



# AMERICAN LEGION

## DEPARTMENT OF VERMONT

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### SEPTEMBER 2023

### Bulletin

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

- Oratorical Update
- “Mark your Calendars”
- Legion Membership Impact Report
- National Commander Elect – Daniel Seehafer Intro
- Opera Company of Middlebury, Production of “Glory Denied”

## Department Commander



### *Mark Cloutier*

National Convention has come and gone. This year was a good convention with lots of great speakers. One that really stuck with me was a fireside chat with Retired Navy Seal Master Chief Sean Dowling, Retired US Navy Seal Senior Chief Mark Tangney, and Chip Ganassi Racing Extreme E team manager Dave Berkenfield had a frank and open discussion about the personal struggles that illustrates the realities of veteran suicide. This talk was un-edited, and they spoke from the heart. This talk proves that the BE THE ONE effort works. Here is the link to the talk. [https://youtu.be/CbM2a7uY\\_x4?si=zs5oxiixfxSDmP8m](https://youtu.be/CbM2a7uY_x4?si=zs5oxiixfxSDmP8m). Just a

warning. This is in raw form and contains some language. This was an actual conversation between the 3 of them. Please watch until the end. At the end, our very own Lew Graham took the microphone and asked for the floor. He then proceeded to put a challenge out to the floor to pass the hat and raise money for Mark Tangney's \$100,000 in medical bills that are not being covered. In the end, this challenge raised \$6001.00 in donations. I just want to say, GREAT JOB LEW!

BE THE ONE is a great effort and it does work. Please folks if you see someone that is struggling, please reach out to them and just talk to them. Ask them how they are doing, ask them if there is anything that you can do for them, and ask if there is anything that they need. I know that I have been practicing this with someone who means a lot to me and has become a great friend. This person knows that my phone is always on and can call me when needed, no matter what the time is. This also goes for each and every one of you. So please BE THE ONE to reach out, BE THE ONE to listen, BE THE ONE to someone who is struggling with how they are doing. Just saving one life helps!

Now that the convention is done, I will be starting my visits to post throughout the state. First, I am going to try and visit all of the smaller posts, I will be sending emails to post adjutants and commanders about a possible visit. Also, if you have any events coming up, please let me know and I will be glad to come and visit.

can be reached at 802-371-8097, by Facebook messenger, or by email at [post7adj@gmail.com](mailto:post7adj@gmail.com)

Stay safe, Stay Healthy!

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

 AMERICAN  
LEGION

BE THE ONE



## **Sr. Vice Commander – Joseph Zickmund**

Although I've had the opportunity to speak with some of you personally, I want to thank everyone who encouraged and supported my efforts to become your Senior Vice Commander. It's humbling and such an honor to be chosen by America's heroes. I'll do my best to deserve your confidence.

During many conversations at convention, a common topic was "we need younger veterans to join us". Some had ideas on how we might encourage greater participation and I heard more than once that we have to be more than a bar to get their attention. The truth is that we are more than a bar. I might even say that a bar is the least of who we are. There are American Legion Posts all over the United States that have no bars at all and yet survive and thrive. The social aspect of a place to sit and visit with friends and like-minded patriots is a wonderful thing. A benefit to many.... but it shouldn't define who we are.

Several years ago, I completed the American Legion Institute training. It's a really great introduction of who we are. Not long ago, someone recommended I do the newer Basic Training course, too, so shortly before the convention I decided the refresher was a good idea. To anyone who has not done so or previously completed the old course, I highly recommend it. It was a wonderful reminder of who, what, how and why we are. The programs and benefits that exist because of The American Legion are fantastic, the good we do is immeasurable, and the lives touched and changed for the better because of the American Legion should be part of every recruitment conversation.

They're right - we need to bring in younger veterans. They're also right, it's going to take more than a bar to do it. Let's put our heads together and figure it out.

For God, Country, and the American Veteran,

Joe Zickmund

Senior Vice Commander

# **BE THE ONE**

**988 is the universal telephone number of the national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline. Remember it and use it if necessary.**

## **NECman – Tom Scanlon**

Fellow Legionnaires:

Just a quick note... At the National Convention in August, during the National Executive Committee meeting it was voted and approved to increase Legion membership dues by \$5.00 dollars. This increase will take effect in 2025.

Tom Scanlon, PDC & NECman

## **Southern Area Commander – William Brothers**

Well, hello everyone, hope all is well now that we are back from the National Convention.

It was a great trip and very informative at the meeting I attended. We did have some great Guest Speakers this year. The one that impressed me was the officer from the movie "Top Gun" that was flying with Tom Cruise in the movie and the video he presented on it, the story with filming it on what was real and what was not was fascinating. We also worked on a lot of Resolutions this time, the one I was glad that passed regarded Service Dogs and First Responders. Service Dogs can now be buried in Arlington Cemetery. That was one of the Resolutions we voted on.

I met so many new Legion members and had some great conversations with many of them, regarding what their Posts are doing now that "Covid" is not controlling us on what we can do. One Post said that they have done great with renewing membership holding a weekly cookout for their community invited and also doing family events at the same time with games and activities. Their membership has grown with the younger vets showing up with their families.

I will be working with my Districts Commanders and Membership Director - Catherine Tester to set up a round table meeting soon on what we can do regarding membership and ways to bring in our younger Veterans to see what they need and want from us. Also, to guide them on managing ways for filling VA claims or to let them know who to contact for this information.

I would like to thank our Department Adjutant for all he did for us at Convention and does at State level, also want to thank Melodie for everything she dose for us up at HQ's, especially for what she did when HQ's was flooded, she went way beyond what is expected from her to get all of our things out of harm's way that she could and got us back up and running from her home. She has done an outstanding job so everyone should let her know and say thank you again. I also want to thank everyone that attended this year's National Convention and all the help I received while there.

Our new National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer is very excited about the up-and-coming year, he is going to be working on BE THE ONE again this year and has some great ideas for us to work on for membership goals. Also want to shout out to our outgoing National Commander by saying thank you for his outstanding Job last year, and good luck on his next adventure.

Well in closing I am looking forward to visiting you all at your Posts and seeing what I can do for you all or what ideas you have for us to keep our membership going and what events you have in the future, thank you all for what you do. Let's work together on success. THANK. YOU ALL

For God and Country,

Bill Brothers, Southern Area Commander

## Department Adjutant – Brian Markwell

Another year has come and gone. Summer is here in full force and Fall on the way. Department elections are done and now we have returned from the National Convention in Charlotte, NC. If you were one of our delegates, Thank you. It was a rewarding experience to see how the American Legion conducts its business. We enjoyed the comradery of being among thousands of fellow veterans and family members, hearing inspirational speakers give exciting presentations covering multiple issues pertinent to today's veterans. And that's just the formal sessions. The time with your fellow Vermonters and other Legionnaires from all over the country is well worth the trip and more.

The flood in July made a mess of the Department Headquarters building. The basement was completely flooded as well as all the electrical wiring and breaker boxes located down there. We were told it would be 2 to 4 months before we could get back into the building. Melodie worked from home during this time. The good news is that we are back in the building after a month and a half and the water did not get up to the first floor, so the office was not touched. During this time, we forwarded the form for individuals and Posts to apply for emergency funding. Many counties in Vermont have been declared disaster areas making the application process much easier to get approved. Remember to include receipts and pictures with the application. If you didn't get the application form, let me know and we can forward one to you directly.

Fall Conference is coming up October 21<sup>st</sup> at Post 14 in Vergennes. Hope to see many of you there. We will also have more Adjutant and Post Officer training sessions around the state. Look for dates and locations in your area. Northeast Region NVC – William Roy will be attending, and I am sure PDC Ferris will have an informative agenda for all attending.

I look forward to another year being your Department Adjutant and doing anything and everything I can in supporting your work for the veteran family of our American Legion Family.

Respectfully,

Brian D. Markwell,  
Dept. Adjutant

### Post Everlasting – Gone, but never Forgotten...

BOUCHARD, CLIFFORD .....	01	ECKHARDT, WILLIAM .....	16
COLBURN, VERNE .....	01	DIX, DANA .....	17
BURNOR, ALLARD .....	01	CLAPPER, FRANCIS .....	19
PLATTNER, ALOIS .....	01	LORD, JOSEPH .....	19
MALBOEUF, MICHAEL .....	01	THURSTON, SR., FORREST .....	20
FITZGERALD, JAMES .....	01	PAGE, GERALD .....	20
PILLSBURY, LEO .....	01	LEWIS, JAMES .....	24
KEMP, GEORGE .....	01	CROFT, RODNEY .....	24
HANCOCK, JOHN .....	01	LUSSIER, ROBERT .....	24
FORCE, KENNETH .....	08	STUART, KEVIN .....	26
GILLANDER, RICHARD .....	10	KENDALL, RICHARD .....	26
FRIGON, MICHAEL .....	10	CAMPBELL, JAMES .....	26
DIBBLE, PHILIP .....	16	BOUCHER, ROLAND .....	26

MILLS, GORDON ..... 43  
 WATTER, DONALD ..... 43  
 WOOLEY, CHARLES ..... 43  
 HOLMQUIST, STANLEY .....43  
 DUBE, JOSEPH ..... 48  
 LANDON, CHESTER ..... 55  
 GREEN, MAYNARD ..... 59  
 PREMIO, ARMAND ..... 60  
 ARNOLD, ERWIN ..... 60  
 BARRY, THOMAS ..... 80  
 HILL, JR., ALDIS ..... 80

TEAGUE, ROBERT ..... 88  
 OLNEY, RALPH ..... 91  
 BURNETT, NORMAN ..... 91  
 BANWARE, JAMES ..... 91  
 LEFEBVRE, NELSON ..... 91  
 LARMAY, ROBERT ..... 91  
 HENDEE, IVAN ..... 91  
 KITTREDGE, DOUGLAS .....1819  
 DAY, GORDON ..... CN01

## A Few Highlights of the 104<sup>th</sup> Annual Dept. of Vermont Convention

By Victor Stone, Dept. Historian



The 2023 Department of Vermont Annual Convention is now history; but as with most historical events there are impressions that linger. Four instances that stood out to me were:

The election and installation of our new Department Commander, Mark Cloutier. A change in senior leadership is always an important event as it signals a new tone and some adjusted priorities for the organization. We all wish Mark a successful and enjoyable year in this important leadership role.

A standout feature of the Convention Banquet was a presentation given by Major General (VSM)

Mark Anarumo the president of Norwich University. His talk was interesting, inspiring, and a testament to the power of education and the personal growth inherent in military service.

This year the prestigious honor of being named Vermont’s Legionnaire of the Year was bestowed on David Cobb of Colchester Post #91. Dave has for many years been the driving force behind the Green Mountain Boys State program; and he





has done a fine job implementing a strong succession plan as he steps away from operational involvement. Further, he has been instrumental in attending to all the details associated with closing the Milton Post on behalf of the Dept. of Vermont.

Finally, the attendees of the Convention were privileged to hear from Valerie Pallotta, Board President of Josh's House, a veterans transitional wellness center. Val thanked the entire Legion family for their support; not only for being instrumental in helping to launch the project but also for the long-term assistance of maintaining and growing Josh's House programs.



## **Membership Chairman – Joseph Zickmund, Sr. Vice Commander**

I just left Convention in North Carolina and I'm here to tell you it was an awesome trip. The crowning jewel was the election and installation of the new National Commander but the messages throughout was clear: service to others.... service to veterans to be exact, is the most important thing we do. The motto "Be the One" rang throughout. Be the One to save a life, Be the One to make a difference, Be the One who leads the charge to better the lives of others. Be the One. Every member matters and every life matters.

As a Post Officer or member, our view is narrow. We spend so much time keeping the doors open we can lose sight of all the wonderful programs we have. My vow to you, and I hope you'll follow my example at the Post level, is to further these programs at Department level. We do so much good, we save lives, and we make lives better. Let's do more of that.

Joe Zickmund  
Senior Vice Commander



## **2<sup>nd</sup> District Commander – David Perron**

Hope all is well fellow Legionnaires. With all the terrible flooding a lot of Post and private homes got hit bad. As a family we all can work together and help others get through this terrible disaster. Remember we can always clean and replace stuff, but we can't replace people. Let's all be Vermont Strong and Legion Strong. As always reach out to me if you need my assistance.

For God and Country.

David W Perron  
District II Commander

## **3<sup>rd</sup> District Commander – Christopher Wood**

Hello from District Three. Man, what a summer it has been. Many communities in Washington, Orange, and Lamoille counties are reeling from the historic flooding. Montpelier and Barre have been the epicenter in our area, and it is a major effort to recover. Have we reached out to every member of our Posts to make sure they are, okay? It can be easy to think our members are alright because our community wasn't hit but remember that you likely have members that live outside your community and may need your help. You might also be the closest post to a Legionnaire that belongs to another post. We are one big family that should take care of each other.

Ready for 2024? The membership drive for the next year is off and running. Looking for some new members? Find Veterans out there that have been affected by the flooding and show them what it means to be a member of the American Legion. Want people to renew their membership? Check in on them, help them when they need it, and show them they are family, so they see the value of being members of the American Legion family. There is no substitute for knocking on the door of a member that you haven't heard from in a while to see how they are doing.

Our Posts do extraordinary things for their communities during hard times, and many times this is the perfect way for Veterans to continue serving. This past year I have built up a pretty good collection of "Be The One" stickers as I get deliveries of flags and other Legion merchandise. It always makes me think about how I can make a difference in a person's life. My home Post has been doing Thursday night community dinners since the start of the Pandemic, and this last Thursday was no exception. The thing that struck me this last Thursday was how many people that came through the dinner line expressed how they couldn't take any more. Life is really hard for EVERYONE right now. Be kind. Be understanding. Be The One.

## **5<sup>th</sup> District Commander – Fred Wilson**

Hello, I'm Fred E. Wilson Jr, newly elected 5th District Commander. I'm a current member of Ballard Hobart Post 36, a 30-year navy veteran and look forward to serving you during the upcoming year.



I hope everyone has been doing well through this recent heat we have been having. Please remember to do Buddy Checks on your members to see how they are doing, especially those who you do not see at your post on a regular basis. Your membership cards and your posts need to review for them for accuracy.

BE THE ONE! The American Legion is activating a national platform to reduce the rate of veteran suicides. Dial 988! Destigmatize asking for mental health help.

I have just returned from the National Convention and “BE THE ONE” If you need anything let me know. I am looking forward to visiting and meeting with you all. Thank you. Fred Wilson, Cell or text 917-763-0354 or fredwilson2016@hotmail.com

Fred Wilson, 5<sup>th</sup> Dist. Commander

## **Rutland County - Richie Baptie**

Greetings Legionnaires: I have not traveled to the post this past few months due to the floods and damage caused, however I was able to call all the Posts and check on how everything was and offer any help and /or support that was needed.

I also had some health issues and as soon as that is cleared up I plan to be on the road to all the Post and seeing all the members.

For God and Country,

Richie-Richard Baptie  
Rutland County Commander

## **Oratorical Program – Karlene DeVine**

Oratorical Comes Early this year (2023-2024). Student Applications must be postmarked no later than Oct. 14, 2023. Available [https://vtlegion.org/documents/oratorical\\_application\\_2024.pdf](https://vtlegion.org/documents/oratorical_application_2024.pdf)

It is a progressive contest—sponsored by your American Legion Post, a contest will be held within your school area between October to December 2023. The next level, District contests will be from November to January.

The final Vermont contest will be held in February 2024. (This is a sequence change from previous years.) I have sent 958 emails (81 VT schools) to Vermont educators, principals, superintendents, guidance counselors and theater/drama teachers. My email asks them to get the information out to students before the close of this school year. Summer is a perfect time to work with the Assigned Topics.

As a broke prospective college student, do you know what the best vehicle to have is? A Scholarship! Do you know of a high school student that likes history, is interested in the U.S. Constitution or wins every argument with rationale explanations? Is that student planning on college? Does that student need help with paying for college? Perhaps you know an adult that likes history, is interested in the U.S. Constitution, or wins every argument with rational explanations? Wouldn't he or she make a good coach for a student representing your post?

You are the boots on the ground for this premier American Legion program. The most effective, least expensive publicity is your advocacy for the Oratorical Program. The first thing to do after elections of new Post, District and Department Officers is to make a calendar of events, including dates for your local Post or District Oratorical contest.

When I call you with an applicant from a school within your district, I can tell the student the date you will be prepared to run the contest. References: <https://vtlegion.org/oratorical.cfm>  
<https://www.legion.org/oratorical> Karlene DeVine Department of Vermont Oratorical Program Chair

## **American Legion Brand**

When it comes to designing products for American Legion events and programs, National Headquarters has developed a style guide to help you create designs that match our existing brand and landmark. This guide walks you through color, font and layout specifications among others. It also will walk you through when to use the emblem versus the brand mark. To access the style guide visit [legion.org/brand](https://legion.org/brand).

The brand mark is to be used in all marketing communications applications (e.g., lifestyle apparel, fundraising, sponsorships, digital media, social media and event announcements). While the emblem should be reserved for official documents and communications (e.g., press releases, business cards, post signage and official letterhead).

The American Legion emblem and other legally protected logos of the American Legion Family is restricted and typically may not be used without permission from National Headquarters.

The use of the emblem by an individual Legionnaire is limited to the wearing of the official insignia and to the possession of authorized jewelry or merchandise bearing the insignia. Posts are confined to using the emblem or reproduction of the emblem on stationery, post publications, notices, posters or place cards, or matters of similar character used in the ordinary routine and conduct of legitimate post business. Departments are similarly limited.

Any other use of the name "The American Legion" or the emblem shall be subject to the approval of the national adjutant at [legion.org/emblem/request](https://legion.org/emblem/request).



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**Mark Your Calendars - Upcoming Events**

Fall Conference - Saturday October 21<sup>st</sup>! @ Vergennes Post 14  
Agenda will be Coming...

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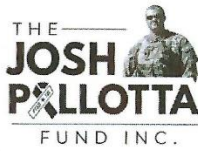
Mid-Winter Conference – January 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Hampton Inn by Hilton – Colchester, VT  
Hotel Contact & Rates Flyer Coming....

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Department Directory is in the works! To be produced soon! Stay tuned...

## Mark Cloutier – Department Commanders Project

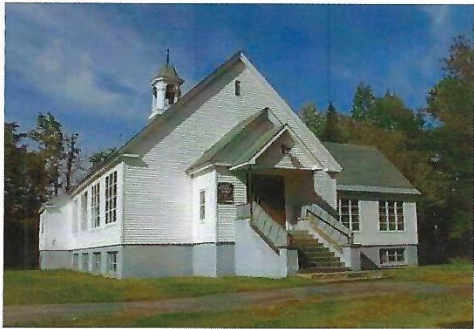
This year's Commanders project will be a Dual project. Both of which are very important.

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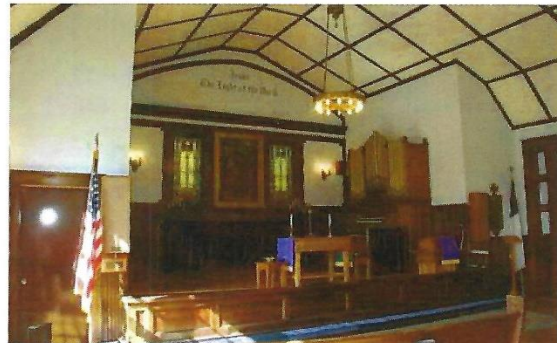
The Department of Vermont Auxiliary President Debi Graziano and I have decided to continue helping raise donations for Josh's house #2. This will aid in raising contributions to help Valerie Pallotta raise the funds that she needs to open a facility in the Northeast Kingdom. The Northeast Kingdom of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

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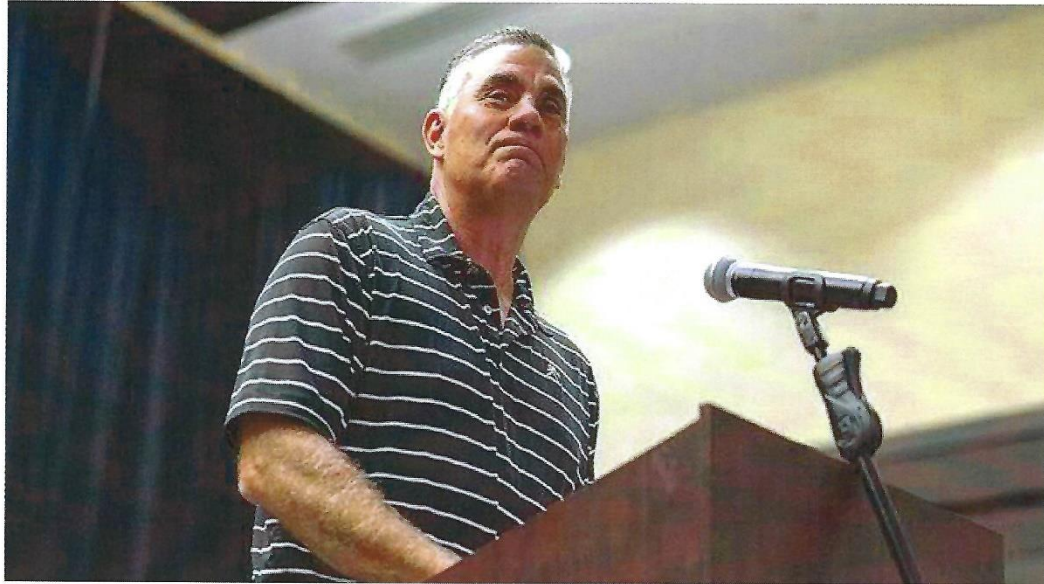
Secondly, I would like to raise donations and awareness for the Rev George L. Fox Memorial Chapel. Now that the church in Gilman, VT has been purchased, funds still need to be raised for the building to be upgraded to become ADA-compliant. This will be done through grants which require funds to match 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.**



## VOICES

*"Whatever you do, be part of something bigger than you."*

*-Wake Forest University baseball coach Tom Walter,  
in remarks Aug. 9 to players and volunteers at the American Legion World Series*



# \$1,551,631

Amount – an all-time high – delivered Aug. 29 by the American Legion Riders to the 104th American Legion National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., for the American Legion's Legacy Scholarship Fund, which provides college money for the children of veterans and military personnel who died on duty or became 50% or greater disabled for service-connected conditions.



# 1st

Standing in points with two races to go in the NTT INDYCAR SERIES of Chip Ganassi Racing's Alex Palou after driving The American Legion No. 10 Be the One car to a seventh-place finish Aug. 27 at the Bommarito 500 in Madison, Ill. Palou would go on to win Sept. 3 at the BITNILE.COM Grand Prix of Portland to lock up the series championship.



# .346

Batting average of Texas Rangers All-Star shortstop Corey Seager, who on Aug. 16 was named American Legion Baseball Graduate of the Year; he played Legion ball for Post 115 in Kannapolis, N.C.



# 1,128

Number of registered attendees of the 2023 Sons of The American Legion National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., Aug. 25-31, including 998 delegates, 22 alternates and 108 guests.



# 0

Hits allowed by left-handed pitcher Jacob Cyr of League City, Texas, Post 554, in the opening game of his team's march to the American Legion World Series championship Aug. 15. Cyr threw a five-hit shutout in the 1-0 finale against Lincoln, Neb., Post 3. Having pitched only the third no-hitter in the history of the ALWS, Cyr received the George W. Rulon American Legion Baseball Player of the Year award.



# 72

U.S. Flag Code inquiries handled by the national Americanism Division in August.



# \$88,731

Amount in American Legion national youth scholarships disbursed to 34 students in August.



# \$797,251

Amount in American Legion Child Welfare Foundation grants awarded in 2023, an all-time record, to assist organizations that work to improve the lives of young people facing challenges beyond their control.



# 70+

Veterans and spouses who attended American Legion career workshops and met with some 60 employers Aug. 24 during the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Hiring Our Heroes Career Fair at the 104th American Legion National Convention.



# 6,272

Number of mobile-device downloads of the 104th American Legion National Convention app, smashing the 2022 high of downloads by nearly 5,000.

## VOICES

*"If we can be out doing things in the communities that are hosting our national conventions — or any event, even at home, a smaller event . . . people see that we're actually active and doing things in our communities and instead of me giving them an application and saying, 'Hey, give me your \$30,' they come up to me and tap me on the shoulder and say, 'What are you doing, and how can I be a part of it?'"*

- American Legion Auxiliary National Vice President Lisa Williamson during an Aug. 25 American Legion Family community project at Freedom Park to clean up markers honoring World War II veterans of Mecklenburg County, N.C., during national conventions in Charlotte; more than 50 volunteered for the effort.



# 375,743

Members in the Sons of The American Legion on Aug. 10, an all-time high.



# 400

Estimated number who attended an Aug. 26 military quality-of-life panel discussion led by top enlisted leaders in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard at the 104th American Legion National Convention, in Charlotte, N.C.



# 8

Number of months thus far in 2023 that have had 6,000 or more audio downloads of the Tango Alpha Lima podcast. That compares with only six months from April 2020 through the end of 2022 that had 6,000 or more audio downloads of The American Legion's national podcast.



# 859

Informal Hearing Presentations prepared free of charge in August by national American Legion representatives for veterans appealing their VA benefits decisions.



# 11,500

Rounds of ceremonial ammo sent to 10 American Legion posts and seven departments in August through the national military surplus program.



# 42

American Legion service officers accredited in August to serve veterans and their families, free of charge, with their VA and state veterans benefits.



# 306

VA benefits decision appeals granted in favor of the veteran in August after free American Legion national representation.





# \$4,194

Amount in American Legion national Temporary Financial Assistance grants awarded to veteran families in August to stabilize homes for six children after unexpected economic hardships.



# 45

Approximate number of veterans assisted with their VA claims by Indiana American Legion service officer Bryce Hullett from the American Legion's Be the One truck over three race weekends at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.



# THE AMERICAN LEGION

*Veterans Strengthening America*

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

PO BOX 1055, INDIANAPOLIS, IN, 46206-1055 • WWW.LEGION.ORG • P: (317) 630-1200 • F: (317) 630-1223

## Daniel J. Seehafer National Commander The American Legion **2023-2024**



Daniel J. Seehafer was elected national commander of the nation's largest veteran's organization on August 31, 2023, in Charlotte, N.C., during The American Legion's 104<sup>th</sup> national convention. Seehafer likes to say, "It's personal," when it comes to The American Legion's mission of serving veterans and their families. He is continuing the theme of "Be the One," to prevent veteran suicide.

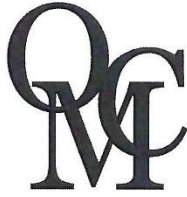
An ordained minister from Wisconsin, he earned his American Legion eligibility through service in the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserve, where he served as a military chaplain. A member of American Legion Post 157 in Horicon, Wis., Seehafer served in a number of American Legion offices at every level, including national chaplain and commander of the Department of Wisconsin.

Born and raised in Merrill, Wis., he lettered in cross-country track while in high school and later received a bachelor's degree in pastoral ministry from Concordia University and a Master of Divinity at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Seehafer was installed as assistant pastor of St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Horicon in 1997 and continues to serve as administrative pastor of the church and its school. His American Legion post was recognized for "100 percent" and "All-Time High" in membership during his terms as commander and adjutant. Other honors include district commander's new post achievement award, silver brigade, and Post 157 Legionnaire of the Year.

In 2023, Seehafer earned an Outstanding Heroism Award for administering the Heimlich Maneuver to a choking victim at an American Legion dinner.

National Commander Seehafer and his wife, Stacey, who is a member of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 157, live in Beaver Dam, Wis. Dan's son, Jacob, and daughter, Emma, are also members of the Post 157 family. Dan is the son of the late Lester Seehafer and Jean Sabatke.



**Opera Company  
of Middlebury**  
**Celebrating 20 Years**

PO Box 803  
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802.388.7432  
www.ocmvermont.org

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*Administrative Director*

Allison Steinmetz

*Music Director*

Filippo Ciabatti

*Director of Young Artist Program*

Sarah Cullins

American Legion  
c/o Tom Scanlon

We are delighted to extend a heartfelt invitation to you, our valued veterans, to join us for a special production of the Vermont premiere of *Glory Denied* presented by the Opera Company of Middlebury. This poignant saga, based on the true story of Colonel Jim Thompson, America's longest-held prisoner of war, offers a compelling glimpse into the complexities of the Vietnam War era and the sacrifices made by those who served our country.

Performance Details:

- Dates & Times: September 27 and 29, 2023 at 7:30 pm, October 1, 2023 at 2:00 pm
- Location: Town Hall Theater, 68 S. Pleasant St. Middlebury, VT

*Glory Denied* is a moving tale of hope, despair, love, hate, courage, and forgiveness, as it follows the journey of Colonel Jim Thompson and his wife Alyce through the tumultuous emotional landscape of their lives. The opera's score, composed by Tom Cipullo, adds a soaring dimension to the narrative, making it a truly unforgettable experience.

**As a tribute to your service and sacrifice, we are pleased to offer you complimentary tickets to this remarkable production.** We believe that your presence will enrich the experience for all attendees and contribute to our collective appreciation for the contributions of veterans like yourself.

**To reserve your free tickets, please RSVP by reaching out via email to [ocm@ocmvermont.org](mailto:ocm@ocmvermont.org).** Kindly provide your name, the number of tickets you require, and the performance date you'd like to attend. **You may also follow the instructions accompanying this letter to order your tickets online.**

Please note that "Glory Denied" will be performed in English with English supertitles to ensure everyone's understanding and enjoyment. **To learn more about the production, visit [www.ocmvermont.org/this-season](http://www.ocmvermont.org/this-season).**

**Your presence would be an honor, and we look forward to sharing this powerful and emotional performance with you.** If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Thank you for your service, and we hope to welcome you to the performance of *Glory Denied*.

Sincerely,



Allison Steinmetz  
Administrative Director  
Opera Company of Middlebury

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Buy Tickets to GLORY DENIED:  
[www.townhalltheater.org/event/glory-denied](http://www.townhalltheater.org/event/glory-denied)

1) Use the link above. Click the BOOK NOW button (white with black lettering in the red box on the right side).

2) Choose the date you want to attend.

**2) Enter VET2023 in the Promotion Code Box for 1 ticket.** (*Each veteran is entitled to one ticket to the production free of charge.*)

3) Proceed to buy tickets as usual should you require additional tickets.

**Please do not share this code with anyone else.**

If you choose, you may call the THT Box Office at 802-382-9222 (Monday-Friday, noon to 5pm) to complete your order.