



AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF VERMONT

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February 2024 Bulletin

Messages from the Department Commander, Senior Vice Commander,
District Commanders, and County Commanders

- Mid-Winter DEC Minutes (Condensed) Dept. Adj. Brian Markwell
- Oratorical Program Information – Karlene DeVine, Dir.
- American Legion National Commander – Daniel Seehafer Visit – Banquet
- American Legion National Commander – Visit/Itinerary
- Legislative Chairman Information – PDC Richard Farmer, CH
- Membership Impact Report

Department Commander



Mark Cloutier

Greetings fellow Legionnaires,

Mid-Winter Conference has come and gone. I think that I can honestly say that it was successful.

We had some dignitaries from National in attendance. The Leading Candidate for National Commander James LaCoursiere Jr, and Donald Hall Jr, the National Commander for the Sons of the American Legion visiting. It is safe to say that they were impressed and had a wonderful time.

At the banquet, we had an incredibly special guest speaker, Lisa Murray-Hirbour, who is the granddaughter of Reverend George L. Fox. Vermont's own hero of the Four Immortal Chaplains whose selfless actions on that fateful night of February 3, 1943, saved the lives of many comrades including four soldiers they surrendered their life jackets to, after a fan of three German torpedoes struck the USAT Dorchester.

While I am on the topic of Reverend Fox, as you all probably know I am a non-voting member of the Reverend George L. Fox Memorial Chapel, and this is also one of my commander's projects. In this month's Legion magazine, there was a story printed that is upsetting. It mentions three posts that purchased the Gilman Methodist Church. This statement is not true. The three posts mentioned contain members who are on the RGLFMC board of directors who were logistically involved in the purchase of the church. The numerous donations, and contributions from American Legion Departments, American Legion posts, Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary Units, as well as numerous members of the Fox family, including VERY GENEROUS donations from the late Mary Fox Murray, daughter of Rev. George L. Fox, and Rev. Isadore H. Fox is what saved this church, not just the three posts mentioned in the article.

However, more than just the American Legion family made contributions for the purchase of this historic church. Many other VSOs, including the Chapel of the Four Chaplains & many of its members, the Free Masons & many community members who remember the family of Rev. George L. Fox all contributed to the purchase of the Rev. George L. Fox Memorial Chapel.

On February 3rd, the chapel will be holding its very first Four Chaplains Ceremony to honor the heroic actions of the four immortal chaplains, and I could not be more excited about this event. This event will be recorded to be viewed at a later date for those who cannot attend. Donations are still needed to help keep this Vermont Legacy alive. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done including making the building ADA compliant, repairing the restrooms and plumbing, as well as eventually a new roof to keep the church waterproof and dry for years to come.

If you wish to donate you can scan the QR code below that is set up for a Venmo account that will be deposited into an account for the Department of Vermont, or make a check payable to

the American Legion Department of Vermont Commander's project, PO Box 396, Montpelier, VT 05601-0396 I can be reached by email at post7adj@gmail.com

American Legion Dept of VT

@vtlegion



venmo

Scan this code to pay

Stay Healthy and Be Safe,

Mark Cloutier
Commander, Department of Vermont
For God and Country.



Sr. Vice Commander – Joseph Zickmund

Legionnaires,

If you missed the Mid-Winter Conference, you truly missed out. National Leading Candidate Jim LaCoursiere was in attendance, National Sons of the American Legion Commander Don Hall was in attendance, and most of your department leadership was in attendance. The information shared was valuable and insightful.

There was a moving Four Chaplains ceremony (with the granddaughter of Reverend George Fox participating) and much opportunity to meet with and talk with others from around the state. Hopefully we will see you this summer at the Annual Department Convention in June. If you want to grow as a Legionnaire, there is no better way to learn and be informed than attending conferences and conventions.

As I start preparations for the 2024-2025 year, reviewing department committees is an important step. I need you and your fellow veterans need you. We need people who want to be of service to other veterans – to other legion members. There are many ways to be of

service and to make a difference. Most are not too time-consuming. Please let me know if you have any interest.

A note on membership: We are middle of the road nationally with retention and recruitment. The first 6 months are the easiest and now we move into the more difficult second half of the year. The middle of the road is comfortable but leading by example is what we should strive for. We are “Vermont Strong”, as the slogan goes.

I greatly appreciate all that you do. We are in this together, and together we can make a difference.

For God, Country, and the American Veteran,

Joe Zickmund

Senior Vice Commander

Dept. Chaplain – Christina Moore

My fellow Legionnaires, I hope all are well and all are in good health. Mid-Winter Conference came off wonderfully and I was glad to see many in attendance.

A Prayer for Peace in the World.

“God, it seems that every time I turn on the news, the world gets a little worse each day. I know sin has ravaged this planet and that the world will lack complete peace until you return. Nevertheless, I ask that you intervene in the world and grant us peace. Help us to find more ways to love our neighbors and show the world your goodness”. Amen.

For God and Country,

Christina Moore, Dept. Chaplain

Department Membership Director – PDC, AltNEC, Catherine Tester

Multi-year membership opportunity to Renew or Join the American Legion

Eliminate the yearly hassle of remembering to renew your American Legion membership by taking advantage of the new multiyear membership available to current and potential members. Legionnaires needing to renew for 2024 or veterans joining the organization for the first time can lock-in a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/renew or legion.org/join.

A multiyear membership was approved by the National Executive Committee (NEC) of The American Legion during the organization’s Spring Meetings last May. Resolution 1: Purchase of

Multiple Years of Membership approves “a five-year pilot program offering the purchase of three consecutive 12-month member terms at the then current dues rate.”

Here is what you need to know about the three-year membership:

- Multiyear membership sign-up is only available on the national American Legion website.
- Current or potential members cannot renew or join for a three-year membership at the post level or department level.
- o Renew now with a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/renew.
- o Not a member - Join now with a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/join.
- Legionnaires already renewed for 2024 will soon be able to renew under the multi-year membership starting with the 2025 membership year.
- Payment for the three-year membership will be upfront.
- There is not a discounted rate with a three-year membership.
- Membership cards will still be sent annually by Legion posts.

Please note that the multiyear membership will work just like Paid Up For Life Program (PUFL). Whatever rate the member renews at is what the post/department/national will receive for the duration of that timeframe. For example, if a member renews today (before national per-capita \$5.00 dues increase becomes effective on July 1, 2024), National will receive \$18.50 for the next three years. Let’s say the department’s per capita is currently \$10.00 and is going to increase to \$12.00 on July 1, 2024. The department will receive the \$10 for the next three years. Once the member renews after the three-year renewal is up, the renewal rate will adjust to the rate at that time.

This is a pilot program and will be reevaluated and brought back to the NEC for its decision ... whether to continue or discontinue, with factual information gathered over the next few years.

Southern Area Commander – William Brothers

Hello everyone!

Well, it has been a while hope everyone had a great New Year. First off want to thank everyone for all the work you have been doing on membership and to let you know we are doing great and are on target. We are a little ahead of the February target number and hope the momentum keeps going, we are around 1700 away from our 100% goal great job.

We just had our Midwinter Conference and it was a great and successful event this year, the banquet was a great time with a band afterwards and was a blast .

I have been starting my visitations and I am looking forward to seeing more of you in the coming months, there is a lot of great things going on in our State at Post level and I can't wait to see more of what you are doing as a Legion Family.

We had a great Four Chaplains Ceremony at mid-winter, with one of the guests, a granddaughter of Reverend Fox and she was overwhelmed by the ceremony that we did and did speak about her grandfather and grandmother, it was a very moving moment as she told us about the story her mother and grandmother used to tell her growing up.

As most of you know about her grandfather's chapel in upstate Vermont there will be a ceremony there on February 3rd, I am looking forward to attending it and finally getting to see the chapel and all the history that is there about Reverend Fox. I know that there was notification sent out to Posts about this and I hope to see a great turn out for this. Mr. Fox was the only member of the four chaplains that was a legionnaire, and his wife was also very involved with the Auxiliary too.

As you all must have heard I am running this year for Sr. Vice Commander, if elected and am looking forward to working with incoming Commander Joe Zickmund and all of you towards making the Legion Family even stronger than we are as we all can do a little better at communicating and working on our goals.

When we all work as one, we can do anything and also, keeping with our national values on "Be the One" remember to always listen to someone that wants to talk and may looking for help. You could be the one to make a difference in his or her day by showing that you care and are there for them. Also, Buddy Checks are a great tool in letting Veterans know we care.

In closing, remember we are all Veterans helping Veterans and I thank you for all you do.

For God and Country,

Bill Brothers, Southern Area Commander

Department Adjutant – Brian Markwell

Hope everyone had a great holiday season and is ready for the New Year. It's February already and we just had our Mid-Winter Conference. At the conclusion of the conference, we had our DEC meeting at which time we discussed the frequency of the Newsletter. It had previously been sent out monthly and been reduced to quarterly. It was felt that we need more frequency in our communication, so we've implemented keeping the full-fledged newsletter to quarterly but sending out a monthly information supplemental bulletin to keep everyone up to date with activities and suspenses. Further information about the DEC meeting is contained in the minutes included elsewhere in this bulletin.

The Department Adjutant and Executive Administrator will be hitting the road again this year to conduct training sessions with the computer systems available to Posts and leadership personnel to better utilize the information available online. We will discuss membership processing, email distribution lists and spreadsheet creations along with other online possibilities to help better organize communications within your organization. We start in Newport on 17 February and will have at least a couple more in various areas of the state. Location, date and time coming soon. Feel free to attend any of the locations to best fit your schedule. Just let us know in advance which one you will be attending. Some host posts like to know ahead of time to plan for snacks and/or lunch requirements. These sessions are open to any and all Legion members as well as SAL members and not just specifically post adjutants. Anyone who would like to become more familiar with the online systems of the American Legion is welcome to attend. You may be surprised at what is possible and share thoughts as to what some are already doing with the systems.

Zoom meetings are a normal tool to be used for meetings throughout the entire Legion spectrum. The most recent one for county and district commanders was not well attended but from what I understand after missing some of the meeting myself, was very beneficial to those who attended if nothing more than to just bounce things off each other and learn from other's experiences. Nothing bad about a good "What about...?" phase of the discussion. I encourage more to become involved with these meetings to share with and learn from your fellow legionnaires.

For those of you who didn't attend the Mid-Winter conference, be advised that the 2024 summer convention will be held in the same location. Other than not getting in your daily 10,000 steps as we all did at the Sheraton/Double-Tree events, most of the comments were positive from the short distances between rooms to the quality of the food at the banquet to the low ceilings making it easier to hear what was going on. I encourage everyone to plan on attending the convention this coming June.

And after that of course is the National Convention in August to be held in New Orleans this year. We have our hotel already assigned to us with it being the Hampton Inn directly across the street from the convention center. No bus this year. Make sure if you're going as a delegate that you look for coordinating emails from Department HQ regarding room reservations so you can stay with the main body as well as coordinating instructions with schedules and calendar of events. It should be a great time and a lot of fun for everyone and especially those who have never attended a National Convention.

For God and Country.

Brian Markwell

Department of Vermont Adjutant

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Dept Mid-Winter Conference 2024
DEC Meeting – Saturday 20 Jan 2024
1320 hours – Hampton Inn, Colchester, VT

Opening ceremonies conducted by Dept. Commander Mark Cloutier

Roll Call conducted by Dept. Adjutant Brian Markwell. Quorum present.

Motion made and passed to accept the minutes of the last DEC meeting.

Financial report given by Assistant Dept. Finance Officer Dave Cobb. Motion made and passed to accept the finance report.

Post 28 update from PDC Linda Perham read by PDC Ron Larose. Post now has a full slate of officers. Widow of PDC Milt Willis has items of his she would like to return to Post 28.

Karlene Devine discussed that Front Porch Forum is an excellent marketing tool to increase the Legion's visibility and shared pricing information. Recommended that the department and Posts use the free service. She will send information to Melodie to have it forwarded to posts and individuals on her distribution list.

Motion made and passed to set up a free Front Porch Forum account.

Lyndon Post 30 needs help with paperwork on re-establishing their non-profit status with the IRS. Dept Adjutant will be working with them in completing the form.

Poultney has a new post commander. Richard Grey will become the commander effective in February.

Oratorical competition schedule and locations will be coming out soon.

Motion made and passed to accept the American Legion Rider's list of State officers.

Carl King from Post 21 will fill in as Orleans County Commander until convention.

Motion made to make the bulletin monthly amended motion to have the bulletin remain quarterly with a monthly update publication. Amended motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 1411 hours.

For God and Country

Brian Markwell

Dept of Vermont Adjutant

The Mid-Winter Conference in Six Photos

By Victor Stone, Dept. Historian



The first day of the Conference featured several key committee meetings. Commander Cloutier checking in on many of them; here he is participating in the discussion at the Finance Committee meeting.



Karen Boyce and Skyler from the Veterans Place describe the good work being done at their facility to support structured transition for homeless Veterans.



Membership is vital to the health of the Dept. of Vermont. Here Joe Zickmund and Cathy Tester share involvement statistics and strategies to grow Legion membership.



James A. LaCoursiere, Jr., the Leading Candidate for National Commander in 2024-2025, is an accomplished Legionnaire with a focus on Loyalty, Unity and Valor (LUV).



The Four Chaplain Ceremony is a moving way to kick off the second day of the Conference. The story of these heroes is inspiring.



Dozens of reports were presented by various Department Officers. Here, Dave Cobb, presents the Finance Report and later the Boys State Report.

2nd District Commander – David Perron

Legionaries, I hope this note finds you all well. Hope everyone enjoyed Mid-Winter, Sorry I was unable to attend due to a surgery.

District II, Great job with membership. Are % are below,

#7 (87.13) #30 (87.93) #53 (57.89) #58 (101.12) #41(94.74) #47 (96.12) #80 (86.39) #21 (78.57)
#23 (87.50) #28 (112.24) #76 (80.56).

Hats off to St Johnsbury first one in District II to be over 100%! And hats off to Post 28 also over 100%.

Membership is everyone's job not just leadership. Beat the bushes people!

County Commanders get out and visit your Post and do your Evals please text me or email Post complete.

Second District Commander, David W Perron

Phone 1-802-272-2793

perrondavid323@yahoo.com

3rd District Commander – Christopher Wood

Hello from District Three. Our communities in Washington, Orange, and Lamoille counties are deep into the winter season, and it seems like I am constantly getting notes about meals, dances, and other events around the area. At this point it seems like I should never have to cook, as there is a dinner somewhere almost every night of the week. There is also a buzz among all the posts as we approach the target dates for 85-100% membership as this is where things get tough. The mid-winter conference is now in the books, and I look forward to working as Assistant Director of the Vermont Legion Riders as we work to get more chapters together to support more Legion Programs. I hope everyone is doing well, and "Think Spring!"

The 2024 membership drive is in high gear, and as the Adjutant at my home post, I know the challenges well of getting that last 15% of your quota. In District 3, Lamoille County Post 46 in Johnson leads the way with 97% of their quota. Not too far behind, in Washington County is Post 75 in Waitsfield with 95% of their expected membership. Leading Orange County is Post 79 in Thetford with 94%. Kudos to these posts for your hard work and attention to this vital part of our organization. Another number that is encouraging is the 28 new members in Washington County with Northfield Post 63 leading the way with 10. Now what? Keep them engaged and show them what a great organization the American Legion is.

All this brings me to "what does the American Legion do for me?" I am still finding that the community and our own members still don't know how to answer this question. Every chance you get you have to tell the community about the children and youth programs, and never miss

a chance to talk about what we do for Americanism. Being a member is about way more than cheap beers at the bar, so make sure you are getting and reading the weekly legislative grassroots update. This document highlights the fight for Veterans Affairs at the national level. National security happens by never forgetting and continuing to serve. Keep up the good work, and I will see you at the Legion.

5th District Commander – Fred Wilson

Hello Legionnaires,

Just returned from a very successful Vermont Mid-Winter Conference at Hampton Inn in Colchester, Vermont from 19 to 20 January 2024. Friday the 19th was for Registration for Legion DEC members and the Legion Auxiliary, Committee Meetings on Finance, Rehabilitation, Internal Affairs and Legion Riders and the evening Banquet honoring Lisa Hirbour, the Granddaughter of Rev. George Fox and Isadore.

Saturday the 20th was for Registration and meetings on many topics including an impressive Four Chaplains Ceremony. Even though National is raising the dues in 2025 by \$5, Vermont will not increase for 2025, but stay tuned for later years.

Membership, membership, and membership are the soul of The American Legion! We are the American Legion Family, the Legion, the Sons, the Auxiliary and the Legion Riders. Loyalty, Unity and Valor. Be the One! Destigmatize asking mental health questions! You know when something isn't right. Don't hesitate to ask.

I would like to hold a meeting of the Windham and Windsor County Commanders in February. Post evaluation etc. Looking forward to a fun filled 2024!

Fred E. Wilson, Jr. fredwilson2016@hotmail.com or 9177630354.

For God and Country.

Just Fred

Rutland County - Richie Baptie

Greetings Legionnaires.

Hope that you are doing well. Those that attended the Midwinter Conference, I hope you enjoyed and learned a lot about membership and ways to recruit more members. As always, the speakers were outstanding and informative.

The past year I was able to attend most of the Post meetings and I am very happy to see how well they are doing, how committed they are to veterans, their members, and the community. The Four Chaplains Ceremony was outstanding for those that have not observed this ceremony before, learned a lot about why this ceremony is very important and dear to the American Legion.

For God and Country,

Richie-Richard Baptie
Rutland County Commander

Washington County Commander – Wayne Goulet

Legionnaires,

During the past few months, I had great visits with the leadership and fellow legionnaires at the Washington County posts. All posts are doing great things to support the Legion family and their community. While visiting the posts, members expressed interest in scheduling events involving Washington County posts such as a summer softball tournament/cookout. We are in the planning stage to make a softball tournament/cookout a reality. More information to follow.

Some posts face unique challenges. For example, the kitchen in the Montpelier Post needs to be renovated and a team is looking at various upgrade options. The Barre Post suffered approximately \$200K in damage from flooding last year. They have received some State funding to use towards flood recovery. However, this funding is significantly less than the flood losses the Post incurred. As such, the Post is in the process of evaluating the best way to use the funds provided by the State. The Waterbury Post is petitioning the town for \$4K to replace the fluorescent lights in the post with energy efficient LED lighting. Both the Barre and Waterbury Posts are looking to upgrade their Point of Sale (POS) systems.

If you are hungry, come to Washington County to satisfy those hunger cravings. For great food at a reasonable price visit Barre Post on Tuesday Night, Waterbury Post on Thursday Evening, and Northfield Post on Friday Night. The Northfield Post also serves breakfast on the first Sunday morning of each month.

Wayne Goulet

Windham County Commander – Steve Martin

Here we are, finally, it seems, looking Spring in the eye. As is often the case, there is the last-minute push to get memberships renewed. You Post Commanders and Adjutants are pretty much in the driver's seat when it comes to renewals. National has been airing what would seem to be really good ads promoting membership via social media. I hope if you see them on Facebook you make an effort to share them and expand on the audience.

The drop in membership is not unique to Vermont and needs to be addressed by both Posts and Department. My Post, Brattleboro Post #5, in 1999 had over 1400 American Legion members. That number has dropped to under 400 in 2023. The most significant loss has been to Post Everlasting and that is a heartbreaking reality. As I read through each month's membership renewal put out by Department it becomes pretty obvious that the problem is everywhere. The area that we can address is the annual loss of members due to a failure to renew. It is vital that an effort be put forth to contact delinquent members and encourage membership renewal. Many of these folks need nothing more than a gentle reminder to continue membership. Some may need just a little more convincing, but a phone call just may be the answer.

Another factor may be in volunteering. Almost every Post has a core group that picks up the bulk of the volunteer work. Part of the answer in keeping members is to keep them active. That member that spends time working on Post activities is usually more apt to renew. Keep as many members as possible involved.

For God and Country

Steve Martin, Windham County Commander

ORATORICAL PROGRAM – Karlene DeVine, Dir.

Oratorical, "the art or practice of public speaking." Oratorical speech, "the rationale and practice of persuasive public speaking". Now, wouldn't that be refreshing from the diatribe that frequents the news and political speeches these days?

The American Legion nurtures civil discourse through the Oratorical Program. Civil discourse promotes mutual understanding. On Sat. March 16th, come hear some promising Vermont high school students demonstrate their understanding of the U.S. Constitution through this scholarship opportunity in the Oratorical Program.

Oratorical Finals

Department of Vermont American Legion

Sat. Mar. 16, 2024, 10 AM Doors open to public

Barre Unitarian Universalist Church, 19 Church St. Barre, VT 05641

9 AM Contest Personnel arrive

9:30 AM Students arrive

Lunch will follow the final ceremonies and awards

HELP needed: escorts, ushers, food service, desserts, judges, tabulator (using Excel spreadsheet) Contact Karlene (802) 377-7380

Needed to sustain the 2024 scholarships (\$2750) and expenses of the program. Please send a check designated to the Oratorical Program to Department of Vermont, American Legion, PO Box 396, Montpelier, VT 05601-0396

There will be 3 contestants (District 1, District 3, District 4). District 2 contestant withdrew as did one of 4 contestants in District 3.

The American Legion's Americanism Division, would like to extend an invitation to you to serve as a volunteer at the American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest Finals, May 17-19, 2024. Please be assured that while volunteer time is a commodity greatly appreciated and highly valued by our organization, we want to ensure your awareness that The American Legion National Headquarters will not provide any financial compensation for your time or travel expenses associated with your volunteer support of the 2024 American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest.

This special event showcases 53 our country's best and brightest youth as they present their thoughts on one of our country's most important documents in our nation's history, the Constitution of the United States of America!

The contest will take place at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan. Contests quarterfinals and semi-finals will be held on Saturday, May 18, 2024, with the finals to be held on Sunday, May 19, 2024. <https://www.legion.org/oratorical/volunteer>

The Forty and Eight” Grande du Vermont, Voiture Locale 646 News



Chef de Gare, Fred LaTour (R), presents Larry Thompson (L) with a certificate of 10 years continuous membership in The Forty and Eight. Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024, at the quarterly meeting of “*The Forty and Eight*” GRANDE du VERMONT, VOITURE LOCALE 646

Larry Thompson was awarded recognition for 10 continuous years of membership.

The Forty & Eight was founded in 1920 by American veterans returning from France. Originally an arm of The American Legion, the Forty & Eight became an independent and separately incorporated veteran's organization in 1960. Membership is by invitation, and open only to honorably discharged veterans and honorably serving members of the United States Armed Forces.

Voiture Locale 646 focuses on providing

nurses’ training scholarships for students attending college or university within Vermont.

Thompson is a 14-year member of Barre American Legion Post 10. In 2020, he was selected to serve the Vermont Department of the American Legion as the Department Service Officer where his duties include but are not limited to aiding veterans with claims for disabilities, grave markers, health care, death indemnity compensation for spouses, pension claims, homelessness and housing.

Legislative Chairman – PDC, Richard Farmer

Dear Legionnaires:

It was good to see some of you at Mid-Winter. As I said there, I would have more information in February.

As you know, the legislature reconvened on 3 January 2024. This is a carry-over year so all bills in committee from last year are considered active.

Different things may happen to the bill. It may remain in committee and die then, or it may be rewritten and resubmitted. Most will remain in their original form.

H255 0 Tx exempt bill will be resubmitted. Let us hope it can get some traction this year.

The best thing we can do to help is call the Chairman of the “Ways and Means” or Government Ops. And Military Affairs. Let them know we want this legislation acted upon. Also, call your local Representative and let them know how you feel.

The following list of bills is the Legislation that is waiting to be acted on.

May our Military be safe.

For God and Country,

Richard Farmer, PDC/PNEC

Legislature Chairman

2023/2024 Veteran/Military Related Legislation

Updated 01/25/2024 ALL BILLS REMAIN IN COMMITTEE
New Bills (2024) are in Green

House:

- **H.26:** This bill proposes to exempt the state active duty subsistence and quarters allowance paid to resident and nonresident members of the National Guard from income tax in Vermont. *Assigned to Ways & Means.*
- **H.43:** This bill proposes to include military protection orders within the definition of foreign protection orders that are recognized and enforced in Vermont. *Assigned to Judiciary.*
- **H.59:** This bill proposes to allow the immediate family of a deceased veteran to apply for the correction, completion, or amendment of a death certificate to accurately record that the death was caused or hastened by a service-connected injury or illness. *Assigned to Gov Ops & MIL Affairs.*
- **H.71:** This bill proposes to extend the issuance of Department of Motor Vehicles credentials and number plates with a veteran designation to individuals disabled during active duty for training. *Assigned to Transportation.*
- **H.153:** This bill proposes to make numerous changes to Vermont's tax laws, including to personal income tax, meals and rooms tax, sales and use tax, property valuation, use value appraisal, and property transfer tax. *Assigned to Ways & Means.*
- **H.168:** This bill proposes to: (1) require the Vermont Office of Veterans' Affairs to develop and maintain a database of veterans in Vermont with any information that is collected exempt from public inspection and copying; (2) waive 100 percent or 50 percent of the registration fee for certain motor vehicles upon proof that the registered owner or co-owner is a veteran who received a discharge under other than dishonorable conditions; and (3) increase the portion of U.S. military retirement pay that is exempt from the Vermont personal income tax. *Assigned to Gov Ops & MIL Affairs.*
- **H.246:** This bill proposes to require that intake forms used by the Departments for Children and Families; of Vermont Health Access; and of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living seek information as to whether an applicant or family member has ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces. *Assigned to Human Services.*
- **H.255:** This bill proposes to exempt all military retirement income and military survivor income received by surviving spouses or dependents from income tax in Vermont. *Assigned to Ways & Means.*
- **H.264:** This bill proposes to exempt disability and pension income for veterans who are permanently and totally disabled from the calculation of household income for purposes of determining the homestead property tax credit. *Assigned to Ways & Means.*

- **H.368:** This bill proposes to amend the powers and duties of the Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Board to require the Board to provide financial and technical assistance for new farmers, veteran farmers, and disadvantaged farmers in order to increase opportunities for more persons to enter farming in the State. *Assigned to Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry.*
- **S.29:** This bill proposes to include military protection orders within the definition of foreign protection orders that are recognized and enforced in Vermont. *Assigned to Judiciary.*
- **S.118:** This bill proposes to exempt all military retirement income and military survivor income received by surviving spouses or dependents from income tax in Vermont. *Assigned to Finance.*
- **S.256:** This bill proposes to extend the issuance of Department of Motor Vehicles credentials and number plates with a veteran designation to individuals disabled during active duty for training. *Assigned to Transportation.*
- **S.264:** This bill proposes to require the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to design and issue special plates for use on certain motor vehicles to applicants who have received the Distinguished Flying Cross or Silver Star and to codify the issuance of special plates currently offered to veterans and members of the U.S. Armed Forces. *Assigned to Transportation.*



Mark Your Calendars - Upcoming Events

Mylegion.org Training – Newport Post 21
Saturday, February 17th 10 am to 1 pm - All Posts and Squadrons Welcome!

National Commander Daniel Seehafer Visit to Vermont
Banquet at Colchester Post #91 – Thursday, March 28th
(Banquet Flyer in Bulletin)

April 14th DEC Meeting – 12 Noon
Barre Post #10

Directory Changes:

(Page 16) Sgt At Arms Dale Manning Correct Email: si8mo63@gmail.com

(Page 14) PDC, Clark “Sparky” Ferris correct address: 5 Corti Street, NOT Lane

(Page 12) Judge Advocate Keith Arlund correct Tel. Number is: 802-282-5901

Post Everlasting....Gone but never forgotten.

POPPLER, SCOTT	01	BEEBE, JOHN	49
ROBERTS, FREDERICK	05	ZEOLI, NICHOLAS	49
RICHARDS, STUART	08	SAVAGEAU, RONALD	49
CHEVALIER, DAVID	12	MALLORY, JOHN	55
GROSS, DAVID	12	FIARKOSKI, JOSEPH	63
HIGGINS, RONALD	13	BROWN, JAMES W.	69
HYDE, PAUL	13	CARSTEN, ROBERT	76
FAIRLEY, JAMES	13	POWERS, STEPHEN	76
ENO, EDWARD	13	WAITE, RICHARD	60
GIBBS, RORY	14	BREWER, ELWIN	80
BROUGHTON, HENRY	14	MCKENNEY, MORRIS	80
HILL, JARRELL	19	LOUGEE, BRIAN	80
WALLACE, THOMAS L.	19	BAILEY, WILLIAM	80
LATTRELL, LANCE	19	POTTER, FRANCIS	88
DIKE, LLOYD	19	WIGGER, ANTHONY	90
COUSINO, PETER	19	GELINAS, EDWIN	91
SWENSON, RICHARD	20	BROOKS, HILTON	91
COBURN, FOSTER	21	RICKERT, MICHAEL	91
HINTON, BRIAN	23	ANGOLANO, RICHARD	91
FORSTER, CLIFFORD	28	MONTOUR, EUGENE	CN01
HOUSTON, MATTHEW	29		
RIDLON, ALAN	31		
HARRIS, RAY	37		
KELLY, JAMES	39		
DURNO, PETER	47		
BROUSSEAU, WALDO	47		



THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF VERMONT

**The American Legion National Commander - Daniel Seehafer's
Visit to Vermont - Banquet**

Colchester Post 91, 3650 Roosevelt Hwy, Colchester

Thursday, March 28, 2024

SOCIAL – 5:00 – 6:00 P.M

DINNER – 6:15 P.M.



Yankee Pot Roast

The above will be served with Fresh Tossed Salad, Rolls, and Double Chocolate Fudge Cake
Coffee and Tea

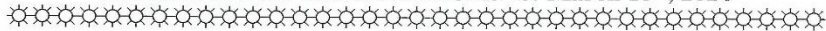
\$16.00 per person

Make Checks Payable to American Legion Department of Vermont and

SEND CHECKS TO:

Dept. HQ, P.O. Box 396, Montpelier, VT 05601-0396

DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS IS: March 18th, 2024



PLEASE RESERVE:

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

NAME: _____

(Circle) POST AUX S.A.L.

American Legion National Commander – Daniel Seehafer VISIT/Itinerary

ARRIVAL: THURSDAY MARCH 28TH 12:30 P.M. –

BURLINGTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 1200 Airport Dr., So. Burlington, VT

Lunch 1:15 p.m. The Lighthouse Restaurant, 38 Lower Mountain View Dr., Colchester, VT

802-448-3361

HOTEL AFTER LUNCH – Down Time before Banquet

Hampton Inn by Hilton, Colchester, 42 Lower Mountain View Dr., Colchester VT (802- 655-6177)

National Commanders Banquet – Colchester Post 91,

3650 Roosevelt Hwy, Colchester, VT (802-872-7622)

5:00 P.M. – Social

6:15 P.M. Dinner

Return to Hotel after Dinner

(POC: Cmdr. Cloutier 802-371-8097)

(Group for Thursday pickup: Cloutier, Scanlon, Markwell, and Manning)

FRIDAY, MARCH 29TH

8 A.M. Breakfast at Hampton Inn by Hilton, 42 Lower Mountain View Dr., Colchester, VT

After Breakfast drive to:

10:00 A.M. The Vermont National Guard Library

and Museum at Camp Johnson, 789 VT Nat 'l Guard Rd., Colchester, VT (802-338-3360)

11:15 A.M. Leave Museum and drive to:

Army Mountain Warfare School – Camp Ethan Allen Training Site,

100 Lewis Chapel Rd., Jericho, VT (802-899-7202)

1 P.M. Lunch in Jericho (TBD)

2:30 p.m. Visit at Burlington Lakeside VA Clinic (CBOC) 120 Lakeside Ave., Burlington VT

802-657-7000

3:00 P.M. Head to Burlington Airport for 4:30 P.M. Flight Out

(POC: Dept. Adjutant Brian Markwell 802-999-1026)

(Group for Friday: Cmdr. Cloutier, Scanlon, Markwell, McKnight, Manning)

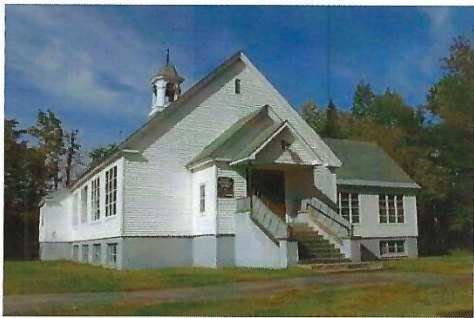
(2/6/24 Tentative Itinerary, Subject to change)

Mark Cloutier – Department Commanders Project

This year's Commanders project will be a Dual project. Both of which are very important.

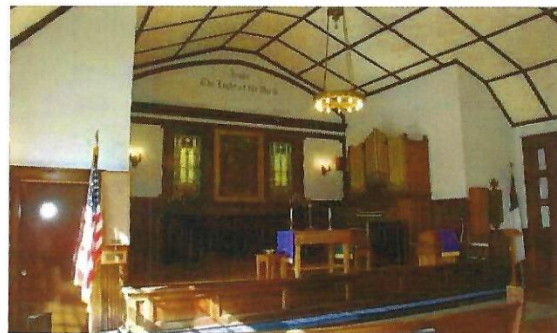


The Department of Vermont Auxiliary President Debi Graziano and I have decided to continue helping raise donations for Josh's house #2. This will aid in raising contributions to help Valerie Pallotta raise the funds that she needs to open a facility in the Northeast Kingdom. The Northeast Kingdom of Vermont has the least amount of Veterans resources in the state of Vermont, and hopefully, this will help.



Secondly, I would like to raise donations and awareness for the Rev George L. Fox Memorial Chapel. Now that the church in Gilman, VT has been purchased, funds still need to be raised for the building to be upgraded to become ADA-compliant. This will be done through grants which require funds to match the grant award. This can be accomplished with the help of you, the posts within the Department of Vermont. This can be done through a one-time donation or by becoming a sponsor of the chapel by

making a monthly, quarterly, or annual donation. For those that don't know this chapel plays a key part in the history of the American Legion. This is the home church of the oldest and most decorated of the four chaplains, Reverend George L. Fox. This church is also the home of the American Legion Moore Fox Post 41 and will be the site of the 4 Chaplains ceremony that will be held on 3 February 2024.



**** Make checks Payable to Commander Cloutier Project, Dept. HQ's, P.O. Box 396, Montpelier, VT 05602-0396**

In check memo line please write which project your donation applies to.

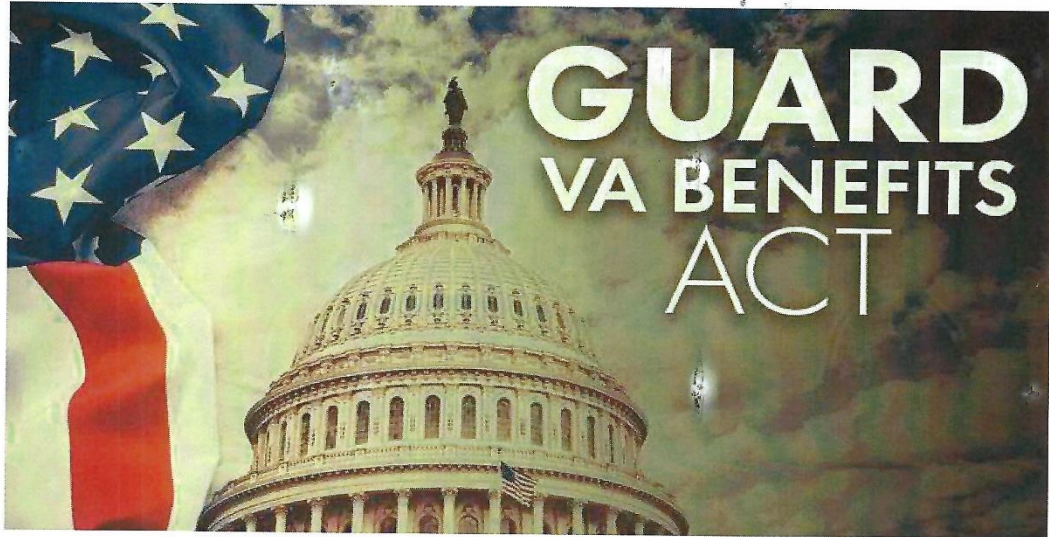
2023 - 2024 NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP TARGET DATES

EARLY BIRD/NEF KICKOFF	SEPTEMBER 13, 2023	50%
FALL MEETINGS	OCTOBER 18, 2023	55%
VETERANS DAY	NOVEMBER 15, 2023	65%
PEARL HARBOR DAY	DECEMBER 13, 2023	75%
MID-WINTER	JANUARY 18, 2024	80%
PRESIDENT'S DAY	FEBRUARY 14, 2024	85%
LEGION BIRTHDAY	MARCH 13, 2024	90%
CHILDREN & YOUTH	APRIL 10, 2024	95%
ARMED FORCES DAY	MAY 15, 2024	100%
DELEGATE STRENGTH	30 DAYS PRIOR TO NATIONAL CONVENTION	

Target dates fall on the second Wednesday of the month unless there is a holiday on that day or at the beginning of that week. Some target dates were moved to the third week to maximize end of year renewal notices.

Since Columbus Day falls on a Monday, the October target date will be on a Wednesday.

To maximize the December renewal notice, the January target date will be on the third Thursday of the month because of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.



VOICES

"Some veterans are being taken advantage of while others are content to pay the exorbitant fees."

- American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission Chairman Autrey James after the National Executive Committee passed, by email vote, a Dec. 12 resolution clarifying the organization's stance against unaccredited parties charging fees and percentages of compensation due to veterans in their VA disability claims



\$62.1 billion

Amount in disability compensation awarded to veterans between 2020 and 2023 after free assistance from accredited American Legion service officers.



43,154

Number of appeals cases handled free of charge by American Legion staff representatives, 2021-23, for veterans who disputed their VA claims decisions. Successful appeals provided more than \$264 million in relief for those veterans during that three-year span.



\$368,686

Highest single retroactive payment secured for one veteran who appealed an initial VA benefits claim decision in December after free assistance from American Legion staff representatives.



64

Number of American Legion service officers who received accreditation in December to represent veterans in their VA claims processes.



4,223

Number of cemeteries where some 3 million graves of veterans were decorated in Wreaths Across America activities, strongly supported by American Legion Family groups nationwide, in December.



\$68,000

Amount of an American Legion Operation Comfort Warriors grant, the largest ever, awarded to the Central Alabama Veterans Healthcare System Nov. 30 that will be used to purchase smart TVs, video games, iPads, golf equipment for a newly modified and wheelchair-accessible mini-golf course and more to help recovering veterans relieve stress and to help them socialize with others.



75

U.S. Flag Code inquiries handled by The American Legion Americanism Division in December.



\$4,000

Value of toys and clothing donated Dec. 12 by The American Legion Family of Post 3 in Alexandria, La., for the Rapides Parish Sheriff's Office for distribution to children in need before Christmas.



\$16,560

Amount in American Legion national youth scholarships awarded in December.



21,000+

Christmas cards sent in December to deployed members of the U.S. Armed Forces, to go along with 40 care packages, from American Legion Family members of Pat Tillman Post 117 in Phoenix.



72.3%

Percentage increase in total audio downloads (120,122) of The American Legion's Tango Alpha Lima podcast in 2023 compared to downloads in 2022.



\$5,280

Amount in American Legion Child Welfare Foundation grants awarded in December to organizations that assist young people facing difficulties.

VOICES

"There's no shame in the game. Let's get them the help they need. They answered the nation's call. I'm very happy we're taking this stance."

- American Legion Department of New Jersey Executive Committeeman Tony Gladden, a contractor for the Army Reserve at Fort Dix, who has been promoting RED Friday and the national Be the One veteran suicide prevention mission to his co-workers



17,360

Rounds of ceremonial ammo distributed in December to 12 American Legion departments and 23 posts through the National Security Commission-managed Military Surplus Program. For the year, the program has distributed 307,520 rounds, 2,206 rifles, 2,000 clips and 18 static displays.