk individuals.

I thank you for your service to America and The American Legion. Best wishes for a productive and enjoyable department convention.

For God and Country,

James A. LaCoursiere, Jr.  
National Commander

## Jeff's Catering & Event Center in Brewer to Host Annual State Convention

June 6-7, 2025

The American Legion, Department of Maine is proud to announce its 106th Annual State Convention at Jeff's Catering & Event Center, 15 Littlefield Way, Brewer.

Department Commander Patricia "Tricia" Thurston will call the convention to order promptly at noontime on Friday, June 6.

The Holiday Inn in Bangor located on 404 Odlin Road will be the headquarters hotel.

This promises to be an exciting and eventful convention for all of the Legion family members and their friends. Please take the time to join us in recognizing our award recipients, listen to various guest speakers as well

as Maine dignitaries, and learn what The American Legion, Department of Maine has to offer our veterans and their families around the state of Maine.

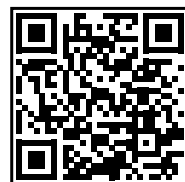
The registration fee to attend is \$10/person which covers both sessions to be held June 6-7. Please note that all invited guests and their family members will not have to pay a registrations fee. Please visit the State Convention page at [www.mainelegion.org](http://www.mainelegion.org) under News & Events to register.

Please show your support to our veterans and Legionnaires around the state of Maine by making every effort to attend.

## Get Your Be The One Challenge Coin & Lobster Pin Before They Sell Out!

*All proceeds go towards assisting  
veterans in the state of Maine*

Coins and pins can be purchased Online by visiting [www.mainelegion.org](http://www.mainelegion.org), by scanning the



QR code with your phone, or by check/money order in the amount of \$10/coin or pin, plus \$5 S/H. Make check payable

to The American Legion, Department of Maine and mail to 5 Verti Drive,

Winslow, ME 04901-0727. Please include an additional \$5 for every 5 coins purchased.

Coins and pins are also available for free pickup at \$10 each.

All proceeds go towards helping veterans in the state of Maine, their families, and various programs in The American Legion.

For questions, please call the Department at 207-873-3229.



Challenge Coin Front



Challenge Coin Back



Lobster Pin



## Commander's Comments

To my fellow Legionnaires and Legion Family,

I hope this finds you all well and feeling your best. When I use the word family, I mean it. The true meaning of family is, "a group of people who provide love, support, and a sense of belonging. It's about shared experiences, mutual respect, and unconditional love, whether those individuals are related by blood, choice, or circumstance." It is true camaraderie at its best. I consider you dear friends and family. Your support for me and for this organization does not go unnoticed. I ask you all to keep on doing all the wonderful work you do for this organization, veterans, and for your communities.

It's hard to believe that I started this



**PATRICIA  
"TRICIA"  
THURSTON**

journey in 2006. When I joined The American Legion, I also joined the Auxiliary. I have been a dual member ever since staying active for both. Being a veteran and a veteran's wife helped it makes sense to me to be a member for both. In 2013, I was appointed and installed as The American Legion Department Chaplain for Commander Hargreaves. Since 2013 I have continued as an officer, and yes, some offices were held more than once! In 2020, I decided to retire early, leaving me the freedom and opportunity to continue as 2nd Vice Commander, 1st Vice Commander, and now in 2024-25, as Department Commander. I am so proud to be a part of this organization and to be your Department Commander this year. My goal was to make an appearance at every possible meeting, event, and celebration I could. We all know that is impossible. What I did do was make as many events as possible or try to ensure Department representation was present. There are so many amazing events planned on the same day within our organization. I truly thank

[More on](#)

["COMMANDER'S COMMENTS" Page 4](#)

## 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 di-



rectly 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, tem-

perament, 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](http://www.mainelegion.org) and click on the **DONATE** button and *make sure to type "Commander's Project" in the Note section.*

## A 'First' Look

Hello everyone!

I want to start out by saying that as I sit here writing this article, I feel so blessed to be a part of The American Legion. It is a great honor to be a part of the Department of Maine, but it is an even greater honor to have been elected by you to be your 1st Vice Commander and your Membership Chairman.

I feel lost for words at times as I look back on my journey to where I am now over the last ten plus years. Going from being a dues-donating member, to the passion that I carry now, is one part of what continues to drive me in this organization. This last year was a very interesting one for me. I have dealt with more health issues than I ever have had in my entire life combined. The thing that I will always look back on is how The American Legion Family stepped up and helped me and my family in our greatest time of need. A time where my vulnerability was at its highest moment. The words THANK YOU could never have more meaning. So, with that said, THANK YOU all to those who



**LEROY  
MCKENZIE**

prayed, comforted, donated, and most importantly took care of my family when I couldn't. I love you all.

That all leads to a big point I want to make. When I called each post in the Department of Maine, one thing I noticed that was repeated over and over was, "we just don't know how to attract younger members like yourself." I am here to tell you: my story is a prime example of how to attract members. The American Legion Department of Maine gave me a reason to value my membership. When I was down and out, people were there. It wasn't the community members; it was TAL Family. Sometimes in membership, we need to take the time to listen and seek out the answers to those questions we are asking. How are we conforming what our post is doing to gain these members? How many of us are doing Buddy Checks? How many are calling on expired members or renewal lists? Are we doing everything we can to make our posts successful? Are we just waiting for members to come ask us to join, or to come renew their memberships? Are we using the Membership Plan? What are you doing in your communities to drive membership?

All year long, we are given tools that we send to each district. Are ALL districts sending this information, these

[More on "A 'FIRST' LOOK" Page 3](#)

## A 'Second' Look

Hopefully this finds you all in good health and spirits. By the time you receive this, we will be just a few short weeks away from the 106th Department of Maine

Convention. The convention this year is still at Jeff's Catering in Brewer on June 6-7.

Dirigo State will be the following week at Colby College in Waterville from June 15-20. Completed forms (Dirigo State Application, Parental Consent, Medical Authorization and Performing Arts if participating) should be mailed to The American Legion, Department of Maine along with a check for \$400 per student by May 25.

In the beginning of March, the Department mailed out the Annual Post Data Report which was due to Department HQ by April 9. The reports and information contained in each are very

important.

The following is a repeat of my last article, which bears repeating.

**Annual Post Data Report** – This report depicts all post information currently on file at national and department HQ. This form is not available online.

**Consolidated Post Report** – You have two reporting options with this report: submit online using [mylegion.org](http://mylegion.org) or by mail, using the paper form which can be found on the department website, [www.mainelegion.org](http://www.mainelegion.org). This report is due to National July 1, and if mailed, it is due to department by May 29.

**Notification of Post/Squadron Commanders & Adjutants Form** – As soon as new officers are elected for the current year or no later than July 1. The post adjutant is to complete the form and submit it to department, even if the post has no squadron.

**Post Officers Form** – This form must be filled out even if there are no changes from the previous year. This form is due to the department by July 1. The District Officers Form is to be filled out by the district adjutant and submitted even if

[More on "A 'SECOND' LOOK" Page 3](#)



## NEC Update

Hello, Over the years I have written many articles for the Maine Legionnaire paper. I have attempted to not repeat any past articles and have attempted to give you, the reader and fellow mem-



**LLOYD WOODS**

ber of this great organization, something to think about and some information that I believe pertinent to our future in The American Legion. There have been many and various topics that have been covered for you.

One thing that I want to mention again, maybe, is the upcoming campaigning and election of members who desire to be an officer in either the local post, district, or department. We must be diligent in our decisions on who to support and elect to fill those various positions. It is our duty to know for whom we wish to be elected, and for whom we believe will do the required job, and not just who wants to wear the different hat. They must be interested in doing what is

required of the position and be willing to do what is necessary to complete that or those requirements.

This time of our Legion year is one of many, many events and happenings in our various posts, districts and department. We, as the Department of Maine, are more fortunate than some other departments in that we do have some younger veterans who want to be more involved and are stepping forward to do what is needed and necessary for our department to grow in programs and membership. I would like to thank all of them for being interested enough to step forward and be willing to do what is needed. Thank you all very much.

As we enter the Easter season, I would like to wish all to have a great, safe and enjoyable season. We must also remember those that did not come home to family, and to those families we send our thanks and gratitude in the sacrifices that have been paid. Also, we must remember all that are deployed.

Remember that I have said many times, "We are just ordinary people accomplishing extraordinary things." Thank you for what you have done for our veterans and what you will continue to do. May God bless you and your family.

**"PROUD TO SERVE"**



**Legion Family Department Testimonial Celebration** held at Auburn Post 31 on Sat., May 10. Left to right, Department Auxiliary President Stasi Brule, Department Commander Patricia "Tricia" Thurston, and Sons of The American Legion Detachment Commander Steve Doyle.

## On the Agenda

### MAY 2025 MEETINGS

**District 5 – Oxford:** May 21, West Paris Post 151, 7:00 p.m., Supper at 6:00 p.m.

### JUNE 2025 MEETINGS

**District 3 – Androscoggin:** June 16, New Auburn Post 153, 6:30 p.m.

**District 8 – Sagadahoc:** June 1, Brunswick Post 20, 6:00 p.m.

**District 12 – Hancock:** June 10, Bucksport Post 93, Dinner at 6:00 p.m., Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

### JULY 2025 MEETINGS

### AUGUST 2025 MEETINGS

**District 5 – Oxford:** Aug. 20, Bethel Post 81, 5:00 p.m., S. Paris Vets Home BBQ. NOTE: SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION. If Vets Home BBQ is cancelled, meeting to be held: Aug. 20, West Paris Post 151, 6:00 p.m.

**District 8 – Sagadahoc:** Aug. 3, Topsham Post 202, 6:00 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER 2025 MEETINGS

**District 3 – Androscoggin:** Sept. 15, Livermore Falls Post 10, 6:30 p.m.

**District 5 – Oxford:** Sept. 17, Oxford Post 112, 6:00 p.m., Refreshments after.

**District 8 – Sagadahoc:** Sept. 7, Bath Post 21, 6:00 p.m.

**District 17 – No. Aroostook:** Sept. 7, Stockholm Post 136, 12:00 p.m. Meal, Meeting at 1:00 p.m.

### ■ "A FIRST LOOK" (Continued from Page 2)

tools, onto each post? When I asked that question to the posts, the answer was no. Membership is only as effective as we want to make it. There were very few complaints about the dues increase. The biggest complaint was that people are slow to renew. If we are all doing what we are supposed to, if we are all providing members with a reason to value their membership, then there should not have been an issue.

I have been very frustrated and disappointed with the membership numbers this year. I honestly think that some posts and districts did amazing, but I also felt that some did not step up to the plate the way they could have. To those that met their goals throughout the year, from the bottom of my heart, I thank you.

I also want to thank District 17 for leading the way week after week. I remember speaking at a District 17 meeting and asking Commander Gray to make sure that the district leads the way. I wanted to be able to brag about my district all year, and because of their

hard work and dedication, I was able to. This doesn't take away from any other district, but I felt I was harder on my own district than I was any other.

There is still time to get your posts to 100% by May 14. If you need help and ask, you'll get help. If you need help and don't ask, then I can't help. I will get ready to close this membership year knowing in my heart that I did everything I possibly could to provide the tools, information, and assistance to support each one of you.

I want to end this by thanking you for all you do. What we do is sometimes thankless, tiresome, and stressful, but at the end of the day, we still push through it. We all share some sort of passion for helping others, or we wouldn't be where we are. Keep pushing through, keep fighting, and Be The One. If you haven't been to the Be The One training, you should.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the Legion Family Joint Testimonial on May 10 at Post 31 in Auburn, and then at the 106th State Convention from June 6-7.

1st Vice Commander, Leroy McKenzie

### ■ "A SECOND LOOK" (Continued from Page 2)

there are no changes from the previous year. This form is due to the department by July 1.

The last three report forms can be found on the department's website under the FORMS/APPLICATIONS button.


I look forward to seeing everyone at these events. I thank you for all you do for The American Legion, whether it is at post, district, or department level. You are important to us. Please stay healthy and travel safely as you all do great work for our organization. I thank you for your continued service.

2nd Vice Commander, Joseph Michaud

**THANK  
YOU!**

**2024-2025  
OFFICERS**





**THE MAINE  
legionnaire**

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## The Adjutant Speaks

I get the opportunity to witness the fantastic work being done by Legionnaires across the state at the post level, the district level, and the department level. Without the entirety of everybody doing their part, the business of The American Legion does not happen.



**JASON  
HALL**

Out of these meetings flow the direction of the scholarships, resolutions, youth programs, and our outreach to veterans, their families, and the communities we serve. I appreciate all those Legion members and Legion Family for taking the time to participate and make an impact on our communities, state, and nation. Realizing that we are made up of a body of members that are both new to The American Legion and those who have been serving for years, and after our June State Convention, many will be serving in new leadership positions. I wanted to pass along some important education opportunities to assist in performing their duties:

- **New Officer Training:** June 6, Friday of State Convention weekend, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m., the Department of Maine Education Committee will offer new officer training aimed at post commanders, post finance officers, post service officers, and post adjutants. There is no charge for this training only, just show up at Jeff's Catering and grab a seat. The two-day registration fee for State Convention is \$10.

- **American Legion Basic Training:** The course covers five topics: History, Organization; Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. Each topic offers ways in which American Legion family members can advance the organization's values and services in their local communities. Learn valuable information on who we are and what we do. Register for free here: <https://register.legion.org/alei>

- **Department of Maine Legion College:** A free, 3-day course in all that is The American Legion. We just graduated a crew in April, more information will be out soon on the next course opportunity.

- **Training Tuesdays:** The last Tuesday of each month, national leadership and staff present 60–90-minute blocks of topics aimed at post officers. Register for free here: [www.legion.org/information-center/training/training-tuesdays](http://www.legion.org/information-center/training/training-tuesdays)

- **Post Service Officer Trainings:** Sept. 20, Oct. 20, Nov. 15 trainings held at Department Headquarters. Send me an email to reserve your seat. Registration is free.

Even if you are not currently in a leadership position, any of the listed educational opportunities can gear you up to serve veterans and the community more effectively.

American Legion Baseball will celebrate its centennial in 2025. We are having the Junior and Senior State Tourneys in late July and early August. We would love you to help celebrate this milestone by volunteering your time at Mansfield Stadium in Bangor, or join us for some great competition, hot dogs, and sunshine.

The initial resolution proposing an American Legion Baseball program was passed at the Department of South Dakota's convention on July 17, 1925.

[More on "ADJUTANT SPEAKS" Page 5](#)

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

you for all the invitations I was given for the many celebrations for veterans and celebrations you all have held, as well as post and district meetings. I just want you to know that I was honored to be at your events and truly enjoyed them all. I am not going anywhere anytime soon, so if you want to extend an invitation for something in the future, I would be honored to attend your events as your Past Department of Maine Commander.

With all that is good in our organization, I know there are frustrations when it comes to trying to get membership numbers where they should be, volunteers at your posts to complete daily tasks, or to take on an officer position, battling the high cost of running a post and balancing your jobs, family, and the day-to-day happenings at your post. Believe me, we feel it and understand it. My thoughts are, you give what you can when you can, and let others know you are there to support when you are able to. Some can give some, and some can give more. That is a perfect balance for what we do. You have to take members from where they are at. They may not be ready to support with volunteering when they first join, but they will be there to support along the way when they are ready.

I spoke the following words at the 2024 Department of Maine Convention after I was installed as Commander, "I know we will all work membership to the best of our ability and that we will continue to support the very important programs we have for veterans, their families, and our communities. Our Four Pillars: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children and Youth are the foundation and mission of this great organization we all belong to. These four pillars shape our work and what we do for veterans and for America...does your post do things to support our pillars? If you don't, or are not sure if they do, then it's time to reevaluate what your post is up to. You don't have to do them all, just choose one or two things to support and do it well! We all need to do our part to give the best we can to our veterans, our communities, and to be proud of what Maine is doing to make this happen. How is it going? Did you go back and think about these thoughts? It is really something to think about. Keep on doing all the good work you do. Keep showing

the 2025-2026 State of Maine Commander and all of Maine that we are the greatest organization supporting veterans. Be visible out there so they see it firsthand. Be vocal and continue publishing what we do. Let others want to be a part of our organization.

I want to thank everyone who supported The American Legion's Family Project for Mission Working Dogs. We really made a difference for them. Your support will go a long way. At this time, I don't have a complete total of what we raised, but I am confident we will make our goal and then some. We hope to give updates at the State Convention.

I want to thank 1st Vice Commander Leroy McKenzie for all he did to keep everyone updated on membership. Thank you for motivating others who were willing to listen and try. Thank you for taking the good with the bad and keeping it positive. You did your job and did it well. Reminder to everyone, it is important to be kind to those who are doing their job to keep our organization moving forward. As a volunteer organization, you should treat others and be treated with respect, recognition, and appreciation for your contributions. Please also remember to share with the posts in your districts what you are doing to be successful. This should not be kept a secret. We are all in this together. In the words of Deo, we are, "One Team, One Fight."

I want to thank all Department Officers for what you have done this year and for your support. You are leading the way to continue to make Maine shine in all we do.

I also want to give a huge shout out to my husband and ALL my mentors I have had along the way! Legion Family, you know who you are! Thank you all very much for all you have done for me through my journey.

That's all for now! I will continue to see you on my journeys. I consider so many of you friends and family and want to continue the relationships we have made. You have all made it worthwhile to do what we do for veterans, families, and our communities.

I want you all to know that YOU MATTER! Never ever forget that. Please reach out if needed.

Thank you for the past year and for taking the time to read this. In memory of Miss Mona, I will end this with WWMD!

Department Commander, Tricia Thurston



## Chapter 86 Presents Donation To Mission Working Dogs:

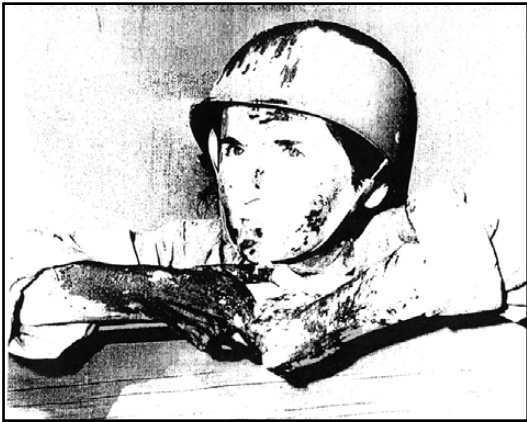
**Members of American Legion Riders (ALR) Chapter 86 in Gray present a \$1,000 check to Department Commander Tricia Thurston for The American Legion Family Project, Mission Working Dogs, on Mar. 27 at the Post home. Left to right, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, ALR Chapter 86 Director Vincent Plummer, ALR Assistant Director and Safety Officer George Mallard, and Sons of The American Legion Detachment Commander Steve Doyle.**



## A Different War

*"There is a chapter of history that has yet to be written..."*

Nurses do not receive the publicity of four Jills in a Jeep. Their pictures do not fill the papers, for there is nothing pictorially pretty about a grim-faced young girl sponging dirt and blood from a wounded soldier.



They are not glamorous in caked blood and torn arms and legs and faces blown away. There is nothing glamorous in a hospital just behind the lines when the wounded came pouring in; nothing glamorous in the long night's watch at the bedside of boys in pain, delirious, afraid, crazed some of them. Their days and nights are full of work and sights that strong men could not stand.

Editorial in *America*, January 15, 1944

Perhaps the passage above suggests the reason why in 1994, when the 50th anniversary of World War II was justifiably commemorated and the news media filled the airwaves with accounts of the heroic achievements of the men who fought in this war, their triumphs, fears, frustrations, and tragedies, the American women—the nurses who shared their experiences—would not be mentioned. How tragic that we can tell our young about their brave grandfathers but neglect the stories of their grandmothers. Are the sacrifices made by these women any the less heroic or their stories any the less poignant because they were fewer in number? I don't believe this to be true. Perhaps it's why no one knows.

Perhaps it's because I am a baby boomer who was raised in the shadow of the war. Perhaps it's because I'm a nurse. Perhaps it's because I'm a woman—but I wanted to know.

So, several years ago I began a journey into the past. I interviewed surviving veterans of combat nursing and their families, reviewed personal diaries, read published and unpublished manuscripts, newspaper and magazine accounts. And I asked what these women, these nurses, did and what impact it had on them and the soldiers for whom they cared. Perhaps it is because I now know that I want others to know.

World War II was a major global conflict that in terms of lives lost and material destruction was the most devastating war in human history. Sixty-one countries involving three-quarters of the world's population participated in the hostilities. Between the War's inception in 1939 and its conclusion in 1945, sixty million people died, thirty million of them civilians, and the material cost was estimated to be over one trillion dollars. The United States sustained 400,000 casualties.

More than 75,000 nurses, fully 29% of all the registered nurses in the United States, served in the armed forces during World War II. Over 250 were killed, and early in the war as the Japanese stormed across the

Philippines 87 nurses were captured and held as prisoners of war for over three years—the first American women ever to be taken prisoner. Countless more wounded both physically and mentally, live today as the for-

gotten disabled veterans.

Nurses have, in fact, tended the wounded in every war in our history, yet they did not suffer the casualties they did in World War II. What made this war unique concerns mobility. In World War I, the nearly stationary nature of the fighting allowed for the establishment of semi-permanent hospitals close to battle sites yet safely in the rear. In the Korean and Vietnamese wars, helicopters worked as air ambulances, enabling the wounded to be evacuated rapidly to relative safety five or six miles behind the battle lines for treatment. In World War II, however, neither of these conditions existed, and to provide life-saving surgical care to the most seriously wounded, nurses travelled with front-line troops and were exposed to all the same dangers and hardships as the men.

*Over 75,000 nurses, fully 29% of all the registered nurses in the United States, served in the armed forces during World War II.*

As in all wars, the chief factor determining whether a wounded soldier lived or died was the speed with which he received good quality medical care. In 1939 as it became more and more apparent that the U.S. would eventually be forced into the war raging in Europe, the Medical Department of the Army commissioned a study designed to establish an effective system of treating the wounded. Most soldiers wounded in battle, it was determined, died of exsanguination; that is, they simply bled to death before they could be treated. The Medical Department of the Army sought, consequently, to establish a system to give rapid care to soldiers whose wounds were not immediately fatal. There were four basic objectives: stop the bleeding, prevent the onset of infection, minimize the effects of shock, and, above all, move the man as rapidly as possible to safety where needed surgery could be performed.

*"The nurses worked under constant aerial and artillery bombardment as they tended the wounded and dying. They were plagued with a complete lack of medical supplies, a sweltering climate, disease, starvation and a constant influx of seriously wounded patients. Their makeshift hospitals were so understaffed that these women were required to work 18-20 hours a day every day...I think often of those special Americans and give thanks for having known such gallant women."*

[More on "A DIFFERENT WAR" Page 11](#)

## Bridging the Gap: Mentoring Younger Veterans

The transition from military service to civilian life can be a daunting journey, a path often fraught with unforeseen challenges. Those transitioning *don't know what they don't know* so we need to show them they are not alone on this path. Within our Legion ranks lies a wealth of experience, a reservoir of wisdom that can light the way for our younger veterans. It is time to bridge the gap.

The area where we can be impactful includes our **Service Officers**. The Legion has accredited service officers who provide expert, free assistance to veterans and their families. They guide veterans through the complex process of applying for VA disability benefits, and offer resources for education, employment, and more.

**Advocacy** is another area we are very impactful. The American Legion is a powerful advocate for veterans' rights, working to ensure they receive the benefits they have earned. Our Legislative initiatives look to improve the quality of life for military members, families, and veterans. **Be The One** advocates suicide prevention and works to destigmatize asking for mental health needs. There are many legislative priorities. I encourage you to visit [legion.org/legislative](http://legion.org/legislative) to view the priorities of The American Legion and read up on each of them.

**Community and Camaraderie** is re-



JULIE FLYNN

ally where the "rubber meets the road" and our local posts provide a sense of community and camaraderie, offering veterans a place to connect with others who share their experiences. Our newer veterans are attracted by what the local post can offer. Membership in the Legion provides valuable networking opportunities with fellow veterans. The Legion encourages veterans to stay involved in their communities through volunteer work

and other service activities.

The American Legion serves as a vital support network for transitioning military members, helping with practical needs, fostering a sense of belonging, and advocating for their rights.

Does your post have a formal mentorship program? Maybe you take a less formal approach towards mentorship. A good example is pairing new members with more experienced members during Clean Up Days or Community Service Projects. Whatever your post does, it should work to listen to our younger veterans. If you hear yourself say anything like, "well that's not how we USED to do it" or "we tried that and it did not work," you should be asking yourself if you are really listening. We can learn much from our new members and we already know they can learn a lot from us. So, let us bridge the gap with our newer members and help light their way.

Department Judge Advocate Julie Flynn

### ■ "ADJUTANT SPEAKS" (Continued from Page 4)

American Legion Baseball was organized "to teach practical lessons in sportsmanship and citizenship by emphasizing such qualities as loyalty, respect for the rules, fair play, courage, and physical fitness."

We still follow the initial resolution, and with each game, the athletes and spectators learn important lessons on sportsmanship and citizenship. We hope to see you at the ballpark this summer.

You may have heard about the membership perks you are eligible for through Legionnaire Insurance Trust (LIT). I recently attended training to learn more about additional perks for Legion Family members; it is worth it to scope out some of the opportunities at: [www.TheLIT.com](http://www.TheLIT.com)

- Of course, No Cost LegionCare: provides up to \$5,000 in insurance coverage just for being a member in good standing.

- Medicare Advantage: A partnership with WellCare (national partnership with The American Legion as well) to get additional benefits.

- Health and medical care: cancer care,

long-term care, health insurance, hospital help, dental, and a few more Medicare supplemental opportunities.

- Identity theft monitoring and resolution.

- Emergency assistance, accident protection, Lifeline medical alert, and travel accident protection.

- DeviceGuard: smartphone and computer insurance.

It is worth a peek. LIT has been partnering with The American Legion since 1965, over five decades of support for VA&R, Legion Baseball, funding service officers, and more.

Convention is approaching fast: June 6-7 in Brewer. More information is in the Leadership Ledger, The Maine Legionnaire, our website, and on Facebook. This is a huge opportunity to hear some great speakers, get free information, visit some of the vendors that will be on site, and bring back valuable information to your post.

Hope to see you in attendance. Convention attendance has grown annually for the last four years, and it really is a great opportunity to learn and network.

Department Adjutant Jason T. Hall



# Service Office Update



**SERVICE OFFICER  
CARL CURTIS**

Hello from the Service Office. The claim process can be very confusing. There are several different ways to try to get a condition or injury service connected. You can try direct, secondary, aggravation, legal presumptive, or even malpractice. That alone is a major reason why you should reach out to an accredited VSO to assist you through the claim process.

In my Post Service Officer Training, I cover the steps of the claim process for each listed above. I do this because a veteran going through the claim process can go weeks, and in some cases months, without hearing from the VA. That can cause a lot of stress in veterans. The PSO is the one at post level that needs to reassure the veteran. The PSO cannot see where the claim is, but if there is understanding of the process, they can explain this to the veteran. I will go through the basic process of the 5 ways to get a condition service connected. If you want to know more information about the process, please attend one of my PSO trainings.

The first way is through direct service condition. The required elements for direct service connection are, an in-service injury, continuance of care over the years, and a current diagnosis. An example of this is: I hurt my left knee on a unit run and I went to sick call to see a medic. I was on profile to recover from the injury. Since I left the service, I have been in a doctor's care for about three years. Now I attend physical therapy every other week for the knee.

The second way is through secondary service connection. This is when a service-connected condition causes damage or an injury to another body part. An example of this is: I am service connected for my left knee that I hurt in service. The injury causes me to limp around most days. The limp caused my other knee to hurt and damage to the joint. The damage for my non-service connected knee can become service connected.

The third way is the aggravation of a preexisting condition. The required elements are a little different. First you need to identify an injury that happened to the veteran prior to enlistment. This injury must be listed on the enlistment physical. It also needs to be listed on the exit physical. The VA will have to determine if the injury was permanently aggravated beyond nature progression due to the physical demand of service. An example of this is: I hurt my right knee playing football in high school. When I took my physical to enlist in the military, I had to see a specialist to clear my knee to enlist. While in the military, my knee hurt a few times, and I went to sick call. On my exit physical from the military, the doctor looked at my knee and determined it was much worse than when I entered. If the damage to my knee is beyond the nature progression of the injury, it can become service connected.

The fourth way is legal presumptive. To meet this requirement, you must have served in an area within the time requirement where exposure to a chemical is conceded by the VA. To meet this requirement, you must prove: you were there, and you have a current diagnosis for a presumptive condition. An example of this is: you were deployed to Vietnam, and you have just received a

diagnosis of prostate cancer from your doctor. Being that prostate cancer is a presumptive condition of agent orange exposure, the VA will service connect the cancer.

The fifth way is malpractice or 1151 claim. This is medical malpractice done by VA medical. It can be very difficult to prove. An example of this is you go in to have your right leg amputated, but they remove the left leg instead.

**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.

**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](mailto:carl.curtis2@va.gov)  
or call: 207-623-5726  
To make a seminar reservation!**

**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. There are three PSO training planned for this year. The dates are Apr. 29, Sept. 20, and Oct 28. 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, 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 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](http://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](http://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](mailto:carl.curtis2@va.gov), or [julie.kern@va.gov](mailto: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.



## Post Service Officer Training

### Presented by Department Service Officer Carl Curtis

A Post Service Officer (PSO) is a very important volunteer position in your post. They are often the first Legionnaire your post members or dependents turn to for help with veteran benefit issues. The PSO's primary duty is to serve as a link between the veteran or dependent and an accredited Veteran Service Officers (VSO) in the Department of Maine.

Join us for training, free of charge, to learn more about the

benefits afforded to veterans and dependents and to learn how to serve as valuable resources to veterans in your community.

#### Upcoming Training Dates:

- Saturday, September 20
- Tuesday, October 28
- Saturday, November 15

All training will be at the training center at Department Headquarters, 5 Verti Drive, Winslow, Maine 04901-0727, with a 10:00 a.m. start. Email the Department Adjutant to reserve your seat:

[jason@mainelegion.org](mailto:jason@mainelegion.org).

## Your Letters



### Extended Gratitude for Homeless Veterans Donations

Dear Members,  
On behalf of the VA Maine Healthcare System patients and staff, we wish to thank you for the recent donation of \$3,600, check number 24814. As requested, this donation has been deposited in the following General Post Fund account(s): 8014 Homeless Vet Assistance. 100% of your donation will be used to supplement the excellent care and services provided to our Veteran patients and their families. We are very grateful for your generosity and support our Nation's Veterans.

Sincerely,

Cesar G Emano, Jr.  
Chief, Center for Development and Civic Engagement (formerly Voluntary Service)

### Grateful for Attendance and Support

Hello,  
I wanted to send a big thank you to those that attended the MASH house dedication on Mon., Apr. 14 at the University of Southern Maine. The dedication was for Battalion Sergeant Major Edwin P. Clarity, a World War 1 veteran. It was a beautiful day with the sun shining, the ceremony was nice with University of Southern Maine President Jacqueline Edmondson speaking at the event. I appreciate the support from The American Legion family who

joined us for this memorable event.

Thank you to Department of Maine Adjutant Jason Hall, Westbrook Post 197 Commander Ken Santamore, District 2 Commander Gene Connolly, and Westbrook Post 62 Commander Dennis Marrotte.

Cathy Clements  
Administrative Support Supervisor,  
University of Southern Maine

### Generous Contribution to National Emergency Fund Appreciated

Dear Commander,

On behalf of all the members of The American Legion family, and those who may have suffered a recent loss in a natural disaster, I wish to extend my personal thanks and gratitude for your generous contribution on April 9, 2025 of \$1,000 to the National Emergency Fund. Your contribution to this fund helps ensure that your ability to assist your fellow comrades can continue.

Because other revenue sources cover administrative costs for The American Legion's National Emergency Fund, every dollar donated is used to help veterans and their families with rebuilding their homes and lives. Your fellow Legion family members and I can't thank you enough for your devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Sincerely,

Rodney K. Rolland  
National Adjutant, The American Legion

## 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](http://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](mailto:dirigostateme@gmail.com) or Dept. Adjutant Jason Hall 207-522-5471 | [jason@mainelegion.org](mailto:jason@mainelegion.org)

*Dirigo State Volunteers Needed!*





# DEPARTMENT OFFICER CANDIDATES 2025



**LEROY  
MCKENZIE**

Commander  
Madawaska Post 147



**JOSEPH  
MICHAUD**

1st Vice Commander  
Madawaska Post 147



**RYAN  
COFFIN**

2nd Vice Commander  
Damariscotta Post 42



**LIAM  
NEDREDD**

Americanism Officer  
Etna-Carmel Post 107



**LOU  
MARIN**

Historian  
Rumford Post 24



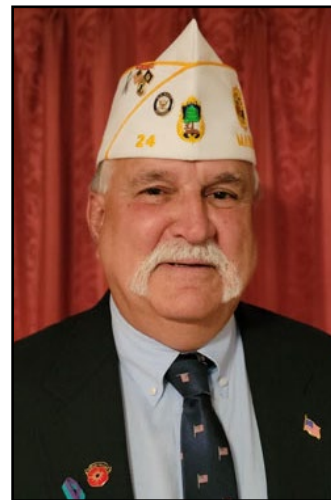
**DANIELLE "DANI"  
BEGERT**

Sergeant-At-Arms  
Lewiston Post 22



**LLOYD  
WOODS**

National Executive  
Committeeman (NEC)  
Madawaska Post 147



**KIRK  
THURSTON**

National Executive  
Committeeman Alternate  
(NECA)  
Rumford Post 24



**DEBRA  
COUTURE**

National Executive  
Committeeman Alternate  
(NECA)  
Litchfield Post 181

## State Convention Hotel Registration

Headquarters hotel: Holiday Inn, Bangor, 404 Odlin Road, Bangor, Maine. To reserve your hotel room, please visit the State Convention page at [www.mainelegion.org](http://www.mainelegion.org) under News/Events and click on "Book your room today!" or scan the QR code with your phone. You may also call to reserve a room: 1-888-HOLIDAY (1-888-465-4329). Please remember to mention you are with The American Legion when booking.



## 2025 106th National Convention Tampa Bay, Florida August 22 – August 28, 2025

This year's National Convention will be held in Tampa Bay, Florida August 22 – 28, 2025. The hotel assigned for members from the Department of Maine will be Embassy Suites by Hilton Downtown Convention Center, 513 S Florida Ave, Tampa, FL 33602. The hotel room rate is \$149.00 (King or Two Bed), plus a tax rate of 13.50% per room/night (subject to change); Additional Occupant in Room per Day – \$20.00; Rollaway Rate per Day – N/A; Parking Rate per Day – \$29.00 Valet Only. If you are thinking about going to National Convention, please let the American Legion, Department of Maine know by calling 207-873-3229, or email [jason@mainelegion.org](mailto:jason@mainelegion.org) and we will be sure to put you on the mailing list for the information. For more information, please visit [www.legion.org/convention/resources](http://www.legion.org/convention/resources).

## 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.





# THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MAINE

## OFFICIAL CALL FOR

### ONE HUNDRED & SIXTH 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 9:00 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](http://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 3:00 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

### 106<sup>TH</sup> 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



THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MAINE  
**106th Annual State Convention Program**  
**June 6-7, 2025**

Jeff's Catering & Event Center, Brewer  
**TENTATIVE AGENDA**

**Friday, June 6, 2025**

Resolutions Committee (9:00 a.m.)	Jeff's Catering & Event Center, Brewer Open Hearing, Committee Chairman, Lloyd Woods
New Officer Training (9:00 - 11:00 a.m.)	Instructors, Leroy McKenzie and Julie Flynn

.....  
**First Session**  
**Friday, June 6, 2025**

Call to Order (12:00 p.m. noon)	Dept. Commander, Patricia "Tricia" Thurston
Opening Ceremonies	Dept. Commander, Patricia "Tricia" Thurston
Presentation of the Colors	Sgt.-at-Arms, Ryan Coffin
Invocation	Dept. Chaplain, Danielle Begert
Pledge of Allegiance	ALL
Preamble	ALL
Report of the Committee on Permanent Rules and Organization	Dept. Judge Advocate, Julie Flynn
Welcome	Past National Commander, Anthony "Tony" Jordan
Greetings	Brewer City Mayor, Michele Labree Daniels
NEC Report	Nat'l Executive Committeeman, Lloyd Woods
Legislative Update	Chairman, Richard Flynn
Maine Blind Camp Update	Chairman, Brian Knowlton
History Awards	Dept. Historian, Jeff Sukeforth
Department Finance Update	Dept. Finance Officer, Mary "Tally" T. Brown
Children & Youth/ Daniel E. Lambert Scholarships	Dept. Americanism Officer, Liam Nedredd
Past Cmdr's Club (James V. Day Scholarship)	Department Commander, Patricia "Tricia" Thurston
Oratorical Update	Oratorical Committee Chairperson, Maureen Malley
Women Veterans Advisory Committee Update	Co-Chairs, Mary Brune and Caroline Yarmala
Nomination of Dept. Officers	Selected Legionnaires
Announcements	Dept. Adjutant, Jason Hall

**3:00 p.m. Recess**

**Reminder: Voting will be on Saturday, from 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.**

.....  
**Second Session**  
**Saturday, June 7, 2025**

Call to Order (9:00 a.m.)	Dept. Commander, Patricia "Tricia" Thurston
Presentation of Colors	Dept. Sgt.-at-Arms, Ryan Coffin
Greetings	Wreaths Across America Director of Media & Military Partnerships, Jeff Pierce
Greetings	Quilts of Valor, Teresa Drag
Greetings	Embers Paws of Hope, Timothy Nickels
Humanitarian Award	1st Vice Commander, Leroy McKenzie
Border Patrol Award	National Executive Committeeman, Lloyd Woods
Dirigo State Presentation	Co-Chair, Julie Flynn
Introduction of Past Dept. Cmdrs. & Past Legionnaires of the Year	Past Dept. Commander, Alfred McKay
Legionnaire of the Year Award	Past Dept. Commander, Alfred McKay

**Second Session (Cont.)**  
**Saturday, June 7, 2025**

Service Office Update/Award	Dept. Service Officer, Carl Curtis
National Leadership Update	Nat'l Executive Committeeman Alternate, Matthew Jabaut
Junior Shooting Sports Program Update	Committee Member, David Watson
Commander's Award	Dept. Commander, Patricia "Tricia" Thurston
Americanism Awards	Dept. Americanism Officer, Liam Nedredd & Dept. Commander, Patricia "Tricia" Thurston
American Legion Be The One Update	Dept. Judge Advocate Julie Flynn and Eastern Regional Nat'l Auxiliary Chair Debra Rumery Civil Air Patrol, Jeff Pierce
Greetings	Dept. Commander, Patricia "Tricia" Thurston
Adjutant of the Year Award	LIT Special Consultant, Dyke Shannon
Greetings	Dept. Commander, Patricia "Tricia" Thurston
Auxiliary, SAL & Legion Riders (Awards)	SAL Detachment Commander, Steve Doyle Legion Riders Director, Thomas Kuespert Auxiliary President, Stasi Brule
Greetings	Director, Scott Bishop
Greetings	Navy Veteran, Author, & Former Asst. Secretary of State for Int'l Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Robert "Bobby" Charles
Greetings	PNC, Anthony "Tony" Jordan, 1st Vice Commander, Leroy McKenzie & 2nd Vice Commander, Joseph Michaud
Greetings	NEC Lloyd Woods to introduce Leading Candidate for National Commander, Dan Wiley
Legion Baseball Update	Dept. Vice Commanders, Leroy McKenzie and Joseph Michaud
<b>12:00 p.m. Lunch</b>	Credentials Chairperson, Brian Knowlton
Greetings	Committee Chairman, Lloyd Woods
Roger's Rangers & Tony's Tigers Awards	Dept. Adjutant, Jason Hall
Greetings	Dept. Commander, Patricia "Tricia" Thurston
Membership Awards	Dept. Commander, Patricia "Tricia" Thurston
Report on Credentials Committee	
Report on Committee Resolutions	
Ceremony Honoring Outgoing Dept. Cmdr.	
Response	
Mission Working Dogs Update	
Sweepstakes Drawing	
Memorial Service – Post Everlasting	Dept. Sgt.-at-Arms, Ryan Coffin & Dept. Chaplain, Danielle Begert
Announcements	Dept. Adjutant, Jason Hall
Benediction	Dept. Chaplain, Danielle Begert
Retirement of Colors	Dept. Sgt.-at-Arms, Ryan Coffin
Adjournment	(Sine Die)

**3:00 p.m.** State Convention Installation for  
Legion, Auxiliary, and SAL Officers  
Jeff's Catering & Event Center, Brewer

.....  
**Sunday, June 8, 2025**

9:00 a.m. Dept. Executive Committee  
Jeff's Catering & Event Center, Brewer

.....  
**Lunch will be available for purchase both  
Friday & Saturday from Jeff's Catering**



## ■ "A DIFFERENT WAR" (Continued from Page 5)

Chief Warrant Officer M. Hull, U.S. Army, Retired.

Although these goals seem simple and straight forward, at the outset of the war penicillin had not yet been discovered, the technique for freezing and storing blood had not been invented, and the use of helicopters as air ambulances was unheard of. The Medical Department placed its faith in saline or plasma for blood replacement, in sulpha for the prevention of infection, and in litter bearers and jeeps for conveying the wounded. Such methods of transportation were totally inadequate for casualties needing immediate, definitive, life-sustaining surgery. So, to provide for prompt surgical intervention, mobile army field hospitals, manned by auxiliary surgical teams, were established close to the battlefield, with a series of larger, less mobile hospitals being spaced at specified distances to the rear. This arrangement allowed for the immediate treatment of those who needed it as well as nearby treatment for those whose wounds were not life-threatening. The usual procedure was to have two evacuation hospitals set up between the field hospital and the general hospital. This allowed for one to be functioning and the other packed and ready to "leapfrog" forward as the line of battle advanced.



**Nurses Who Arrived In France via England and Egypt after three years of service, Aug. 12, 1944, 10th Field Hospital, 5th Armed Division HQ, Mear Le Mans, France.**

*"That soldier was looking directly at me, but he did not see my stringy hair that had not had a perm in over a year...my rumpled shirt and slacks and scruffy, high top boots. What he saw and heard was a nurse and a voice which made him remember what all of us longed for—the cocoon of safety and security which we feel when at home."*

Eleanor R. Meyer, ANC Veteran

Theoretically, a seriously injured soldier would first be tended to on the battlefield by a medic who would attempt to stop the flow of bleeding, give morphine for pain, and mark the soldier's location for the litter-bearers who could then carry him to the battalion aid clearing station located some 500 to 800 yards to the rear. The soldier would then be examined by medical personnel and, if his condition was not life-threatening, be conveyed by jeep to an evacuation hospital several miles to the rear for surgery. If, however, he needed immediate surgery, he would be brought to the field hospital, usually adjacent to the clearing station. Here, in tents under primitive conditions, doctors and nurses from the auxiliary hospital surgical teams would treat

shock, begin transfusions, and perform emergency surgery. Once his condition was stabilized, the wounded soldier would be transported to the evacuation hospital. Still a series of tents but considerably larger and only a little less mobile. If further, more extensive care was required, he would be transferred to a larger general hospital, still within the battle zone but distant enough from the fighting to allow it to set up as a fully functional hospital for treatment and rehabilitation.

Nurses, with their unique training and expertise, were essential to the successful operation of these medical facilities. In 1940, however, ninety-seven percent of all the registered nurses in the United States were women. Never before had American women been placed in a position of such jeopardy so close to the front lines. To put this into perspective one must recognize that this was nearly fifty years ago when the position of women in our society was far different from what it is today. The general attitude of the public was that the war was being fought to protect the sanctity of the American way of life and those left behind, namely women and children.

One nurse's story poignantly illustrates this point. Mary Kennedy, from Swampscott, was a 32-year-old surgical nurse when she enlisted in 1942. "They kept saying they needed nurses," she told me, "and I wanted to serve my country." Both of her brothers, employed in essential service, had been exempted from the draft. The day she was leaving, she remembered, her older brother drove up in a convertible with his golf clubs in the back and said to her mother, "It's a terrible thing to send women of the family off to war first." Both brothers soon enlisted, however, and she recalled that her mother proudly displayed from the living room window a flag with three stars on it, indicating that three members of the family were serving in the war.

Recruitment posed another major problem. *At the outbreak of hostilities, the Army Nursing Corps had only 942 nurses on active duty. The United States had never drafted women into military service, yet the government determined that at least 50,000 nurses would be needed.* To solve the problem, the government commissioned the Red Cross to recruit 2,000 nurses each month. The goal was to reach 50,000 gradually and then keep that number. The Red Cross's unprecedented media blitz was aimed at young nursing school graduates. Advertisements, many times sponsored by private industry and filled with patriotic fervor, appeared in the popular magazines and papers. Recruiters visited local hospitals and schools of nursing, encouraging enlistments and distributing government literature. One such brochure, picturing nurses tending wounded soldiers in hospital tents, asked,

Did you ever take a bath in a hat... ever build a hospital and tear it down within a few hours... ever hand a scalpel to a surgeon as nearby cannon shook the ground? As a member of the Army Nurses Corps, these may be everyday experiences for you... you'll have to live roughly and work gently in the field, where the hours are long

and the demands are never ending... but to an Army nurse with a courageous heart the supreme reward is life for an American soldier.

In 1941 as a twenty-two-year-old recent nursing school graduate, Phyllis Santangelo Galeaz read this brochure and decided to join the Army. "They said it would be for one year and I thought maybe I would see a little of the world and do something that was needed. Then Pearl Harbor was attacked, so I volunteered for overseas duty. I never imagined I would spend three years in the jungles of New Guinea!" Nearly fifty years later when I interviewed her, the brochure was still in Galeaz's possession.

The effectiveness of this campaign became even more apparent when another nurse I spoke with related that twenty-three of the twenty-six graduates of the Salem Hospital School of Nursing, class of 1942, joined the military.

In conjunction with the voluntary recruitment effort, the War Manpower Commission set up Procurement and Assignment Committees in each state to register and classify every nurse in the country. These committees screened nurses selectively so that the military need for nurses could be met without stripping civilian hospitals of necessary personnel. A Class I rating meant that the nurse's civilian occupation was not considered essential and that she was available for military service. Class II indicated that the nurse, although not available for military service, was available for relocation within the civilian health care structure; and Class III indicated that the nurse was essential in her present position. Although these committees lacked the legal enforcement authority of draft boards, they had a great deal of power. As their less-than-subtle literature stated, "Persuasion and public opinion are the only methods that can be used to get a nurse to accept her responsibility."

One nurse related how well the system worked. In 1944, the small surgical hospital in Boston in which she had been working closed, and she was trying to decide whether to seek another position or return to school for post-graduate work. "I arrived home one day and opened my mail, and I didn't have to worry about my decision," she recalled. "There was a letter from Uncle Sam telling me I was no longer considered essential and requesting me to report to 900 Commonwealth Avenue," the Boston Armory. "My mother was upset. 'Don't worry,' I said, 'they'll never take me: I have a heart murmur, flat feet, and I'm overweight.' Well," she told me with a laugh, "I passed with flying colors and was soon in the army."

*The training and preparation these nurses received was haphazard and inconsistent, apparently depending on when they joined. Those enlisting before Pearl Harbor were simply commissioned second lieutenants and sent to Army hospitals for general staff duty.* Once war was declared, however, with the reserves being activated and voluntary enlistment increasing, it became glaringly apparent that some form of systemized training was necessary to introduce nurses to military service and to

prepare them for overseas combat duty. A field training course opened at Fort Sam Houston in Texas where nurses were taught to purify water, cope with gas injuries, pitch tents, climb rope ladders, dig foxholes, and march. "Marching was fun because we weren't the most coordinated group," recalled Mary Kennedy. "I think we drove the regular Army people crazy." Those who entered before war was declared, however, were sent overseas without benefit of any training.

Another problem involved determining appropriate uniforms for nurses. Wearing starched white uniforms made no sense for women tending the wounded in the jungles of the Philippines or in the deserts of North Africa, but at the outbreak of the war that was all the Army had. They quickly instituted the use of a blue seersucker dress with blue pumps for general duty. Phyllis Galeaz, stationed in New Guinea, remembered how impractical this outfit was. "There was mud everywhere, not to mention rats, snakes, and tarantulas." She and her fellow nurses started wearing army boots. "We were a pretty sight with those blue dresses and ugly boots," she told me, "but it was safer."



**Primitive Conditions in the operating tent of a typical field hospital. UPI photograph, Belgium, 1944.**

But not too easy on the feet. The boots were made for men, and many times even the smallest pairs were two sizes too large for the women, whose feet, especially in tropical heat, blistered from wearing them.

The dresses provided troublesome for women climbing over the side of a ship or bending over the low army cots to care for the wounded. Eventually an Army nurse field uniform was designed—with slacks. Amazingly, this innovation met with resistance from the Army hierarchy which, reflecting attitudes of society at the time, did not think women should be "wearing pants." But with pressure from the Army Nurse Corps and from necessity, the field uniform was adopted.

The nurses went overseas with the troops on cruise ships pressed into service for the duration. "It was fun meeting girls from all over the country," remembered Mary Kennedy, "but we were all a little nervous, although trying not to show it, because of the danger of submarine attack." Their fears were well founded, for the S.S. *Santa Rosa*, carrying the 48th Surgical Hospital unit to which she was assigned, was torpedoed on its way to North Africa, and the command

[More on "A DIFFERENT WAR" Page 17](#)



## Vietnam Era Veterans Luncheon

On Mar. 23, a Vietnam Era Veterans Luncheon was held in honor of Vietnam era veterans' service at The American Legion Post 24 in Rumford. It was well attended with fifty-five veterans and fourteen guests. They were treated to a beautifully decorated hall done by Carol and Don Roach, haircuts given by Heidi and Kelly, and gifts donated by many businesses, members, and friends in our community. Resources were provided by Rumford Post 24, The Red Cross, Honor Flight, and The Military Women's Memorial. Barbara joined us to provide gun locks and information on gun safety and Don provided a morning of amazing music and supported us with the PA system. There was a morning ceremony led by Department Commander Tricia Thurston with Ed Perry presenting the flag, Bill McAloney giving a beautiful

prayer, and Louie Marin placing the banner on our POW/MIA table. Bill then shared a preamble to the Pledge of Allegiance with all joining in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Later a sit-down lunch of roasted turkey or ham, mashed potatoes, gravy, carrots and rolls were prepared and served by Post, Auxiliary and SAL members. For dessert, a beautiful cake was donated by Thibault's from Hannaford and cookies were provided by some of our Auxiliary members. The Western Maine Witches on the Water joined us and performed two dances for our veterans. All in all, it was an amazing day for our Vietnam veterans. We thank all our Vietnam veterans for traveling near and far to attend this event. We will see you all next year!

The American Legion would like to

thank all businesses and individuals who donated gifts. We want to thank our hard-working Post, Auxiliary, and SAL members for all they do for us and for these special events. A huge thank you goes out to Kelly Deroche, Heidi Merrill, Susan Richard, Pam Marcelino, Keith Bickford, Gloria Morton, Rena Nichols, Val Scott, Lynn McAloney, Jo Chapman, Kirk Thurston, Carol Roach, Bill McAloney, Don Roach, Louie Marin, Alan Williams, Ed Perry, Amy Hagan, Scott Hagan, Roger Richard, and Darlene Whitaker.

"My heart is full and my thanks go out to our Vietnam veterans for your service and sacrifices, and to all our volunteers that continue to do so much for Post 24," said Department Commander Tricia Thurston.

Submitted by Department Commander Patricia "Tricia" Thurston



**Event Ceremony:** Department Commander Tricia Thurston leads the ceremony for the day.



**Group Photo:** A total of fifty-five veterans and an additional fourteen guests attended the 2025 Vietnam Era Veterans Luncheon held at Rumford Post 24 on Mar. 23.



**Enjoying The Luncheon:** Top left photo, left to right, Ramona Grover, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, and Vietnam veteran and long-time member of Bethel Post 81, Rich Grover. Top middle photo, left to right, Janet Kluj, Past Department Commander Randy Kluj, and Department Commander Tricia Thurston. Top right photo, left to right, Post 24 Commander Ed Perry, Past Department Commander Randy Kluj, and Janet Kluj. Bottom left photo, Randy Chaisson, left, and his friend, right. Bottom middle photo, Unit 24 member Kelly Deroche, left, and Rumford Post 24 member and Vietnam era veteran Wendall Farnum, seated. Bottom right photo, Vietnam veteran Alan Williams, left, and Department Commander Tricia Thurston, right.



**Welcome:** Left to right, Lynn McAloney, Rena Nichols, and Valerie Scott greet luncheon attendees at Rumford Post 24.

**Lunch Preparation:** Left to right, Pam Marcellino, Sue Richard, Keith Bickford, and Gloria Morton volunteer to prepare the lunch for the Vietnam Era Veterans Luncheon.



**Volunteers And Attendees:** Left photo, Rumford Unit 24 members Valerie Scott, left, and Rena Nichols, right, volunteer at the luncheon. Middle photo, Vietnam era veterans Joe Marcellino, left, and Roger Richard, right, attend the luncheon. Right photo, Vietnam era veteran Mike Hardy, left, with Rumford Unit 24 volunteer Darlene Whitaker, right.



## Department Commander's Year in Review



**Great American Airshow:** Department Commander Tricia Thurston, center, takes a photo with Warbird Thunder Pilots at the 2024 Great American Airshow in Brunswick.



**Christmas Tree Decoration:** American Legion Post 24 of Rumford and Unit 24 Auxiliary members decorate the annual Christmas tree.



**2024 National Convention:** Left to right, Lynette Blanchard of Louisiana, Lowrie Finley-Jackson of Missouri, and Department of Maine Commander Tricia Thurston gather to take a picture with Legion College 2019 attendees and facilitator Lowrie at the 2024 National Convention.



**Women Veterans Luncheon:** Left to right, Department Chaplain Dani Begert, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, and Post 28 Finance Officer Jennifer Kimble at the Women Veterans Luncheon on Sept. 24, 2024.

### Farmington Post 28 Veterans Day:

Department Commander Tricia Thurston, second from right, attends Veterans Day 2024 in Farmington.

There was a beautiful ceremony with laying of wreaths followed by a luncheon provided by Unit 28 Auxiliary members.



### Mission Working Dogs Fundraising Event:

Rumford Post 24 American Legion Family held a fundraiser for the Department Commander's

Project, Mission Working Dogs (MWD) on Mar. 29. The Fundraiser was led by Unit 24 member Gloria Morton with support from the post, unit, and squadron volunteers. There were many items in the raffle, donations of food and desserts, and music provided by The Hooligans. The event raised approximately \$2,500 to support MWD. Top photo, Post, Unit, and Squadron 24 members and representatives from MWD with their service dogs. Bottom photo, Mission Working Dogs Fundraiser lead and planner Gloria Morton, left, and Department Commander Tricia Thurston, right, surrounded by service dogs from MWD.

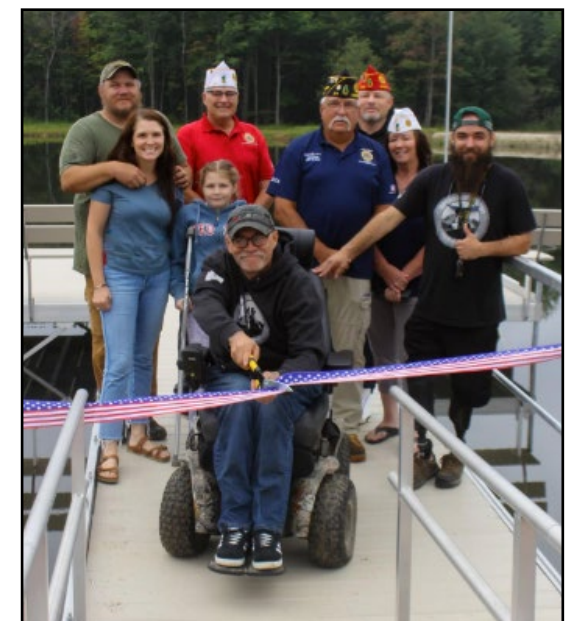


### Flag Pole Dedication Ceremony:

Department Commander Tricia Thurston, left, and Rumford Unit 24 Auxiliary member Gloria Morton, right, at the Rumford Hope Association's Flag Pole Dedication Ceremony on Sept. 24, 2024.



**Pearl Harbor Remembrance:** Maine AMVETS and Department of Maine participate in a ceremony and laying of the wreaths in Portland to honor Pearl Harbor Day on Dec. 7, 2024. Left photo, Department Commander Tricia Thurston salutes. Right photo, left to right, Department of Maine National Executive Committeeman Alternate Matt Jabaut, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, and Past Department Commander Kirk Thurston.



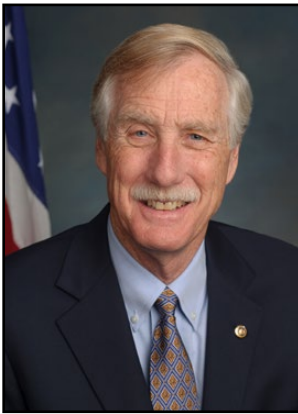
**Ribbon Cutting Ceremony:** Operation Reboot family and friends attend the ribbon cutting for the new ADA dock at Camp Byron on Aug. 24, 2024 as part of Kirk Thurston's Commander's Project.



## Helping Maine Veterans Receive Benefits They Earned

Maine boasts one of the largest populations of veterans, a key group of our community that has sacrificed so much in service to our freedoms. These brave men and women are our neighbors, friends, business owners, teachers, volunteers, first responders and more.

One of the best parts of serving on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee is working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make sure our veterans across the country, including here at home in Maine, get the benefits they have earned. Because despite increased partisanship elsewhere, this committee continues to put partisanship aside to work on behalf of our veterans. In fact, the Senate recently passed my bill with Republican Senator John Cornyn of Texas to codify the Veterans Experience Office (VEO) — and it did so unanimously! Founded in 2015, the VEO collects veterans' feedback through surveys and uses that data to continuously improve the VA's website and other resources used by veterans interacting with the VA. To protect the office from being disbanded or reconsidered by future administrations or Congressional sessions, the Improving Veteran Experience Act codifies the VEO into law so it can continue to provide consistent and quality care for veterans well into the future.



SENATOR  
ANGUS KING

I also want to share the committee's work to make sure veterans in rural towns can easily travel to their Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) healthcare appointments. Republican Senators Kevin Cramer from North Dakota and Dan Sullivan from Alaska have been working with me to help these veterans. So, we introduced the Supporting Rural Veterans Healthcare Services Act, a commonsense solution that

would provide veterans with free transportation to health care appointments by reauthorizing a useful and popular program called the Highly Rural Transportation Grant (HRTG). This grant program has made a huge difference by providing 2.7 million veterans nationwide with transportation to their appointments. A veteran's zip code should never be a barrier to receiving care and this is another simple fix that will make a huge difference — and goes to show that supporting our veterans doesn't have to be a partisan endeavor.

Similarly, we have made inroads with veterans that are experiencing high rates of mental illness and suicide from their time in service, but there is still work to do; veterans are at a much higher risk of suicide than those who haven't served. That's why I teamed up with my Republican colleague Senator Tim Sheehy from Montana to introduce the Saving Our Veterans' Lives Act. This bill would

provide free firearm lockboxes to any veteran who requests one. This commonsense solution would put firearms one extra step away from a veteran who is in crisis, and those few extra seconds could quite literally be the difference between life and death. It's simple legislation that can make a tremendous impact and I'm hoping all our colleagues will join us in supporting this critical bill.

Lastly, I would like to take a moment and address the elephant in the room — the chaos in Washington — as many folks have reached out to my office.

Let me be clear: I hear you and I share many of your concerns about the staff reductions and cuts within the VA, among other things. Here in the Senate, I am working with my colleagues to raise the alarm and fight back. These cuts impact services veterans like you rely on in your daily lives — if there is no one to answer the phone at the VA, that is a denial of benefits, no different than if the doors are locked at a CBOC or if there are no doctors or nurses to administer care. Veterans also make up about 30% of the federal workforce, so anytime you hear of any cuts to this or that department, it's likely they are harming households of those who served. It's an insult to all of you who were willing to put your lives on the line, who came home and served our country again as a civil servant, only to be told "thank you for your service, you're fired."

So, what can you do, you may ask. My answer is always, "I need to hear from you." If you want to bring attention to an

issue, then I want to know about it — you are the eyes and ears on the ground.

Maine people from all walks of life have stood up to help protect and defend our nation. Whether serving in one of the World Wars or in one of the more recent conflicts in the Middle East, every person who volunteers to protect and defend our nation deserves our very best support in return — and I promise to never stop advocating for you. In the meantime, if you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to my offices across Maine or in Washington, D.C.

U.S. Senator Angus King



**Washington Conference Meeting With Senator King:** Left to right, Dept. Commander Tricia Thurston, Maine Senator Angus King, and Dept. Legislative Chairman Richard Flynn at the Washington Conference held Feb. 22-26 in Washington, D.C.

## Meet Garver, Topsham PD's New Comfort Dog

The Topsham Police Department is introducing the public to its new comfort dog, Garver. Comfort dogs are used for community outreach and interviews with victims of trauma and abuse. The police department says it chose the name Garver to honor the members of the Corey Edwin Garver American Legion Post 202 in Topsham, who helped raise money for the comfort dog program. Garver is a 10-week-old male English Labrador that comes from Boonefield Labradors in New Hampshire. Boonefield specializes in breeding English Labrador support dogs for law enforcement agencies in every state in New England.

The Topsham Police Department wrote in a statement on Facebook: "We would like to take a moment to introduce Garver, the newest addition to the Topsham Police Department. We should start this introduction by explaining how Garver came to be a member of the Topsham Police Department.

In 2024, we were approached by the

Commander of Topsham's American Legion Post 202 (Jim Burak) in regard to the Legion's wish to raise money to start a comfort dog program at the Topsham Police Department. Commander Burak and the Legion were hopeful that a comfort dog program would be able to assist with local school aged youth that may have suffered from trauma or who suffer from various stages of anxiety, while also assisting in police department engagement with community members of all ages. American Legion Post 202 then began a fundraising program that has raised a total of \$10,000. These funds have since been donated to the Town of Topsham to be used specifically for the comfort dog program.

Although relatively new to the State of Maine, law enforcement agencies across the country use comfort dogs for everything from community outreach to meetings and interviews with victims of

[More on "TOPSHAM COMFORT DOG GARVER" Page 22](#)



**Topsham Post 202 Helps Local Police Department:** Corey Edwin Garver American Legion Post 202 in Topsham helped raise \$10,000 to assist the Topsham Police Department start a comfort dog program and adopt Garver, an English Labrador puppy, named after the Post. Officer Mathieu welcomes Garver with a hug.

Photos Courtesy of Topsham Police Department



## Promoting Teamwork, Delivering Results

The Marine Corps teaches that teamwork is the cornerstone of success. That's just as true in Congress as it is on deployment, and Maine's lucky to have a congressional delegation that takes that mindset to heart.



**CONGRESSMAN  
JARED GOLDEN**

One of the latest examples of that commitment is our recent win to improve Maine Veterans' Homes' (MVH) financial outlook. Back in 2019, the VA abruptly stopped covering the costs of nursing home care provided by state veterans' homes to early-stage dementia veterans. That shifted the responsibility to already-strained state veterans' homes — something everyone knew wasn't sustainable — so lawmakers passed legislation the next year to resume VA reimbursement. However, the VA delayed the required rulemaking by more than two years, which cost MVH millions and added significant burdens for Maine veterans and their families.

So over my last three terms, I've worked continuously with Senators Collins and King and Congresswoman Pingree to secure retroactive reimbursement from the

VA to MVH and keep in-state providers' doors open. That work has included bipartisan legislation, pointed discussions with VA officials, and sustained pressure on the agency to follow through when it eventually promised to reimburse MVH. I'm proud to report that in April, we received notification that MVH has now received full reimbursement for the domiciliary care it provided Maine veterans.

It's a rewarding victory, and one that reaffirmed to me that for as many problems as the VA has, a world without that agency's support is one where Maine veterans will lose the help they deserve. So that's why the mass layoffs that were announced earlier this year at the VA raised major alarm bells.

In the first month of the new administration, 2,400 VA employees — many veterans themselves — were abruptly laid off across the country. That included several Mainers doing mission-critical work at Togus. It was especially concerning because while termination emails commonly said the decision was due to those employees' "poor performance," those same individuals' internal records show nothing but exemplary reviews throughout their careers at the VA.

Senator King and I immediately reached out to VA Secretary Douglas Collins demanding an explanation, accountability, and a recommitment to upholding the

agency's central mission to provide outstanding medical care for veterans. We were far from the only lawmakers across the country with these concerns, and the agency did eventually reinstate those employees. That's an important step, but I'm still keeping my eye on the agency's proposal to restart mass layoffs with the goal of returning to 2019 staffing levels. I'm all for eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse in D.C., but I strongly disagree with the assertion that employing veterans and other professionals to take care of those who served is wasteful, fraudulent, or abusive — it's a vital responsibility and one that requires teamwork from all of us.

My office continues to help Maine veterans who need help overcoming challenges with federal agencies, 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](mailto: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



**Washington Conference Meeting With Congressman Golden:** Left to right, Dept. Commander Tricia Thurston, Maine Congressman Jared Golden, and Dept. Legislative Chairman Richard Flynn.

## Honoring the Commitment of the Civilian Workforce

The State of Maine has long played a vital role in our national defense through the service of our veterans and active military personnel and the dedication of the civilian workforce that supports them. To honor their commitment, I am working to strengthen the civilian workforce at our shipyards and to ensure that veterans and their families receive the benefits they deserve following their service.

I was glad to join Senators Angus King and Jeanne Shaheen in welcoming Secretary of the Navy John Phelan to Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY) in Kittery. This was Secretary Phelan's first official visit to a public shipyard since being confirmed to his current role, and PNSY was the right place to start. It's the oldest and one of the most respected public shipyards in the country.

For more than 200 years, the skilled workers at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard have helped ensure the strength and readiness of our Navy. They continue that mission today by repairing and maintaining our nuclear submarine fleet, work that has become even more important as the United States responds to growing threats from



**SENATOR  
SUSAN COLLINS**

nations like China.

Our visit gave us a chance to highlight the importance of investing in shipbuilders to strengthen our defense industrial base. Their craftsmanship and work ethic are second to none. That's why I've long supported federal funding for both infrastructure improvements and workforce development at PNSY. In this year's appropriations bills, I secured \$401 million to help

expand the Shipyard's capacity to maintain fast-attack submarines, which are vital to our national security. Senator Shaheen and I also teamed up on a bipartisan letter urging the Navy to exempt PNSY workers from the Office of Personnel Management's deferred resignation program for federal employees. In our letter, we noted that any reduction to the Shipyard's workforce would jeopardize our nation's security by increasing submarine maintenance timelines.

Secretary Phelan and our bipartisan delegation all agreed that growing and supporting our shipbuilding workforce is essential to preserving America's strength

now and into the future. I will keep fighting for investments and policies that give our shipbuilders and shipyards the tools they need to succeed.

Just as we stand behind the civilian workforce that strengthens our military, we must also uphold our commitment to military servicemembers. That includes honoring the service and memory of our veterans after they pass.

That's why I recently introduced the *Ensuring Veterans' Final Resting Place Act* with Senator Jim Banks of Indiana. Right now, if a veteran receives a VA-issued urn or plaque, they are no longer eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery, even if their spouse is still eligible. This policy has caused real hardship for families trying to lay their loved ones to rest with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Our legislation would fix this problem by changing current policy so that veterans who receive a VA urn or plaque can still be buried in a national cemetery. This would ensure that the surviving families of fallen veterans can receive full VA burial benefits no matter what type of memorial they choose. Military families in Maine and across the country deserve nothing less to repay the countless sacrifices they have made.

From strengthening our shipyards to protecting veterans' burial rights, I will

always remain committed to supporting those whose work serves to protect our great nation. I am proud to serve a state that is home to so many of our nation's heroes, and I thank the civilian and military servicemembers, as well as their families, for their service, their sacrifice, and their enduring commitment to our country.

U.S. Senator Susan M. Collins



**Washington Conference Meeting With Senator Collins:** Left to right, Dept. Commander Tricia Thurston, Maine Senator Susan Collins, and Dept. Legislative Chairman Richard Flynn.



## 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.

### 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.

### 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 at [www.vimeo.com/946785549](http://www.vimeo.com/946785549) or visit [www.thelit.com/accident-protection](http://www.thelit.com/accident-protection) to learn more.

Please Note: Current members only are entitled to the \$5,000 No-Cost-To-You Accident Insurance Protection.

If your membership was expired at any point, you will have to sign up again to receive coverage.

## BE THE ONE 2025 Training

### Upcoming Training Dates:

- 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:

[bethetheone.org](http://bethetheone.org)

To reserve your spot or for questions, email:

[bethedepme@gmail.com](mailto:bethedepme@gmail.com)

## Be the One App Now Available

For both veterans in crisis and those around them, an app exists that can help provide the necessary resources in their area. Be the One app now available to assist veterans in crisis, those around them.

The Be the One app, developed by Columbia University and tailored to The American Legion's Be the One veteran suicide prevention mission, is available via both [Apple](#) and [Google](#). The app used the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale

(C-SSRS), the most evidence-supported tool of its kind. It asks a simple series of questions that anyone can use anywhere to help prevent suicide.



Scan QR Code  
for Apple App



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## Legionnaire Benefits

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

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- 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



- **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.
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\*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](http://www.TheLIT.com) to review plan details.

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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.

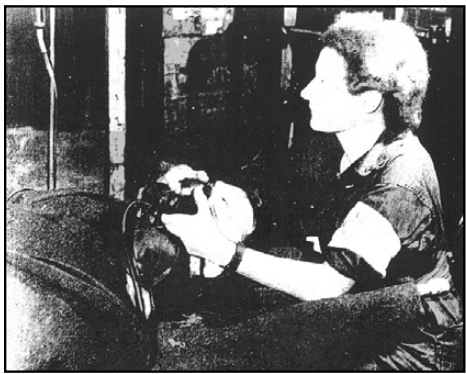
Cut it out



## ■ "A DIFFERENT WAR" (Continued from Page 11)

was given to abandon ship. "I remember climbing down those rope ladders at the side of the ship," Kennedy reported, "and then swinging into a lifeboat. It was very frightening; that water was a long way down."

The nurses even at boarding had not been appraised of their destinations. "We tried to guess where we were going by what we were issued," recalled Genevieve Flood Wing in an interview at the Brockton Veterans Administration Center, where she is a patient. "Light clothes and nets meant China-Burma-India and heavy clothes meant Europe." Issued light clothes, she presumed she'd be sent to China, "but when we got to New York," she told me, "I was given heavy clothes and sent to Europe! They never took the light clothes away either, and I still had them when I came home."



**Anesthesia: 2nd Lieutenant Anne C. Kermer, 27, of Pelham, New York, giving anesthesia—July 24, 1944, Evacuation Hospital, France.**

*"The fire is burning low and just a few live coals are on the bottom. With slow feeding of wood and, finally, of coal, a roaring fire is started. I couldn't help thinking how similar to a human being a fire is. If it's not allowed to run down too low and if there is a spark of life left in it, it can be nursed back—so can a human being. It's slow, it's gradual, it's done all the time in these field hospitals..."*

Lieutenant Francis Slinger, ANC, Killed in Action,  
October 21, 1944

Upon arrival at their duty stations, the nurses were assigned to a surgical group. Genevieve Wing, assigned to one of the sixty-four teams that made up the 5th Auxiliary Surgical Group, explained how the system worked. Each team had two surgeons, one anesthetist (either a doctor or a nurse), one surgical nurse, and two corpsmen. Each team travelled in its own truck, which also carried basic surgical supplies as well as any personal gear. Once orders were received, each team would proceed to its specified location, meeting up with several other teams to establish a field hospital near the front lines. The mobility that was so big an asset would also prove to be a problem: "The Chief Surgeon would ride up front with the driver," recalled Wing, "and we'd be on a bench in the back of the truck. We were always getting lost, and that can be pretty dangerous so close to the front."

Frederick Clayton, a correspondent for the Red Cross, described one of the field hospitals in 1943:

The field hospital unit was bivouacked on a depressingly damp hillside, close behind a division clearing station. Earth-jarring explosions could be heard constantly, and periodically there was heavy shelling from the German side. Above the terrific outbursts of anti-aircraft fire which gave evidence that Jerry planes were overhead. The nurses were making the best of their bad living conditions, in fact, cracking jokes about damp tents, not too warm; bathing or washing in a helmet full of water; eating canned rations for days on end; working to the sound of incessant rain; slogging through knee-deep mud. There was always the chance that they might be wounded, but they all seemed willing to take that chance.

UPI Release, European Theatre, 1943, printed in  
*American Journal of Nursing*

After visiting another such hospital that same year, Margaret Bourke-White, on assignment for Life, wrote, "These girls were working closer to the battle line than American women have ever worked before in this or any other war. These ten nurses were stationed actually ahead of our own heavy guns. A short walk in the wrong direction would bring one right into German territory. Ours and our enemy's artillery crashed back and forth at each other, the two-way traffic of shells passing directly overhead." Bourke-White's article went on to describe the heroic efforts of these women who, mindless of their own safety, cared for the wounded under a constant barrage of artillery.

*Any qualms of the military hierarchy concerning the nurses' ability to withstand combat were dispelled early in the fighting. The North African invasion on November 8, 1942 was the first major amphibious landing of American troops in the war, and nurses landed with them.* In her memoirs, Theresa Archard, Chief Nurse of the 48th Surgical Hospital described the landing: "Just before dawn the guns started booming. With the coming of daylight we could see ships all around us. Sergeants barked orders and enlisted men followed each other over the sides of the ship onto Commando boats. The gunfire from shore became more and more deafening, and we were two miles from land." The nurses were assigned five to a boat with two medical officers and twenty enlisted men. Describing the loading of the landing craft, Archard continued, "It was horrible gazing down at that swaying ladder, our helmets like iron on our heads, full packs on our backs, our shoes untied, and the roar of guns all around us. We had to wade in; wet to our waists we floundered up the beach."

The medical units and equipment were scattered during the landing. The invading forces were under constant sniper fire and air attack, but the nurses impressed everyone with their ability to handle the situation. We have the report of the commander of the medical unit, Colonel Raymond Scott: "There were twenty-four hours with plenty of things dropping all around—planes being shot down. Let me tell you they quickly learned to dig foxholes... They were pretty hard put for food. They had no water except in their canteens. They had no tents. Each nurse was given one blanket, and they used

the ground for a bed. They were wearing fatigues and steel helmets—but they were there ready to go and waiting for us."

Another nearly disastrous amphibious landing demonstrated anew the courage of these women. On January 22, 1944, the Allies, attempting to outflank German lines and speed up the liberation of Rome, staged a surprise landing at Anzio. Once again, nurses landed with the troops. The Germans held the high ground, however, and the Allied advance stalled on the beach. Field and evacuation hospitals alike were nestled in with the combat troops and were subjected to a constant barrage of artillery fire and air attack. Six nurses were killed and many more wounded. The Army Medical Department's *History of the Service in the Mediterranean* put it this way:

The Anzio beachhead nursing service contributed one of the great heroic achievements of the war. If there was any distinction between combat troops and medical personnel, it was that the latter worked harder and took greater risks. They had not even the scant protection of a foxhole, and the red cross was a target rather than a shield. There were, moreover, no lulls or quiet periods in their activities. Through it all, the approximately 200 nurses on the beachhead carried on their normal duties, without rest and without complaint. When the German drive was in full swing and conditions were at their worst, the evacuation of the nurses was considered, but only briefly. As a morale factor, their presence was of incalculable value. To remove them would have been very close to an admission of defeat in the eyes of the combat troops. So they remained, six of them never to depart. Among those who survived, four wore the Silver Star, the first women ever to receive that decoration.

In *Medical Service in the Mediterranean and Minor Theaters*, Office of Military History, 1965

*"The Nurses were fine as long as they were busy. If there was a lull in the activities, I'd often find them upset and thinking of home. They were young, many of them only 22 years old and away from home for the first time. But the minute they'd get a flow of badly wounded patients, the nurses would be back on their feet, smiling and telling jokes to make the boys feel better."*

Lt. Col. Eileen Flaherty, ANC Retired

The Silver Star is the Army's recognition for gallantry in action. The nurses were awarded the medal for rescuing forty-two patients from a burning hospital tent. The citation read in part, "Through the shelling which included many air bursts, they exhibited coolness and courage and carried on with complete disregard for their own safety. Their quick thinking, competence under unnerving conditions, and loyal consideration for the welfare of their patients prevented confusion which might have been critical, and they were an inspiration to the enlisted men working under their supervision."

Their courage becomes even more remarkable when one recognizes that this incident occurred on the day their chief nurse, Nurse Second Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth, was killed.

The death of the nurses at Anzio, perhaps

understandably, led to criticism. Army policy was defended by the Medical Commander of the Fifth Army, Brigadier General Joseph I. Martin, in a report to the Surgeon General: "Nurses certainly are not expendable, but in a situation as critical as that which developed on the beachhead—when subjective factors determine whether a line will hold or crack—these nurses assumed a major symbolic importance... The presence of the nurses on the beachhead constituted a ringing affirmation of our determination to hold what we had."

The positive morale factor of the nurses' presence was commonly acknowledged. "Somehow seeing us up there made them feel safe, secure," recalled Mary Kennedy. "I think they thought if women are here, things can't be that bad. They knew they'd get good care." Phyllis Galeaz related how she tried always to wear perfume as she cared for the men in the jungle hospital tents of New Guinea. "I'd get my mother to send it to me," she said during our interview in her home in Lynn. "It always seemed to relax the men and remind them of home." Genevieve Wing remembered that the soldiers loved joking with the nurses. "They'd say, 'Wow—an American woman,' and then they'd make fun of my Boston accent."

But what of the morale of the nurses? The chief nurse in charge of the 18th Station Hospital in New Guinea, Eileen Flaherty, observed during our interview at the Brockton V.A. Medical Center that the nurses in her group were fine as long as they were busy. If there was a lull in their work, however, she'd find them upset and thinking of home. "They were young, many only twenty-two years old, and away from home for the first time. But the minute they'd get a flow of badly wounded patients, the nurses would be back on their feet, smiling and telling little jokes to make the men feel better."



**Field Nurses of the 13th Field Hospital, Omaha Beach France, June 1944.**

Privacy and creature comforts soon became things of the past. All the nurses remember the lack of water. "You were either a prince or a pauper," said Genevieve Wing. "Sometimes if you stayed in one place long and there was water nearby they'd set up showers, and time would be set aside for the nurses to use them. Most of the time, though, you'd be lucky to get a helmet full of water to wash with." Eileen Flaherty and Phyllis Galeaz both remembered the many times water was rationed on New Guinea. "You'd only be allowed one canteen full a

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## ■ "A DIFFERENT WAR" (Continued from Page 17)

day. We'd save that to drink because during the day the temperature would go up to one-hundred-and-thirty, and you need the fluids." Bathing was out of the question. "If we had any, we'd just use cream or something to wash our face."

For most of the nurses another problem was lack of sleep. During the heat of a major battle, operating room sessions were long and intense, commonly lasting 18 hours. "Basically you worked till you couldn't stand any longer." Recalled Mary Kennedy, working as a surgical nurse. Phyllis Galeaz described her day on a medical unit this way: "If you got three or four hours sleep you were lucky...but who could sleep after that? Really, you just couldn't. But we were young...war is for the young...you can rejuvenate. But it took its toll in other ways."



**Slit Trench:** Lieutenant Maxine Lykins digs a slit trench on the Anzio beachhead, Italy, 1944.

When asked what was most frightening, the nurses I interviewed invariably mentioned artillery fire. "At times it seemed it would never stop," noted Genevieve Wing, "but we just kept operating. We had to, there were so many wounded." When the shelling was close, she reported, they were taught to throw themselves over the patient on the operating table. "It was just second nature after a while. He was helpless during surgery and we had to do what we could to protect him." A correspondent visiting a field hospital in Italy during an artillery attack described this scene:

We had just regained our feet when a particularly loud scream came piercing towards us and we all fell flat. I noticed the nurse, before she dropped down, took time to check the position of the blood and plasma needles in the boy's wrists. I heard her say, "Hold your arm still, Clarence," and she lay down on the ground beside his cot. The instant we heard the bang of the exploding shell, she was the first person back on her feet making sure those transfusion needles had not been jarred out of place. I remember thinking it was a privilege to be with people like that.

Margaret Bourke-White, *They Called it Purple Heart Valley*, 1944

In New Guinea, the problem was not artillery fire but Japanese bombers. In 1942 the Japanese sought to capture New Guin-

ea because of the airfields and use it as a foothold to invade Australia. The hospital was located right between two airfields. Phyllis Galeaz recalled that "for a while it seemed like they bombed us every night. The soldiers dug slit trenches for us, but they didn't get much use. Who could go and leave the men?" When the anti-aircraft guns started firing, she reported, the ground shook and the sky lit up. "Now when I see it in the movies," Galeaz told me, "it all comes back. The noise is something you can never forget."

*"The Anzio beachhead nursing service contributed one of the great heroic achievements of the war. If there was any distinction between combat troops and medical personnel, it was that the latter worked harder and took greater risks. They had not even the scant protection of a fox-hole and the red cross was a target rather than a shield."*

Leaves for R&R were rarely granted, taking its toll on the nurses. As D-Day approached, every nurse who could be spared was sent to the European theater. The nurses in the Mediterranean and in the Philippines worked increasing hours without respite. In a 1944 memo, Major Margaret Craighill, an Army consultant for women's health and welfare activities, wrote, *"The hours are long and working conditions, especially in the field and evacuation hospitals on the Fifth Army front, are difficult. The nurses are showing definite signs of fatigue...Little things bother them which previously they could laugh off. Young faces have old masks."*

In *Medical Service in the Mediterranean and Minor Theaters*, Office of Military History, 1965

Another near-universal problem involved communicating with family in the States. World War II nurses could never say where they were headed or where they had been, and when they did write, they tried to minimize the dangers so as not to worry those at home. Letters were censored as well, contributing to feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Every nurse I interviewed had her own special memory. Mary Kennedy painfully remembered the many surgical amputations. "One of the hardest things I had to do was to take the arms and legs and throw them away," she told me. "It used to make me physically sick. They were so young, these boys. I remember thinking, one day they're in high school and the next in the army and at the front."

Genevieve Wing spoke of the many times she and the members of her team operated on the same soldier more than once. "Our job was to operate and stabilize their condition so they could be sent to the rear for recovery. Sometimes you'd say to yourself that there was something familiar about this guy, and you'd realize that you'd operated on him several months ago." It took her a while to adjust to the fact that the rear area hospitals did not evacuate those who could be rehabilitated but rather sent them back to the front. "It was sad," she continued, "Many times he didn't make it the second time."

The nurses who entered France after D-Day remembered the terrible destruction, "All I could think was Thank God this

didn't come to America," said Ruth McBrien, who was assigned to the 2nd General Hospital, the first general hospital to arrive in France after D-Day.

Phyllis Galeaz and Eileen Flaherty, both stationed in New Guinea, remembered the terrible heat, the deadly snakes, the insects, and the rats as big as small cats. "I have a phobia about rats and mice," said Flaherty, "and I'll never forget waking up one morning seeing this huge rat staring at me from the netting pole." Galeaz remembered the terrible food. "I think they forgot us," she said. "We lived on Spam and C-Rations, anything powdered, unless a ship came in and that was rare. After a while I just couldn't eat." During her three years stationed there she lost forty-seven pounds.

Galeaz also recalled how the decision was made to issue side arms to the nurses. "This Japanese soldier just came wandering into the camp. He was sick and looking for help, but they were so surprised he was so close. After that, they gave us lessons on what to do if we were taken prisoner and how to shoot a gun. We didn't want the guns—we weren't there for that. I could never kill someone."

Galeaz remembered that Japanese soldier for another reason. He needed a transfusion, and another nurse, her friend Isabel, gave her own blood. "I always admired that," she told me. "I wasn't sympathetic after seeing what they'd done to some of our boys, and I just couldn't do it."

Shortly after Pearl Harbor the Japanese stormed across the Pacific, overrunning Thailand, Burma, Hong Kong, and British Malays, and seizing the Dutch East Indies and dozens of islands including the American-held Wake and Guam; the Army and Navy garrisons they encountered fell.

The Japanese lost no time in attacking the Philippines. By May of 1942, in retreat in the Bataan Peninsula, U.S. forces under MacArthur surrendered. The nurses stationed at installations in the Pacific during this period were captured along with the soldiers, thus becoming the first uniformed American women prisoners of war.

In a series of oral-history interviews conducted by the Department of Defense many years later and produced as a video entitled *We All Came Home*, the P.O.W. nurses recounted their experiences. Madeline Nash, a Navy nurse stationed in the Philippine capital, which was bombed continuously from December 8 until Christmas, 1941, recalled "looking out after the bombing and seeing Manila in flames. All the patients were crying for help and you wanted to help them all, but there were only two nurses. They were operating on the steps—everywhere!"

Manila soon fell and she and the other Navy nurses were captured, Nash described looking over the hospital balcony and seeing the American flag pulled down and the "Rising Sun" flag hoisted up. "I'll never forget that," she said tearfully. She and others were sent to the Santo Thomas internment camp just outside the city.

Meanwhile on Bataan the Army nurses set up two field hospitals and began caring for the many wounded. These hospitals were actually just clearings in the jungle, and the wounded personnel were out in

the open with only jungle growth for protection. Operations were performed in an abandoned motor pool building. Food was scarce, and enemy bombing and strafing were constant. The hospitals were attacked several times and casualties mounted. A sense of the horrors on Bataan is given in an official history of the Army Nurse Corps:

The Japanese bombed [one of the hospitals mentioned] on March 29, scoring a direct hit on the wards and killing or seriously wounding more than one hundred patients. A nurse remembered the force of the bomb. "The sergeant pulled me under the desk, but the desk was blown into the air, and he and I with it. I heard myself gasping. My eyes were being gouged out of their sockets, my whole body felt swollen and torn apart by the violent pressure. Then I fell back to the floor, and the desk landed on top of me and bounced around. The sergeant knocked it away from me, and gasping for both, bruised and aching, sick from swallowing the smoke from the explosive, I dragged myself to my feet."



**American Nurses Liberated** in 1945 after three years as Prisoners of War are transported from Manila to Leyte, where they were treated and eventually released to come home to a hero's welcome.

The sight that met her eyes was appalling. Patients had been blown out of their beds. Bodies and several limbs hung from the tree branches. Although the nurses knew that nothing could be done to prevent further air attacks, they carried on.

*The Army Nurse Corps*, CMH Pub, 72-14, p. 5

When it became apparent that Bataan could no longer hold out against the invasion of the Japanese, General MacArthur ordered Army headquarters, the hospitals, and the nurses moved to Corregidor where he hoped to make a stand until American reinforcements arrived. Colonel Carlos Romulo, a native Filipino and a member of MacArthur's staff, dramatically recounted the escape from Bataan:

There were cars filled with nurses, and I could not bear to look into their faces as we passed on that crowded road. I knew what was written on them. I had seen it in the open and unprotected tent hospitals on Bataan. It was not fear. I never saw a nurse afraid. It was something more dreadful than fear, because that is active. It was inevitability.

They knew what to expect. They had seen what hate can do, when their hospitals were deliberately bombed and wounded men screamed in their last agony under Japanese planes. They had heard stories of other women. They were fleeing towards

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## ■ "A DIFFERENT WAR" (Continued from Page 18)

the water line where there might or might not be boats to carry them to Corregidor...I will never forget the faces of those girls. I will never forgive the fact that American women, under the American flag, had to know that night—the last night on Bataan."

*I Saw the Fall of the Philippines*, 1942

The nurses arrived on Corregidor and immediately set up a hospital in Malinta Tunnel, an underground fortress. In his memoirs (1946), General Jonathan Wainwright, MacArthur's successor as commander of the American forces in the Philippines, wrote, "Never forget the American girls who fought on Bataan and later Corregidor. Their names must always be hal- lowed when we speak of American heroes. The memory of them coming ashore on Corregidor that early morning on April 9, dirty, disheveled, some of them wounded from the hospital bombings, and every one of them with her chin in the air, is a mem- ory that can never be erased."

The conditions in the tunnel were un- speakable, and the food and medical sup- plies were running low. Japanese planes bombed the island continuously, casualties mounted, and it soon became obvious that Corregidor would also fall.

"When General MacArthur and his family left," recalled Helen Nestor, one of the captured Army nurses. "I think that was the first time I saw the writing on the wall—that we'd have to surrender." Gladys Mealer Giles, Captain, U.S. Army, retired, remembered, "When I knew surrender was coming I felt very anxious and was glad I had work to do, not that I wanted anyone to be wounded, but it kept my thoughts on something other than what was happening outside."

On May 6, 1942, Corregidor surrendered and the Army nurses were taken prisoner. Madeline Ullom recalled their commander telling them, "I want each and every one of you to remember that you are an American and an officer in the United States Army. You know what your duties and respon- sibilities are, and always remember your oath." As Helen Nestor said, "How could they prepare us, there was no precedent for this—American women, nurses, being tak- en prisoner."

The nurses were marched to the dock and taken by boat and truck to Santo Thomas in Manila to join the Navy nurses already captured. Alice Clark described the jour- ney in an article published in the American Journal of Nursing in 1945: "The trip was made by truck and in the hold of an inde- scribably verminous freighter. Many of the nurses were ill from recurrent malaria and fatigue." Once they arrived, the Army nurs- es were placed in confinement, separated from the rest of the camp. As Mary Nelson, now a retired lieutenant commander, ex- plained, "I always felt the Japanese didn't know what to do with the military women."

Eventually when the need for medical care became acute in Santo Thomas, the nurses received permission from the Jap- anese to establish a hospital in the camp.

Food in the camp was scarce, medical supplies, non-existent. The nurses did the

best they could, working twelve-hour shifts and living day to day. "During the entire time we were there, the Japanese only let one Red Cross package through," Marg- aret Greenwalt Walcher, a young first lieu- tenant, reported. "Most of it was perishable and we used it right away. It was so hard to see them die. I was on a men's ward, and a week before we were liberated twelve men died of starvation."

*"The thing that impressed me the most, all the men before they'd die, a lot of them called for their mother. These things both- er you. All I could think of was his poor mother when she hears about her son being killed—I wished I'd had a way of letting her know that we'd cared for him."*

Phyllis Galeaz, ANC Veteran

After thirty-seven months of deprivation and hardship, the nurses were freed by the U.S. forces. "When the men of the First Cavalry discovered the American nurses," according to the account of Alice Clark, "they went wild, shouting and cheering and hugging and kissing the stunned girls." Most of the nurses were the merest skele- tons of their former selves, suffering from malaria, dengue fever, malnutrition, and ex- haustion. "As a young soldier with that col- umn," Chief Warrant Officer M. Hull would go on to write, "I remember the other pris- oners telling us how those nurses had kept hope alive for so many captives who might otherwise have perished...I think often of those special Americans and give thanks for having known such gallant women."

It was not the ill fate of every American nurse stationed in the Philippines to fall into Japanese hands, but the campaign even for the lucky few left its scars. Phyllis Galeaz, while at her staging area in Australia, met one of the nurses to escape from Corregidor by submarine just before it fell.

"I came up behind her to say hello, and she jumped when I touched her. She had that same vacant stare the boys used to have coming out of the jungle." Flaherty, who served briefly at the evacuation hospital in Australia where the escaped nurses were taken for care, gave this account: "Women who normally weighed one-hundred-and- twenty pounds were down to eighty-four. Most were sick with malaria and exhaus- tion. I never pressed them to talk about it, and they didn't volunteer too much."

Galeaz and Flaherty told me that al- though they'd known that nurses had been captured by the Japanese in the Philippines, it wasn't until the war's end that they would learn of their fate.

The war ended for Genevieve Flood Wing on December 31, 1944, when she was wounded at the Battle of the Bulge and re- ceived head and spinal cord injuries serious enough to warrant 100% disability from the Army. Wing was one of sixty-eight Army nurses to receive the Purple Heart. She was also awarded the American Campaign Medal with four Bronze Stars and the Mer- itorious Unit Emblem.

Phyllis Santangelo Galeaz was sent home from New Guinea after three years of duty in the jungle, weighing ninety-eight pounds and suffering herself from malaria, dengue fever, and exhaustion. She remem- bers arriving in America on a hospital ship and seeing the Golden Gate Bridge. "Those

of us who could went up on the deck, and we were all crying." Galeaz received the American Campaign Medal, the American Defense Service medal, the Distinguished Unit Citation, the World War II Victory medal, and the Asiatic/Pacific Campaign Medal.

Eileen Flaherty and Ruth McBrien, two nurses who told me during our interviews that they had decided they'd better join up when the commitment was only one year, returned home after four years overseas, highly decorated. They both went on to make careers of the Army, serving in Ko- rea and Vietnam, and retiring as Lieutenant Colonel and Major, respectively.

Mary Kennedy spent the entire war in North Africa. Her group, the 48th Surgical Hospital, followed Patton's army as it en- gaged Rommel's tank divisions and fought in the bloody battle for Tunisia. After near- ly two years in a mobile surgical unit, Ken- nedy was promoted to chief nurse and as- signed to the 128th Evacuation Hospital in Casablanca, not returning home until after V-E Day. As our interview ended, Kennedy, now 81 years old and a resident of a retire- ment home, said, "I used to worry about all the blood—there were no blood banks and all we could give them was saline, and they bled so much. We just had to stop the bleeding."

"I understand," I said, as her eyes brimmed with tears.

"They buried them, you know."

"What?" I asked.

"They buried them, the arms and legs..."

A report released by the Army Medical Department in 1949 perhaps puts the work of the World War II combat nurses in a final perspective:

Of those wounded men who survived to reach a battalion aid station or other med- ical facility, only 3.5 percent subsequently died of their wounds. Nearly three soldiers in four returned to duty. The rate of DOWS [Died of Wounds] was half that of the pre- vious war.

*A Different War* By Linda M. Morrison

Submitted by Donna Mabee, Greenville Post 94

All photos courtesy of the Center for Military History, Washington D.C., Office of Army Nurse Historian

*"The Genevieve Flood Wing mentioned in this article was my Dean at my school of nursing. The Mary Kennedy was a Nursing Supervisor at the hospital where I did my nursing training, the author of this article, Linda Morrison, was an instructor at my school of nursing. She was one of the smartest nursing instructors at the school."*

- Donna Mabee, Army Nurse Corp. 1971-1981 & Greenville Post 94 member



**Linda M. Morrison** is the Coordinator of the Salem State College School of Nursing Resource Center. Her research project on the role of the nurse in World War II was presented this past year at the National League for Nursing Convention and at the annual meeting of the Nursing Archives Association, Mugar Library, Boston University.

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## Membership Management in MyLegion.org: Register Today for a MyLegion.org Account

**M**yLegion.org is a one-stop-shop for managing your American Legion membership.

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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.

### **\*\*Attention District Commanders and Post Adjutants\*\***

**[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](mailto:rachael@mainelegion.org) to set up an appointment.

*Training lessons last between 1-2 hours.*

## 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/sons-of-the-american-legion/join-sons-of-the-american-legion](http://www.legion.org/about/american-legion-family/sons-of-the-american-legion/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.

## American Legion Cribbage Boards

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**\$30/each available for pickup only.** Proceeds Support Warren Post 218 Members.



## Acting with Resilience and Persistence for Veterans

*The American Legion's Government Affairs office in D.C. continues extensive work on behalf of our nation's veterans.*



**Testimony:** National Legislative Director Julia Mathis, center, answers a question during testimony before the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs while Department of Maine National Executive Committeeman Alternate (NECA) Matthew Jabaut, left, and National Commander James LaCoursiere Jr., right, look on.

Photo by Hilary Ott, The American Legion

**D**ear American Legion Family members and friends,

In the military when faced with a challenging mission, we relied on the operational assessment, resilience, perseverance and communication.

The same holds true in the civilian world. My visit to attend meetings in Washington, D.C., this week reemphasized the importance of our mission there.

The American Legion's Government Affairs office in D.C. acts on behalf of our nation's veterans in lots of ways, and as you can imagine with a new administration and new Congress, they have been busy. They remain fully engaged with the White House, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), bipartisan leaders in Congress, and other government agencies to maintain situational awareness on a myriad of important veteran and military related matters.

A sampling of the progress we have made so far this year:

- The American Legion submitted its [eighth testimony](#) to Congress earlier this week only four months into the 119th Congress. Furthermore, we have been asked for the Legion's support on 92 bills members of Congress have introduced, and have provided feedback on them through Legion resolutions. Delivering our members' voice through advocacy is the core mission for the D.C. office, and we are delivering.

- In addition to meeting lawmakers

and submitting testimony, staff has engaged with officials from VA, the Small Business Administration, Department of Labor and other veterans service organizations. We have met with VA Secretary Doug Collins, his staff and career VA employees numerous times. We have attended several VA meetings to relay our candid feedback about potential changes at the department.

The D.C. office also continues to work with VA to ensure the success of the System Worth Saving and Regional Office Action Review programs. Eight trips are scheduled in 2025 to continue providing best practices and challenges at VA facilities to the Secretary and members of Congress.

Washington is built on relationships. Our public and private efforts have ensured that your voice is being heard at the highest levels of the federal government. We look forward to continuing a proud tradition of affecting positive change for our nation's veterans in Washington.

I could not be prouder of the progress the D.C. team has already made and look forward to all the achievements yet to come. And I promise our 1.5 million members — and all veterans — these efforts on your behalf will result in improvements for generations of veterans to come.

May 01, 2025

National Commander James LaCoursiere Jr.

[www.legion.org/information-center/news/commander/2025/may/acting-with-resilience-and-persistence-for-veterans](http://www.legion.org/information-center/news/commander/2025/may/acting-with-resilience-and-persistence-for-veterans)





## Member Owned. Mission Led.

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**Pre-commissioned officers**



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Our advice articles are created by professionals with a military background. They know how to account for the unique financial challenges military members and their families face.

#### **Tools for every stage of life**

We have a robust set of resources that includes a free job finding service, military and deployment pay calculators, checklists for major life events and more.

#### **Guidance when you need it**

We use predictive modeling to anticipate our members' life events and give relevant advice when it's needed most.

### **Caring for military families and our local communities is core to who we are.**

**Mental health in the military community is top of mind.** We support programs that champion well-being.

#### **We're committed to ending veteran homelessness.**

We're starting in 'Military City USA' - San Antonio, Texas - where we've donated millions to support this cause.



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## ■ "TOPSHAM COMFORT DOG GARVER"

(Continued from Page 14)

trauma and abuse. Studies have shown that comfort/support dogs tend to lower stress and anxiety in those around them and can also be a great comfort in times of sudden loss and trauma. We would be remiss if we did not also note that comfort dogs are a support tool for first responders who deal with trauma on a regular basis.

In addition, we would like to thank the Sagadahoc County Board of Health, Board Chair Melissa Fochesato, and the Sagadahoc County Commissioners for their support by providing \$7,000 of opioid settlement funding to assist in the program. For those who are unaware of the opioid settlement funding: opioid manufacturers, distributors, and retailers have been forced to pay billions of dollars in restitution to settle lawsuits regarding their roles in the opioid epidemic. These additional funds will go towards costs specifically related to our comfort dog program.

Why the name Garver? We have chosen to name our comfort dog Garver out of respect and appreciation for the members of the Corey Edwin Garver American Legion Post 202 in Topsham. This amazing program would not be possible without your support. Thank you.

Garver is a 10-week-old male English Labrador that comes to us from Boonefield Labradors in New Hampshire. Boonefield specializes in breeding English Labrador support dogs and has placed canines in law enforcement agencies in every state in New England.

Garver's partner will be School Resource Officer Gabrielle "Belle" Mathieu and his primary patrol area will be in the Mount Ararat High and Middle Schools, but he will also be making appearances throughout the greater Topsham community. Please be sure to come up and say hi when you see Garver. He has already started making people smile."

Article by WGME Staff  
Fri., April 18, 2025 at 5:03 p.m.

<https://wgme.com/news/local/meet-garver-topsham-pds-new-comfort-dog-police-community-out-reach>



**Meet Garver:** After raising funds for his adoption, Topsham Post 202 members introduce Garver, the comfort dog who will be assisting the Topsham Police Department and community members.

Photos Courtesy of Topsham Police Department



**Ready To Bring Comfort To The Community:** Department and Topsham Post 202 Finance Officer Mary "Tally" Brown holds Garver.



**S**ubscribe 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-form>

## American Legion Flag & Emblem



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## Show Your Support to Veterans in the State of Maine

The American Legion Department of Maine Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization exclusively for charitable purposes including the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations described under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. All donations to the foundation are tax-deductible under the United States Tax Code and Internal Revenue Service.



Maine that will enhance the lives of our veterans, their families, children and communities in the State of Maine to-

day and for future generations.

Please show your support to our Veterans in the State of Maine and donate today to make a difference!

To donate with Paypal or Debit/Credit card, scan the QR code on the right or visit [www.mainelegion.org/pages/foundation.php](http://www.mainelegion.org/pages/foundation.php) and click the DONATE button then select the designated fund of choice. Donations can also be by made by using the American Legion Department of Maine Foundation Brochure.

Checks should be made payable to American Legion Department of Maine Foundation and mailed to: American Legion Department of Maine Foundation, 5 Verti Drive Winslow, Maine 04901-0727. Please make sure to provide your name and address so that we may send you a tax receipt.

Thank you in advance for your generous contribution!



## Is Your Post Utilizing Its' Sales Tax Exemption?

All Legion Posts in the state of Maine qualify for Sales Tax Exemption. If your Post currently does not have a Certificate for Sales Tax Exemption, please call Dept. Headquarters for assistance at 207-873-3229 so we can send you a packet containing detailed instructions on how to obtain this status.





# Maine American Legion Baseball



With an alumni base that includes more than half of current Major League Baseball players, American Legion Baseball is one of the most prominent and tradition-rich amateur athletic leagues in existence.

The program is always growing, and participation is easy. About 3,500 teams compete each year, so there's ample opportunity for new players to join, and for coaches who want to start a team. The league also employs a large number of umpires and other volunteers.

## To play:

Contact your local Legion post. Visit [www.legion.org/baseball](http://www.legion.org/baseball) and click on "Find a Post." Fill in your city, state and ZIP code.

Players who are cut from a team, or try out but don't make the roster, can play for the post that is the next-shortest driving distance from their residence. If a player doesn't make that team, he can try out with the next-closest post. He can continue until he finds a team to join.

Age Eligibility Chart: <https://baseballmaine.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/2025-Legion-baseball-age-chart.pdf>

Full Registration is open for the 2025 American Legion Baseball Season. For more information, please visit: [baseballmaine.com/team-registration](https://baseballmaine.com/team-registration)

To register online, visit: [legion.org/baseball](https://legion.org/baseball)

## To coach:

Coaches who want to start a team should contact the department baseball chairman, Scott Bishop at [chairman@mainelegionbaseball.org](mailto:chairman@mainelegionbaseball.org)

The department will send a new team packet, which includes copies of the state and national rules, insurance information and registration forms. Begin your team registration at [baseball.legion.org](https://baseball.legion.org).

## To umpire:

Usually, local umpire associations provide departments with umpires.

Department chairmen can nominate umpires to officiate the national tournament. Umpires can also nominate each other.

## To volunteer:

Legion Baseball can always use your help. Volunteers can serve in a variety of ways, ranging from statisticians to serving Gatorade during games.

For more information, contact your local post.

## Schedule & Standings

Senior Legion Baseball: <https://legion.baseballmaine.com/maine-senior-legion/>

Junior Legion Baseball: <https://legion.baseballmaine.com/maine-junior-legion/>

## Forms:

Baseball forms can be accessed at: <https://baseballmaine.com/important-legion-baseball-forms/>

## Championship Schedule:

Maine Senior State Championship, July 26 - 30/31, Mansfield Stadium, Bangor

Maine Junior State Championship, July 31 - Aug. 4/5, Mansfield Stadium, Bangor

Northeast Senior Regional Tournament, Aug. 6 - 10, Manchester, NH

Northeast Junior Regional Championship, Aug. 9 - 11\*(Approx. dates), TBD, MA

SR World Series, Aug. 14 - 19, Shelby, NC

## Contact Information:

Scott Bishop, Chairman  
Phone: 207-745-0555

Email: [chairman@mainelegionbaseball.org](mailto:chairman@mainelegionbaseball.org)

Maine Legion Baseball Website:

<https://baseballmaine.com/>

## Scholarships

Learn more about Legion Baseball scholarship opportunities and apply here:

[www.legion.org/get-involved/scholarships/the-american-legion-baseball-scholarship](https://www.legion.org/get-involved/scholarships/the-american-legion-baseball-scholarship)

## 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



**District 1 Attends Boston Regional Conference:** Legion members from Maine's District 1 and Department Officers represent the Department of Maine at the 2025 Boston Regional Conference on Feb. 1. The daylong interactive training featured sessions on legal, Constitution and Bylaws, Buddy Checks, post operations, Be The One veteran suicide prevention, membership retention, post meeting operations, mentorship, MyLegion, and resolutions. Left to right, District 1 and Eliot Post 188 Adjutant Kimberly Richards, Department Adjutant Jason Hall, District 1 and Eliot Post 188 Historian Don Hands, Eliot Post 188 Commander John Richardson, and National Executive Committeeman Alternate Matthew Jabaut.

## Berwick Post 79 Expands Media Presence

Berwick's Charles S. Hatch Post 79 is on a mission: to expand their membership by reaching out to prospective young veterans through their preferred social media channels. In addition to legacy news outlets (newspapers, radio, and television), the post recently expanded their Facebook page which will also better serve current members. Visit the Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CharlesSHatchPost79>

The Berwick Post 79 and Legion Riders Chapter Facebook page was established in 2017 by Post member and Legion Rider Beverly Cassady, and was recently expanded and updated by Stephen Allain, the post's new social media coordinator. By creating a combined public relations/media team, as noted by Post Commander Bryan English, "This will take us a step ahead as we try to reach a new level of information available about Post 79."

The Post 79 Facebook page can also be accessed through the post website [www.berwickmelegionpost79.org](http://www.berwickmelegionpost79.org) by

clicking on the Facebook symbol at the top right of the website's home screen.

Keeping current members fully informed of post news and activities on a regular basis outside of monthly meetings is also an ongoing challenge that will soon be facilitated through Stephen's initiative to utilize Mailchimp for post business. While this "all-in-one" platform primarily focuses on email, Mailchimp also offers tools for social media marketing, providing another means of achieving the post's goal of expanded media outreach.



**Expanded Facebook Page:** Berwick Post 79 expands and updates its social media presence, including a newly updated Facebook page.



## 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

### Westbrook Post 62 Business Meeting: Post 62 welcomed Westbrook's Troop 87 as guests at its Wed., March 5 Business Meeting. Guests from Troop 87 were Boy Scouts Master



Joshua Bradford, Joshua's son Joseph, Cub Scouts Master Nathaniel Dyer, and Nathaniel's son Sam. Nathaniel described the long and active history of Troop 87 in Westbrook, along with current activities, Merit Badges, and future projects. Front row, left to right, Westbrook Post 62 Commander Dennis Marrotte, Post 62 member Phil LeClerc, Post 62 member Michael Thomas, Troop 87 Boy Scout Master Joshua Bradford, Troop 87 Cub Scout Master Nathaniel Dyer, Cub Scout Sam Dyer, Boy Scout Joseph Bradford, and Post 62 member Roger Barr. Back row, left to right, Post 62 member Phil Spiller, Post 62 member Ed Symbol, Post 62 Adjutant Gary York, Post 62 Finance Officer Gerry Doyon, and Post 62 member Richard Galipeau.

Photo by Westbrook VAC Rebecca Boaz



**Westbrook Post 62 Welcomes Mission Working Dogs:** Stephen W. Manchester Post 62 of Westbrook welcomed Christy Gardner as the April 2 Business Meeting Guest Speaker. Christy survived severe injuries while serving in the U.S. Army and learned a new way of life with a service dog. Her experiences gave her an idea, which led to the founding of Mission Working Dogs, a non-profit organization. Learn more about Mission Working Dogs at [www.missionworkingdogs.com](http://www.missionworkingdogs.com). Westbrook Post 62 wants to thank the Department of Maine Auxiliary President Stasi Brule for bringing Christy Gardner and her service dog Douglas to the April Business Meeting. Front row, left to right, Alan Brule, Roger Barr, Ed Symbol, Department Auxiliary President Stasi Brule, Dennis Marrotte, Christy Gardner with service dog Douglas, John Burke, Norman Vaillancourt, and District 2 Commander Gene Connolly. Back row (behind Stasi Brule), left to right, Gary York, Phil LeClerc, Gerry Doyon, Tom Haskell, Charles Roundy, and Phil Spiller.

Photo by Post 62 Member Kelly Bernier



**Guest Speaker:** Westbrook's American Legion Post 62 welcomes Founder and President of Mission Working Dogs Christy Gardner and service dog Douglas to the April Business Meeting. Christy Gardner, a U.S. Army Veteran, standing, describes her non-profit organization Mission Working Dogs while accompanied by one of her employees, Douglas. Listening, left to right, Post 62 Officers Phil Spiller and Gary York. Seated beside Christy is Post 62 Treasurer Gerry Doyon.

Photo by Westbrook Post 62 Commander Dennis Marrotte

**Westbrook Post 62 Donates To Mission Working Dogs: On Wed., April 2, Post 62 Commander Dennis Marrotte, left, presents Founder and President of Mission Working Dogs Christy Gardner, right, a contribution check for Mission Working Dogs and a blue t-shirt with the SW Manchester Post 62 American Legion logo. Looking on is "Douglas" the service dog and Post 62 Chaplain Phil LeClerc, back left.**

Photo by Phil Spiller



**Windham Post 148 Eagle Cane Presentation:** At the Field-Allen Post 148 Veterans Coffee on Wed., April 9, a special tribute was held recognizing a dozen veterans with eagle canes produced by the Post 148 Chaplain Gerald Beaulieu. In October, Gerald started carving eagle cane heads and with the help of post member Arne DeFosse, who provided the cane sections from a local woodlot, Gerald was able to assemble the canes and tailor them to the veterans' service. At the coffee event, canes were presented to eleven of the veterans, another example of "Veterans Serving Veterans." Top photo, veterans receiving eagle canes, left to right, Morris Wright, Ted Deschambeault, Willie Goodman, Phil Perry, Gerald Beaulieu (presenting), Bob Chapin, Tom Theriault, David Tanguay, Waler Lamb, Phyllis Page, Arne DeFosse, and Phil Sweetsir. Bottom left photo, Post 148 Chaplain Gerald Beaulieu presents the eagle canes. Bottom right photo, a great crowd turned out for the Wednesday Veterans Coffee with over forty in attendance. The event has been running for nine years and is still going strong.



**Naples Post 155 Draping Of The Charter:** Post 155 held a Draping of the Charter for post member Jim Landry at the Celebration of Life on Jan. 25. Post 155 Sgt.-At-Arms Brent Brown performs the Ceremony.

Submitted by  
Naples Post 155 Historian  
Stewart Ross Graham



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

## District 2 continued



**Naples Squadron 155 Certificate Of Appreciation:** Sons of The American Legion Squadron 155 member Tony Campbell, left, presents Bob Thibedeau of Hancock Lumber, right, with a Certificate of Appreciation on Feb. 16 for donating lumber to build the Redemption Bottle Shed.

Submitted by Naples Post 155 Historian  
Stewart Ross Graham



**Naples Post 155 Visits Mission Working Dogs Facility** in Oxford on Feb. 16. Left to right, SAL Squadron 155 member Dave Barry (kneeling), SAL Squadron 155 member Tony Campbell, Legion Post 155 member Bob Hemmick, Auxiliary Unit 155 member Torri Pappas, Legion Post 155 member Dave Woolley, Legion Post 155 member Ross Graham, Auxiliary Unit 155 member Janeen Canavan, President of Mission Dogs Christy Gardner, and Auxiliary Unit 155 member Linda Allen, who set up the tour of the Mission Working Dogs facility.

Submitted by Naples Post 155 Historian Stewart Ross Graham

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

## District 4

Farmington Post 28; Kingfield Post 61; Phillips Post 64; Strong Post 78;  
Wilton Post 117; Rangeley Post 120



**Post 28 Presents Quilt Of Valor:** Department Commander Patricia "Tricia" Thurston, left, and veterans' representative with the Career Center and Maine Department of Labor Brad Bean, right, place a Quilt of Valor over the shoulders of Roger Ryder, center, a Vietnam War veteran from Temple on Friday morning, Oct. 11, at Roderick-Crosby Post 28 in Farmington.

## Replica of Vietnam Veterans Memorial Coming in July to Farmington

Scores of volunteers and various donations, including \$22,000, are needed to bring The Wall That Heals to Farmington July 1-6.

FARMINGTON — The Wall That Heals, a 375-foot traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., will make its only Maine appearance this year July 1-6 in the field near Narrow Gauge Drive-In in Farmington.

American Legion District 4, University of Maine at Farmington and the Farmington community partnered to bring the memorial to Franklin County, according to a news release.

Committee members Brian Ellis, veterans representative for the president's office at UMF, and Jennifer Kimble with Roderick-Crosby American Legion Post 28 shared more information Monday about how Farmington was chosen, what to expect while the replica is in town and ways community members can help to make the visit a success.

Kimble said she came up with the idea of bringing The Wall That Heals to Farmington. "I guess it was just really because these are our veterans, they're getting up there in age," she said. "We need to celebrate them while they're here. Get them the welcome home that they didn't get, that they should have gotten."

Ellis noted the number of Vietnam War and other veterans in the greater Farmington area. "It will be an opportunity to recognize veterans in general," he said.

"When we applied we were one of 133 from around the country," Kimble said. "We were one of 32 that were chosen. They didn't tell me how many others in Maine applied, but we got chosen because our community came together

outside of veterans groups."

"Jennifer (Kimble) did a good job, had a game plan ahead of time," Ellis said. "She really showed her commitment to it."

Organizers said they need to raise \$25,000 for the costs of insurance, transportation fees and other expenses. So far, \$3,000 has been raised and the goal is to raise the remainder by the end of February, they said.

The memorial is expected to arrive on July 1 with an escort of 100 motorcycles. Kimble hopes people will line the streets downtown once the time is known.

Help needed: Able-bodied volunteers are needed to help with set up on July 2 and take down on July 6, Kimble said. Throughout its stay, upward of 300 volunteers will be needed for a variety of other tasks, she said. Four-hour time slots are being set up but those are flexible, Kimble stated. "If you are willing to work, we want you," she said.

Ellis said water and healthy snacks for volunteers are also needed, as are stakes for the wall and other things that might pop up at the last minute. He is also working with the 100 veterans attending UMF for ways they can help.

Viewing will open on July 3 and continue around the clock through 2 p.m. July 6. A variety of special events are being planned, including music, a Quilt of Valor presentation and programs on Agent Orange and for Gold Star families. Timing for those are still being worked out, Kimble said.

Fireworks are planned as usual for Thursday night, July 3, near the Narrow Gauge Drive-In. Owner John Moore said movies will not be shown that night. One indoor theater will open around 8

[More on "MEMORIAL WALL"](#)  
Page 26

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

## District 3

Livermore Falls Post 10; Lewiston Post 22; Auburn Post 31; Lisbon Falls Post 66; Turner Post 111; Sabattus Post 135; Mechanic Falls Post 150; Auburn Post 153; Lisbon Post 158; Lewiston Post 210



**Celebrating 100 Years Of Service:** Sabattus Post 135 celebrates its 100th birthday at the post home in Dec., 2024. Left to right, Past Department Commander Kirk Thurston, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, Sabattus Post 135 Commander Ron Caron, and Past Department President and Sabattus Unit 135 member Joan Caron.



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

## District 4 continued

■ "MEMORIAL WALL"  
(Continued from Page 25)

p.m. for those who would like to watch the approximately 15-minute fireworks show without the noise.

Moore said it depends on availability of technical people to provide the livestreaming, which would be similar to what is offered for the UMF graduation in May. The theater holds about 75 people, and another could be opened if needed, he said. While Moore is not involved with planning the event, he said, "We are here to help."

"John (Moore) is a big supporter," Kimble said. She said the livestream option would be good for those with PTSD or sensory issues.

Kimble said visitors may take rubbings of loved ones' names and there will be golf carts for people who need them to get from the parking lot to the wall. There is also an opportunity to honor the memory of those who survived the Vietnam War but died afterward, she said. Visit [vymf.org](http://vymf.org) to submit the name and photo of the person. Those from Maine will be part of an exhibit in the mobile education center which comes with the wall, she added.

According to Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund website, "Bringing The Wall home to communities throughout our country allows the souls enshrined on the Memorial to exist once more

among family and friends in the peace and comfort of familiar surroundings. The traveling exhibit provides thousands of veterans who have been unable to cope with the prospect of facing The Wall to find the strength and courage to do so within their own communities, thus allowing the healing process to begin." Since its unveiling in 1996, "The Wall That Heals has been displayed at nearly 800 communities throughout the nation."

"The 53-foot trailer that carries The Wall That Heals transforms to become a mobile Education Center. ... Exhibits give visitors a better understanding of the legacy of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the collection of items left at The Wall," the website says.

"This is a good opportunity for Farmington," Ellis said. "It's during the Fourth of July weekend, which is a prime time for it to be here. John (Moore) has a beautiful background, a somber area for it."

Donation checks can be mailed to American Legion, PO Box 648, Farmington, ME 04938. For more information or to volunteer time or other donations, email Kimble at [legionpost-28maine@gmail.com](mailto:legionpost-28maine@gmail.com).

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By Pam Harnden  
Jan. 31, 2025  
[www.sunjournal.com/2025/01/31/replica-of-vietnam-veterans-memorial-coming-in-july-to-farmington](http://www.sunjournal.com/2025/01/31/replica-of-vietnam-veterans-memorial-coming-in-july-to-farmington)

**The Wall That Heals:** The Wall That Heals exhibit features a three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Like the original Memorial, The Wall That Heals is erected in a chevron-shape and visitors can do name rubbings of individual service member's names on The Wall.



## 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

Rumford Post 24  
Four Chaplains Ceremony

The American Legion Post 24 in Rumford held a ceremony for the Four Chaplains program for 2025 on Sunday, Feb. 2 at 2:00 p.m.

From the welcoming remarks by Department of Maine Commander Patricia

Thurston, to the invocation presented by Post Chaplain Bill McAloney, and to the honoring of the POW/MIA empty chair by Past Department Commander Kirk Thurston and Unit 24 Sergeant-at-Arms Judy Sanborn, this was truly a Legion

Family event.

Who are the four chaplains? They were four United States Army Chaplains: a Methodist Minister, the Reverend George L. Fox, a Jewish Rabbi, Alexander Goode, a Catholic Priest, Father Washington, and a Reformed Church in America Minister, the Reverend Clark Poling.

These four men were assigned to a ship called the *SS Dorchester*. Again, it wasn't an accident that they were of these different denominations. During World War II, there were men enlisting from all over the country of different backgrounds. The *Dorchester* was a passenger ship. It had been requisitioned by the Army, and it was transporting 900 plus troops to Greenland as part of a convoy with a couple of other troop ships and some Coast Guard escorts.

In the early morning hours of Feb. 3, 1943, the *U.S.A.T. Dorchester* was crowded to capacity, carrying 902 servicemen, merchant seamen, and civilian workers. Once a luxury coastal liner, the 5,649-ton vessel had been converted into an Army transport ship. The *Dorchester*, one of three ships in the SG-19 convoy, was moving steadily across the icy waters from Newfoundland toward an American base in Greenland. SG-19 was escorted by Coast Guard Cutters Tampa, Escanaba, and Comanche.

The men on the *Dorchester* sailed together for 11 days in very close quarters, so they would see the clergymen together setting up for their respective services. They would also have show nights, where they played the piano and all four Chaplains could sing. Later, surviving soldiers would comment on how well the representatives of various denominations got along and that when they preached, they seemed to be in most ways more united in faith than separated.

During the early morning hours of Feb. 3, 1943, at 12:55 a.m., The *SS Dorchester* was torpedoed by German submarine U-223. The damage was severe, boiler power was lost, and there was inadequate steam to sound the full six-whistle signal to abandon ship. Through the pandemonium, according to those present, four Army Chaplains brought hope in despair and light in darkness. Those chaplains were Lt. George L. Fox, Methodist; Lt. Alexander D. Goode, Jewish; Lt. John P. Washington, Roman Catholic; and Lt. Clark V. Poling, Dutch Reformed. Quickly and quietly, the four Chaplains spread out amongst the soldiers. Though they were four Chaplains of different faith denominations, they are remembered for their acts of bravery and heroism. These four men met each other where they received their Army Chaplain training at the Army Chaplain School at Harvard University.

When most of the men were topside, the Chaplains opened a storage locker

and began distributing life jackets. It was then that a crewmember witnessed an astonishing sight. When there were no more lifejackets in the storage room, the Chaplains removed theirs and gave them to four frightened young men. "It was the finest thing I have seen or hope to see this side of heaven," said another survivor who saw the Chaplains' selfless act.

The Chaplains helped organize the abandoning-ship effort. They distributed lifejackets and got as many men as they could into lifeboats. When all available lifejackets ran out, they each gave up their life jackets to enlisted men, and urged and helped men get into the water. One survivor recounts seeing one of the Chaplains putting a lifejacket on a man who was frozen with fear and pushing him into the water because they knew the ship was going down. Then the Chaplains joined arms, said prayers, and sang hymns as they went down with the ship.

As the ship went down, survivors in nearby rafts could see the four Chaplains—arms linked and braced against the slanting deck. Their voices could also be heard offering prayers. Of the 902 men aboard the *U.S.A.T. Dorchester*, 672 died, leaving 230 survivors.

During the Four Chaplains Ceremony, Tammy Schmearsal-Burgess led the crowd in singing the National Anthem and God Bless America. Reading the eulogies were Leonard Bromberg, Father Aaron Damboise, Pastor Cindy Christie, and District 5 Chaplain Louie Marin. After each eulogy, members of the Auxiliary placed black sashes over the crosses and the Star of David and laid a rose at its base as the eulogy readers lit a candle. Life vests were also placed on chairs in front of the deceased clergy's pictures by Auxiliary members. The closing benediction was read by Unit 24 Chaplain Leslie Skibitsky.

Following the memorial, a light luncheon prepared by the Auxiliary and a cake donated by Thibault Remembrance Center, were enjoyed by all attendees.

Reverend Fox, Rabbi Goode, Reverend Poling, and Father Washington each passed life's ultimate test. In doing so, they became an enduring example of extraordinary faith, courage, and selflessness. The Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart were awarded posthumously Dec. 19, 1944, to the next of kin by Lt. Gen. Brehon B. Somervell, Commanding General of the Army Service Forces, in a ceremony at the post chapel in Fort Myer, VA. A one-time-only posthumous Special Medal for Heroism was authorized by Congress and awarded by President Eisenhower on Jan. 18, 1961. The special medal was intended to have the same weight and importance as the Medal of Honor.

[More on "FOUR CHAPLAINS"](#)  
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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

## District 5 continued

### ■ "FOUR CHAPLAINS" (Continued from Page 26)

**Four Chaplains Ceremony:** Department Commander Tricia Thurston, at the podium, delivers welcoming remarks at the Four Chaplains Ceremony held by Rumford Post 24 on Sun., Feb. 2 at 2:00 p.m.



**Four Chaplains Group Photo:** Rumford Post 24 held a Four Chaplains Ceremony on Feb. 2. The ceremony was planned and led by Post 24 Chaplain Bill McAloney with support from post, unit, and squadron members. Local clergymen and women also came to support and had roles to honor the Four Chaplains. A light meal was enjoyed by all who attended the ceremony.



**Mexico Good Samaritan Fundraiser:** Rumford Post 24 held a community supper in March to support the Mexico Good Samaritan, raising \$1,471 to go towards costs for their daily expenses. A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Michelle Robinson Williams and her

team by Rumford Post 24 for all they do to support those with food insecurities. Many thanks to Michelle and her team, to the many post, auxiliary, and squadron members, and soup kitchen volunteers for helping with the supper, as well as to the many businesses and communities who donated toward the raffles. And thanks to Louie Marin for always being ready with the camera to take photos! Lou, thank you for all you do! Left to right, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, Jo Chapman, Michelle Williams, Rena Nichols, and Post 24 Adjutant Randy Canwell.

## Sisters in Arms Center Donation

Dec. 19, 2024, was a very rewarding and heartwarming day for many members of the Rumford American Legion Post, Unit and Squadron 24. We loaded up three vehicles with the many gifts, gift cards, and donations for a female veteran and her children who needed our support.

We cannot thank everyone enough for all the outpouring of genuine support for this veteran. From the moment the need was posted, many stepped up to help. From local members, community, and our American Legion Family

across Maine, everyone did a phenomenal job bringing items and sending gifts our way so that they could be delivered.

Thanks to everyone who helped, she and her children will have a wonderful Christmas that will extend into the New Year!

We took a few pictures of our day in getting the items to the veteran. We were not able to meet her in person, but some of us were able to video chat with her later. She is so appreciative of all that we did and sends many thanks to

all who helped.

Merry Christmas to you all and we can all sleep a little better knowing a veteran and her children are under a safe roof and in a warm house. God Bless you all!

I thank you all from my whole heart for being there: Gloria Morton, Lynn McAloney, Jo Chapman, Al Williams,

Kirk Thurston, Carol Roach, Don Roach, Tricia Thurston and Executive Director of Sisters in Arms Center Rebecca Cornell du Houx. Thank you, Rebecca, for accepting the donations and ensuring the veteran was able to pick them up. Also, for making the video chat happen!

Submitted By Dept. Commander Tricia Thurston



**Group Photo:** Rumford Post, Unit, and Squadron 24 members take a group photo at Department before heading back on the road to deliver donations to a local female veteran in need and her children. Left to right, Lynn McAloney, Carol Roach, Don Roach, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, Past Department Commander Kirk Thurston, Jo Chapman, Al Williams, and Gloria Morton.



**Donations Delivered:** Gifts and donations to a local female veteran in need and her children are delivered to the Sisters in Arms Center by Rumford Post, Unit, and Squadron 24 members just in time for Christmas. Left to right, Executive Director of Sisters in Arms Center Rebecca Cornell du Houx, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, Past Department Commander Kirk Thurston, Gloria Morton, Al Williams, Jo Chapman, Carol Roach, and Lynn McAloney.



**Uniform:** While at Department Headquarters, Jo Chapman, left, and Past Department Commander Kirk Thurston, right, stand alongside the mannequin dressed with their dad's uniform that he wore while in the Coast Guard.



## 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



**Camden Post 30 Officer Installation:** Officers are installed at Camden Post 30 on May 1. Left to right, Post Adjutant Jeff Sukeforth, Sgt.-at-Arms John Hyssong, Post Americanism Officer Scott Bergey, Post Historian Rodney Lynch, Post Commander Dave Franclemont, Post Service Officer Sandy Delano, Post Treasurer Norm Carver, Post 1st Vice Horace Benner, and Post Chaplain Stephanie McLain.

Photo by Camden Post 30 Member Jaime Ward



### Five Town Little League Flag Dedication:

Camden Post 30 provides a new flag every year for Five Town Little League, (FTLL) to fly during the season. Each year the flag is dedicated in honor of a local veteran. At the 2025 Opening Day held on May 3, the

flag is dedicated to 101-year-old WWII Veteran, Dell Hyssong, a 65-year member of Camden Post 30. Left to right, Stephanie McLain, Dave Franclemont, Carol Lee Hyssong (Dell's daughter), John Hyssong, Skip Pierce, and Norm Carver.

Photo by Post 30 Adjutant Jeff Sukeforth

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

## District 8

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



**Winter Softball Classic:** Topsham Post 202 holds Frozen Softball games on Sat., Feb. 15 to benefit homeless veterans.

## Phippsburg Post 216 Happenings & Events

Phippsburg Post 216 members are saddened by the recent loss of two long-term Legion members, who together accounted for 55 years of continuous service.

Since the Post's establishment in 2011, we have unfortunately transferred 21 members of Post 216 to Post Everlasting. This includes Comrade Richard E. Soule (Dick) who passed on Jan. 10, 2025 and Comrade Harald E. Zinke who passed on Feb. 21, 2025.

Their families and friends were invited to attend the ceremonies, and a light meal was served afterwards. Both veterans were selected and completed the Maine Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.

### Richard Soule (USMC - MSGT)

Comrade Soule began his distinguished military career on June 28, 1950, when he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and served with the 1st Marine Division, 1st Amphibious Truck Company. His Marine Division fought in the Korean War from 1950 to 1953, participating in the Inchon Landing, the liberation of Seoul, and the Chosin Reservoir Campaign. After four years of active-duty service he was honorably discharged on June 27, 1954, as a Staff Sergeant, and transferred to the Maine Army National Guard where he completed 28 years of reserve service, retiring as a Master Sergeant on Nov. 17, 1992.

His decorations included the United Nations Service Medal, Korean Service Medal with star, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Medal, Expert Rifle Device, and Expert Pistol Device.

Comrade Soule joined The American Legion on April 26, 2014, and transferred to Phippsburg Post 216 on June 12, 2014. One of his proudest moments was when he received the book "Korea Reborn – A Grateful Nation" from Maine's Past Department Commander John Hargreaves.

Comrade Soule was interred at the VA Cemetery in Augusta with Military Honors on Fri., Jan. 17, 2025. Post 216 held the Draping of the Charter and Post Everlasting Ceremonies in honor

of Comrade Soule at their meeting on March 13.

### Harald Zinke (Army - Specialist 4)

Comrade Zinke was born in Gersdorf, Czechoslovakia on Feb. 8, 1934. At the end of WWII, as ethnic Germans, his family was forced to leave their home and return to Germany. Harald lived there as a refugee and later came to the U. S. via Canada to find a new life.

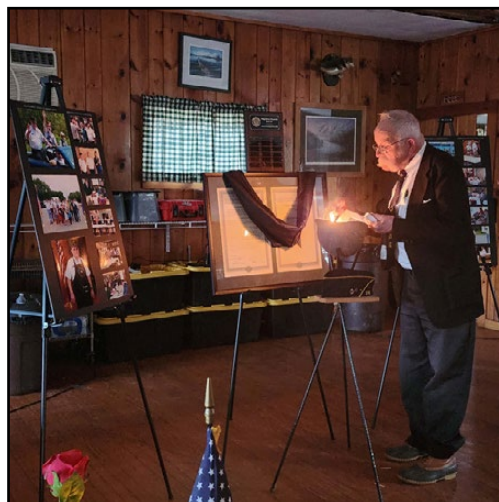
Comrade Zinke began his military career when he was drafted into the U.S. Army on Dec. 14, 1959. He worked hard and completed his high school education through the military GED Program, receiving his high school equivalency in 1961. He was very proud to become a U.S. citizen through the naturalization process on July 24, 1962.

Upon graduation from recruit training, Comrade Zinke was transferred to the 4th Army - 24th Field Artillery - 4th Battalion - Battery "A," where he was transferred to Korea and assigned the duties of "target acquisition."

He attained the rank of Specialist 4 and his decorations included the Expert Rifle and Carbine Device and a Good Conduct Medal. Due to his expertise in firearms, he competed in many competitions during his tenure.

Comrade Zinke joined The American Legion on July 1, 1985, and on Aug. 4, 2014, he transferred to Phippsburg Post 216. He was awarded his 40 Year Continuous Service Certificate and Pin in 2024.

Post 216 held the "Draping of the Charter" and "Post Everlasting" Ceremonies in honor of Comrade Zinke at their meeting on Apr. 10.



**Ceremonies For Comrade Soule:** Left photo, Post 216 Chaplain Spear burns the military and Legion records of Comrade Richard "Dick" Soule, transferring him to the "Post Everlasting." Right photo, Post Chaplain Spear delivers a prayer at the "Draping of the Charter" and "Post Everlasting Ceremony" for Comrade Richard "Dick" Soule.



**Display Of Items And Photos** from the military career of Comrade Richard "Dick" Soule at his "Draping of the Charter" and "Post Everlasting Ceremony."

[More on "POST 216" Page 29](#)



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

## District 8 continued

### "POST 216"

(Continued from Page 28)

**Ceremonies For Comrade Zinke:** Top left photo, Phippsburg Post 216 Adjutant Mike Young places Comrade Harald Zinke's Legion Cap on the Brazier at his "Draping of the Charter" and "Post Everlasting Ceremony." Top right photo, Post 216 Sgt.-At-Arms Larry Swizdor, left, and Post Second Vice Commander Harvey Munsey, right, march the Brazier to the Rostrum at Comrade Harald Zinke's "Draping of the Charter" and "Post Everlasting Ceremony." Bottom photo, Comrade Harald Zinke's family and friends observe his "Draping of the Charter" and "Post Everlasting Ceremony."

All Photos by Chilloa Young



**Post Everlasting:** Phippsburg Post 216 Adjutant Mike Young, left, reads the names of past post members who have been transferred to "Post Everlasting" as Post Commander Ken Kellogg, right, observes.

Photo by Chilloa Young



**Continuous Service Certificate:** Phippsburg Post 216 Second Vice Commander Harvey Munsey, left, receives his 47-Year Continuous Service Certificate from Post Commander Ken Kellogg, right, at the Jan. 9 Post Meeting.

Photo by Post 216 Adjutant Mike Young

## 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 to Hold Memorial Day Service

Goodrich-Caldwell Post 6 will conduct a Memorial Day service on Mon., May 26 at 10:00 a.m. at the Memorial Monument in Legion Park in the Hallowell Cemetery. The guest speaker will be Mark Holmquist, who was a Sentinel Guard at the National Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The service will continue to Granite City Park. All community members, family, and friends are invited to join in remembrance of our veterans and loved ones. Following the ceremony, all are invited to the Post home at 114 Second Street for social exchange and refreshments.



**Oakland Post 51 Appreciation:** Dana Wrigley has been named Grand Marshall of the Memorial Day Parade to be held on Mon., May 26. On behalf of Decker-Simmons American Legion Post 51 in Oakland, Jeffrey Flye presents a Certificate of Appreciation to Dana Wrigley for his many years of distinguished service to the community of Oakland on Apr. 22. Left photo, left to right, Jeffrey Flye, Wally McKenney, Dana Wrigley, and Patrick Linehan. Right photo, left to right, Wally McKenney (behind Jeffrey), Jeffrey Flye, Dana Wrigley, and Patrick Linehan.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

## District 10

Fairfield Post 14; Skowhegan Post 16; Pittsfield Post 32; Madison Post 39; Bingham Post 99; Jackman Post 122; Hartland Post 141; Athens Post 192



**Officers Are Installed At Skowhegan Post 16** on May 5. Front row, left to right, District 5 Chaplain and Post 24 Historian Louie Marin, Post 16 2nd Vice Commander Linda Agiar, Post 16 Chaplain Ira Stoddard, Post 16 Americanism Officer Dave Dagneault, Post 16 First Vice Commander Terry Knowles, Post 16 Finance Officer Margaret Williams, Post 16 Commander and Historian Tina Richard, and Department Commander Tricia Thurston. Back row, left to right, Post 16 Service Officer Lee Couturier, Post 16 Sgt.-at-Arms Greg Shorey, and Post 16 Adjutant Roxann Hawes. Missing from the photos is Post 16 Judge Advocate Dave Bucknam.



**Department Commander Performs Installation:** Department Commander Tricia Thurston performed the officer installation ceremony at Skowhegan Post 16 on May 5. Tricia Thurston, right, and Post 16 Commander and Historian Tina Richard, left, pose for a photo at the ceremony.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT...

District 10 continued



**Post 16 Raffle Drawing:** Skowhegan Unit 16 member Annette Flannery, left, draws the winning ticket for fuel as Post 16 Sgt.-at-Arms Greg Shorey, right, holds the bucket.

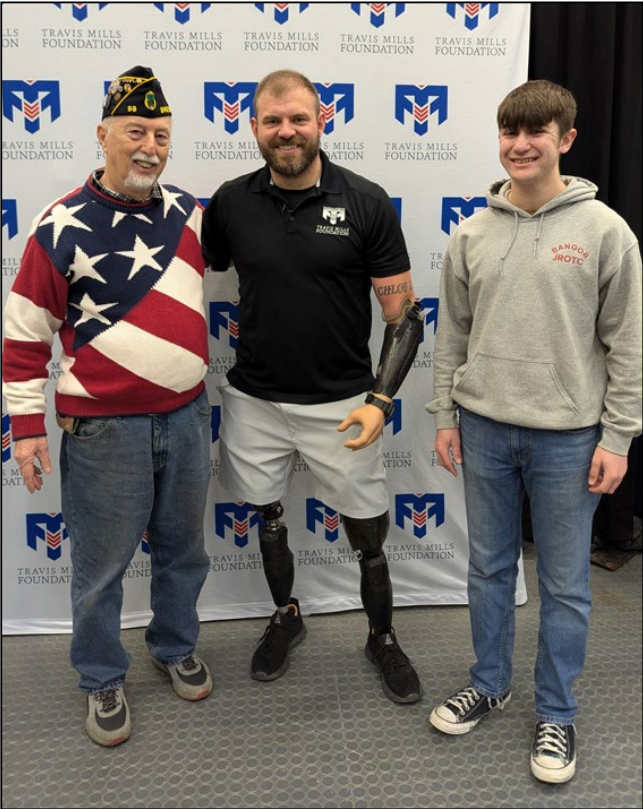
**Post 16 Celebrates American Legion's 106th Birthday:** Skowhegan Post 16 Commander and Historian Tina Richard, right, blows out the candles on the American Legion birthday cake while Auxiliary Unit 16 President Ann Spaulding, left, holds it.



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



**Brewer Post 98 Attends Vietnam Veterans Ceremony:** The Travis Mills Foundation hosted a ceremony for all Vietnam veterans at the Augusta Civic Center on Wed., March 26. Approximately 850-900 veterans and one guest were in attendance. Left to right, Brewer Post 98 Chaplain Paul Miller, Travis Mills Foundation Founder and President of Board of Directors Travis Mills, and Paul's grandson Ethan Christ, a sophomore and member of the Army Jr. R O.T.C. program at Bangor High School.

**Newport Post 105 Recognizes Scouts:** Top photo, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, center, presents Certificates of Honor to Tabitha Brewer, left, and Travis Brewer, right, for their accomplishments and participation in the Scouts program on Mar. 10 at Newport Post 105. Bottom left photo, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, right, presents Alex Brewer, left, with a Good Citizen Citation for becoming an Eagle Scout. Alex Brewer planned and built a shed for Newport Post 105. Bottom right photo, Alex Brewer, left, presents the keys to the shed building to incoming Post 105 Commander Kuespert, center, during the night's events while current Post 105 Commander Kimberly Lander, right, looks on.



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



**District 14 Meeting:** District 14 held its meeting in Brownville Jct. at Post 92 on Mar. 15. Left photo, District 14 Commander Dan Nutter, left, and Post 92 Commander Chris Crockett, right, stand behind the cake served at the meeting to celebrate the 106th Anniversary of The American Legion.

Submitted by District 14 Adjutant Brian J. Knowlton



**Dexter Post 53 Donation:** Dexter Post 53 Adjutant Tim Tiess, left, presents a \$100 donation check to Paul Zimmerman, right, on behalf of the Post on April 9. The donation will go towards bringing the Gold Star Memorial Wall to Guilford from July 3-6.



T a p s C o l u m n

POST	NAME	CONFLICT	POST	NAME	CONFLICT
Post 2 – Augusta	Henry N Fossett	Vietnam	Post 93 – Bucksport	Chester R Tweedie	Korea
Post 2 – Augusta	Albert C Haskell	Vietnam	Post 94 – Greenville	George C Murray Sr	Vietnam
Post 2 – Augusta	Joseph L Fortin	Vietnam	Post 94 – Greenville	Woodrouffe L Bartley Jr	Korea
Post 4 – Gardiner	David P Crocker	Vietnam	Post 97 – Howland	Philip E McPhail	Korea
Post 5 – Waterville	Lucien L Veilleux	Korea	Post 98 – Brewer	George E Mayo	Vietnam
Post 5 – Waterville	Robert D Houle	Korea	Post 98 – Brewer	Paul E Tower	Korea
Post 5 – Waterville	James A Stanhope	Vietnam	Post 98 – Brewer	Dolores F Hainer	Korea
Post 6 – Hallowell	Franklin D MacKenzie	Korea	Post 100 – Dixfield	Abraham Saphier	WWII
Post 9 – Machias	Steven J Richards	Vietnam	Post 118 – Mars Hill	Charles G Muncey	Lebanon/Grenada
Post 9 – Machias	Walter S Yaroeh	Vietnam	Post 123 – Kezar Falls	Carleton H Pulcifur, Jr	Vietnam
Post 9 – Machias	Leonard W Bowles	Korea	Post 128 – Standish	Lucien J Arsenault	Korea
Post 9 – Machias	John R Atwood	Korea	Post 134 – Alfred	Wayne G Littlefield	Korea
Post 19 – Sanford	Herbert A Young	Korea	Post 134 – Alfred	William L Ferrigno	Vietnam
Post 19 – Sanford	Steven U Roberge	Vietnam	Post 136 – Stockholm	Conrad J Guerrette	Korea
Post 19 – Sanford	Alfred R Lamontagne	Vietnam	Post 138 – Winterport	Benjamin L Mitchell	Vietnam
Post 20 – Brunswick	William H Tracy Sr	Korea	Post 142 – Peaks Island	Robert B Hurley	Unknown
Post 20 – Brunswick	George P Tetu	Korea	Post 143 – Wells	John Odonnell	Korea
Post 22 – Lewiston	Ralph L Baril	Korea	Post 147 – Madawaska	Arthur L Faucher	Vietnam
Post 22 – Lewiston	Cheryl Gray	Vietnam	Post 148 – Windham	Phillip M Napier	Vietnam
Post 23 – Baileyville	Edwin E Howe	Korea	Post 149 – Waldoboro	Richard Levensaler	Korea
Post 24 – Rumford	James A Salatino	Korea	Post 149 – Waldoboro	Edward C Gagnon	Korea
Post 24 – Rumford	Robert L Goding	Vietnam	Post 150 – Mechanic Falls	George R Daddona	Vietnam
Post 24 – Rumford	Roger Fournier	Korea	Post 153 – Auburn	Frank H Piscura	Vietnam
Post 24 – Rumford	Glen C Tompkins	Korea	Post 155 – Naples	Gerald F Kearney	USAF
Post 24 – Rumford	Robert Watson	Korea	Post 171 – Harpswell	Leslie McNelly	Vietnam
Post 30 – Camden	Ralph Knowlton	Korea	Post 171 – Harpswell	William E Allen	Vietnam
Post 34 – St. George	Donald R Choquette	Korea	Post 178 – Winslow	Edward L Dewitt	Korea
Post 35 – So. Portland	Robert Hughes	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Robert T Ferrante	Vietnam
Post 35 – So. Portland	Richard S Sipos	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	John Greenleaf	Korea
Post 35 – So. Portland	Boyce M Jackson	Korea	Post 178 – Winslow	Clement A Guyette	Vietnam
Post 35 – So. Portland	Danny P Darling	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Edward H Kelly	Korea
Post 39 – Madison	Edward B Spack	Korea	Post 178 – Winslow	John B Knox	Korea
Post 40 – Winthrop	Alvah E Donnell, Jr	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Dewey A Martin	Vietnam
Post 49 – Van Buren	Cherly L Martin	Persian Gulf	Post 178 – Winslow	William H Maynard	Vietnam
Post 52 – Oakfield	Peter L Gerow	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Leon R Moulton	Vietnam
Post 53 – Dexter	Emile F Ouellette	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Charles F Pine	Vietnam
Post 57 – Old Orchard	Jerome G Plante	Korea	Post 178 – Winslow	Waldena Pond	Vietnam
Post 58 – Buckfield	Donald F Kleeberger Jr	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Robert D Sisson	Vietnam
Post 58 – Buckfield	Daniel L Douglass	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Robert A Clark	WWII
Post 58 – Buckfield	Donald M Fish	Vietnam	Post 178 – Winslow	Francis H Ogorman	Vietnam
Post 59 – Pembroke	Elliott Tarbell	Unknown	Post 178 – Winslow	Douglas E Miller	Korea
Post 62 – Westbrook	William E Currier	WWII	Post 205 – Augusta	Charles R Lang Sr	Korea
Post 62 – Westbrook	Ronald P Doak	Korea	Post 207 – Trenton	Joseph Powell	Korea
Post 62 – Westbrook	Arthur R Leighton	Vietnam	Post 207 – Trenton	Raymond R Wood	Korea
Post 63 – Ellsworth	Vinal E Tainter Jr	Vietnam	Post 210 – Lewiston	Roger U Nadeau	Vietnam
Post 65 – Lubec	Marvin G Sawtelle	Vietnam	Post 210 – Lewiston	David E Gorey	Vietnam
Post 69 – SW Harbor	Daniel Chalmers	Vietnam	Post 214 – Lebanon	John Riemenschneider	Korea
Post 69 – SW Harbor	Jerry W Tapley	Vietnam	CN09 – St. Johns, Canada	David T Stinson	Korea & Vietnam
Post 74 – Kennebunk	Richard H Avy	Vietnam			
Post 77 – Lincoln	Ernest L Little	Vietnam			
Post 80 – Millinocket	Robert Miller	WWII			





## Attention: Next Deadline is July 18

The deadline for material, stories and/or pictures to be submitted for consideration for use in the **August 2025** issue of The Maine Legionnaire will be **July 18, 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](mailto:legionme@mainelegion.org) or

[rachael@mainelegion.org](mailto:rachael@mainelegion.org)

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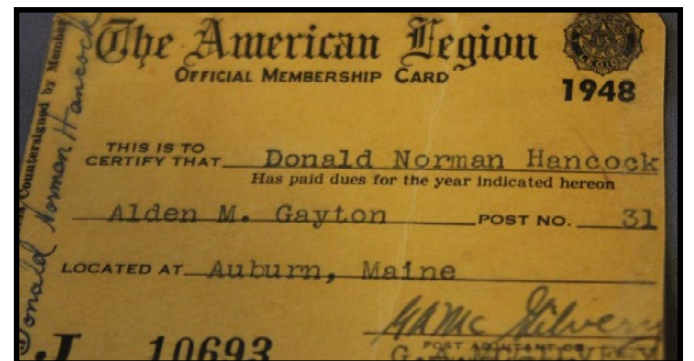
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To update your address, complete all sections of the above form and mail to: The American Legion, Department of Maine, 5 Verti Drive, Winslow, Maine 04901-0727, or register on-line by visiting [www.mylegion.org](http://www.mylegion.org)

### Brewer Post 98 Supports

Bangor High School's Army JROTC 89th Military Ball on Sat., May 3. Post 98 Commander Gary Freeman, right, and Post 98 2nd Vice Commander Sheri Nantkes Clark, left, present a Legion coin and Certificate of Achievement to CDT Captain Connor Hickson, center, who served as HHC Commander. CDT Cpt. Hickson, an Honors AP scholar, was recognized for his many contributions to school projects and activities, receives a \$40,000 scholarship. He plans to major in Computer Science and Electrical Engineering at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Thank you, Brewer Post 98 and the other posts in Penobscot County, for your continued support of Bangor's JROTC program.



**WWII/Korean War Veteran Visitation:** Top photo, Department Commander Tricia Thurston, left, visits WWII and Korean War veteran Donald Hancock, right, at the S. Paris Veterans home on Feb. 21. Don shared his craft of building models with Commander Thurston as well as many service-related stories. Bottom left photo, before leaving, Commander Thurston presented Don with her commander's pin to add to his cap. Bottom right photo, Don is a past member of Auburn Post 31, shown here on his 1948 Legion card, and a current member of Oxford Post 112.

Photos by Louie Marin

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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.