My Fellow Legionnaires,

The Department is busy. I am busy traveling around the state. And the weather has not been bad in February, but as I write this the state is in for rains and/or wet heavy snow. Keep your fingers crossed!

I failed to express my gratitude to all posts that have been very generous in supporting my two Commander’s Projects: trail around the campus at the Veterans Home in Bennington and tents for Green Mountain Council. I am excited to see what the final tally will be at convention.

On February 10th, Bristol Post 19 and the VA hospital in White River Jct dedicated a “Virtual Living Room” built at Post 19’s facility. This room is equipped with a one-person workstation to video/audio communicate with health providers at the VA facility without making the long trek to White River Jct. This setup will allow veterans to request a DD214, apply for VA healthcare, browse job opportunities, access benefits available to veterans, etc. All appointments are through the VA. This project was developed by the “Foundation for Rural Services”, financed by a financial institution in Colorado and coordinated and constructed through Waitsfield Telecom. This is the second of these projects in the nation with the first one being in a library in Kentucky.

I will answer the most obvious question; Post 19 was not selected because the Department Commander is from this Post. Waitsfield Telecom applied for the grant to fund this project was selected and they asked Post 19 to establish this room as the other two Addison County Legions is not serviced by Waitsfield Telecom. Post 19 is looking forward to supporting all veterans in this area.

The Annual Eagle Scout Luncheon was held on February 14 at the Capital Plaza Hotel and Conference Center. The Class of 2019 Eagle Scouts was a total of 65 and 27 Eagle Scouts with their parents and leaders attended the luncheon. Prior to the luncheon, they had a tour of the Capital, met with Senators and Representatives and Governor Scott. This year I was the Master of Ceremonies for this event.

Janet Osmer escorted me through the VA facility to visit patients. This was one of the most rewarding times I have had as your Department Commander. They were excited and happy to see someone from the American Legion taking the time to visit and listen to them. They were extremely happy with their care at the VA facility.

(Continued on page 4)
PREAMBLE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

For God and Country we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;
To maintain law and order;  To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;
To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars;
To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;
To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;
To make right the master of might;  To promote peace and goodwill on earth;
To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;
To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America,
and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation,
under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all
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**Department of Vermont Monthly Bulletin**

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**DEPARTMENT OF VERMONT**
I visited Rutland’s Post 31 monthly meeting and was very happy to see the enthusiasm and excitement from the members. They are very happy to be where they are now compared to where they were last spring. Many former members have taken an active role to ensure this Post is going in the right direction as they move forward. Many kudos to Linda Perham on her contributions to this Post to turn it around.

On a short road trip in February, I managed to visit Commander Richard Brackett of Geno-Robinson Post 11 in Bridgewater and enjoyed a nice chat with Richard at his home.

Our membership is still doing well but to keep this momentum going you need to focus on your Post’s renewals. Every Post has members that have not renewed. Have a face to face meeting with these people to encourage them to renew their memberships. If your Post gains a new member, the Department also gains a new member!

March is the month we celebrate the birth of the American Legion. I hope all Posts celebrate the 101st American Legion Birthday in some special way.

I can be reached by email, ronaldlarose@gmail.com, 802-453-3818 (w) or 802-453-7663 (h).

For God and Country,

Ron LaRose
Department Commander
802-453-3818 (w)  802-453-7663 (h)  802-989-8573(c)
ronaldlarose@gmail.com

Happy Birthday American Legion

On March 15, 1919, the first American Legion caucus, held by members of the American Expeditionary Force, convened in Paris. Much as the birthday of the United States is celebrated on July 4 - for the date in 1776 when patriots declared the independence of the British colonies and birthed the spirit of America - March 15 is the date when The American Legion came to life.

How is your post celebrating? Share a short story and pictures via email to ctester2663@gmail.com to be included in a birthday collage in the April bulletin.
March 17th, 2020

My Fellow Legionnaires,

I am writing to present the following as guidance for the next few weeks and the consideration of all Posts in the Department of Vermont.

It is incumbent upon all Posts, especially those with social quarters, to follow the guidelines suggested by the President, the National Center for Disease Control, the Governor of Vermont and the many medical authorities that have addressed this situation. The Governor of Vermont has directed that all bars and restaurants close at 2 P.M., today (Tuesday, March 17th 2020). This includes all American Legion social quarters, and rental facilities. The American Legion Posts may conduct meetings but should follow the social distancing guidance and the restrictions on the number of people that should be present. (The President suggests limiting to ten (10), the Governor of Vermont suggests limiting to fifty (50). Suggested social distancing of (6) six-feet should be followed at any of these meetings.

Many state governments have also closed schools, restaurants, bars and all non-essential business activities. There are too many facts unknown about this virulent strain of the flu. The most vulnerable are those people over the age of 65 that also have underlying medical issues. Unfortunately the demographic of the American Legion population falls directly into that category.

Please understand that the Department of Vermont does not have control or authority over the social quarters and activities of any Post. The decision on how to handle these matters lies only with the Officers and the Executive Boards of each individual Post.

The Department of Vermont intends to follow all of the guidelines issued by the authorities mentioned above. The Department Headquarters will remain open for the time being but I am strongly recommending that you communicate with us via email or telephone. If you do visit the office, please follow the (6) six-foot social distancing recommendations of the CDC. The Department of Vermont Executive Committee will be addressing the situation further in the near future.

I cannot emphasize strongly enough that there are too many unknown facts about this flu. It is in the best interest of all American Legion members and citizens to exercise wise discretion in deciding how to proceed for the next few weeks.

For God and Country,

Ron LaRose,
Department Commander

Keith O. Artund,
Department Adjutant
Senior Vice Commander

Catherine M. Tester

Hello Legionnaires,

March will be a very busy month for all of us, State Oratorical Contest on March 7, membership engagement District 1 on March 14, Children and Youth Bullying Poster Contest and Americanism Photo Contest are in full swing, applications are being accepted for Boys State and Law Cadet Program, Legion Baseball is forming teams and ordering uniforms and setting schedules and many posts are planning their Birthday Celebration.

I will be attending the Legion Conference in Washington D.C. March 8-11. Look for an article next month on updates from the conference.

Congratulations to the six posts that have reached 100 percent; Norwich University Post 1819, Ora E. Paul Post 24, Mad River Post 75, Henry L. Danforth Post 53, Manchester Post 38, and Cecile A Davis Post 17. Who will join the 100 Membership Club next? There are many posts that are close.

Please look at your 2019 members that have not renewed, make phone calls, send letters, drop by for a visit. I was at one post recently and shared their non renewed list. Within an hour, the commander had renewed three people from the list. Your list can be run by logging into mylegion.org. Need help, give Melodie or I a call.

It amazes me how many programs we have for the youth of our communities, many spearheaded by dedicated Legionnaires, Auxiliary and Sons of the American Legion members. Thank you for your dedication and your service.

For God and Country,

Catherine M. Tester
Sr. Vice Commander
ctester2663@gmail.com
802-989-3755

Southern Area Commander

PDC Royal Sheeley

For God and Country,

As we enter the Spring of the year it is time to start thinking about the election of Officers at all levels of the Legion Chain of command. Here are still department Level position that need candidates. The election of Post Officers is as important to the health of your post as the election of Department Officers is to the American Legion Department of Vermont. Consider what your post’s goals are and who can best serve the post to accomplish those
goals. Also consider what programs you intend to support and ensure that post POC’s understand the program and can best achieve the objectives of the program. It is also time to start compiling your information for the annual reports. Remember the Department goal is 100% reporting of Post Consolidated Reports. This report is always a problem in that small posts do not realize that they in fact do activities that are reportable and should be documented on the report.

Our Legislative Chairman uses the statistics from the Consolidated reports when he reports to State Committees on issues impacting Veterans, the financial support that the American Legion provides to the C&Y programs, Scholarships across the state and other programs that individual posts and the Department of VT support. The Consolidated Report, the Post C&Y reports, the Color Guard report, and the Americanism reports are all sources for selection of posts for Department of Vermont Awards and recognition at the Department Convention, so do not sell yourselves short at the post level. If you have questions on completing these reports contact your County, District, or Area Commanders for assistance.

PDC Royal E. Sheeley
Southern Area Commander

NORTHERN AREA COMMANDER

Tom Scanlon

As many of you may have heard the VTARNG is gearing up for a major deployment in 2021. This was widely reported by both the media and Vermont National Guard HQ, in the latter period of 2019.

It is estimated, according to reports, that approximately 2,500 soldiers, primarily from the 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Mountain), as well as members of the 172nd Public Affairs Detachment and the 172nd Law Enforcement Detachment will be deployed. In that these components are comprised of residents of other states as well as those in Vermont, it is estimated that this will impact hundreds of Vermont ARNG members. This deployment is not surprising in that the 86th has one of the highest readiness ratings in the Army.

Those deployed will support U.S. Central Command, U.S. European Command, and U.S. African Command. Exact locations of deployment have yet to be officially reported.

I have mentioned this so that all American Legion posts throughout the state can get prepared to support both those being deployed, as well as their families. That is what we do as members of the American Legion. The following program and contact information is being provided as a source of reference to assist families of those deployed.

The Family Support Network is there to provide a broad range of services to help families cope with the unique challenges of deployment. We, as Legionnaires, must pull together to help, particularly in putting families in touch with the right people to help and assist with their problems. For more information on the Family Support Network they can be contacted by toll free number: 1-800-504-4098, or email address: familysupport@legion.org or by visiting: www.legion.org/hsn.

For immediate, short-term financial needs, families of deployed service members who have minor children at
home can apply for cash grants through the American Legion’s *Temporary Financial Assistance Program*. *Military OneSource* is there for military personnel and their families 24/7 and help with all kinds of issues. They can be reached at: 1-800-342-9647 or visit [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com).

*Operation Military Kids* (OMK) supports children and youth impacted by deployment. More information can be found at [www.operationmilitarykids.org](http://www.operationmilitarykids.org).

Finally, don’t forget those comfort and care packages for those deployed when the time comes. It will be here faster than you think, so start preparing now.

*For God, Country & Community*

Tom Scanlon

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DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT

Keith Arlund

The department is over 87% of our 2020 membership goal. Please keep up this excellent effort. As everyone knows this is the most difficult time of the year. Senior Vice Tester continues to work revitalization around the department with good results. March is a busy month for many of us. Members (Tester, Scanlon and Moore) will be attending the Washington Conference and the DSO (Willis) will be attending training there as well.

I will be traveling to Louisville, KY March 16-19 to meet with the staff at The Gault House where the department will be staying at the National Convention in August. I will finalize our requirements with them as required by DEC. I will also survey the convention site, other facilities and places that may be of interest to our delegates. I will report later on this and provide information to assist members who will attend.

We have finalized the agenda/itinerary for the Eastern Region National Vice Commander's trip to the department May 15-17, 2020. Complete information will be provided in the next bulletin and posted on the website. In a "nutshell" CMDR Frank MacDonald will visit posts in West Rutland, Chester and Ludlow. He will attend and participate in Leadership Training at Post #31 in Rutland on May 16th.

Work continues on the visit of the Leading Candidate for National Commander, Paul Dillard (TX) who will be in Vermont June 4-7, 2020. More to follow on this.

Respectfully,

Keith O. Arlund
Department Adjutant
Hello Fellow Legionnaires,

Hope all is well. Cant believe how fast this year has gone. Frist off please let me know when your installation is so I can get secduled so far I have one post that has contacted me.

I hope all Posts have been using mylegion.com I have not heard from anyone that needs help. The amount of time you save with accurate records is amazing. So please if you have not tried please do.

This is TV he time of year to start planning your Memorial Day ceremonies. So we can honor those who have gone before us. Please get a info to me so we can get to Department to let everyone know what Posts are doing.

January was also the time of year to make sure your paper work is complete and update with the Secretary of State. It's very easy to do go online to the Secretary of state website you can update right there. Please start now making plans on who each post is sending to Convention. We have to have a quorum in order to conduct business. So please send a representative. Also is important to get your membership cards so you can start on new year at the convention. Will be held back in Burlington again in June.

Take care if there is anything I can help with please contact me.

God Bless our Troops

Christina Moore
4th District commander

Why is the Consolidated Post Report (CPR) so important that every post should submit one?

When the National Commander testifies before Congress, the Consolidated Post Report (CPR) data is used to provide numerical data of what the collective American Legion is doing. Leadership at all levels of the organization need to impress upon our posts that they need to report what they are accomplishing in their community. The CPR is important to the business of The American Legion. As of March 14, 2019

The Federal Charter requires the National Organization to report to Congress on the activities of the corporation during the prior calendar year. The CPR is essential in collecting the data to compile this report to Congress.

Every post is most likely doing something in the community. It is important that the post leadership report what they are doing and at what level they are assisting. The post or department may fill out a CPR to just submit a report, but the level of participation is what is essential. This is made easier by using the CPR form on mylegion.org. It has the capability to keep a running total and save the data until the next event. The magnitude of our numbers from just 68% (which is yearly average at National level) of our posts reporting has a major impact on Congress.
Here's a little story a friend sent me several years ago. It is a good example how people who fail to accept God will often make atheistic like statements. The story goes like this:

God was very busy

If you don't know God don't make stupid statements!!!!!!

A United States Marine was attending some college courses between assignments. He had completed missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. One of the courses had a professor who was an avowed atheist, and a member of the A C L U. One day the professor shocked the class when he came in. He looked to the ceiling and flatly stated, “God if you are real then I want you to knock me off this platform. I'll give you 15 minutes". The lecture room fell silent. You could hear a pin drop. Ten minutes went by and the professor proclaimed," here I am God, I am still waiting". It got down to the last couple minutes when the Marine got out of his chair went up to the professor and cold-cocked him, knocking him off the platform. The professor was out cold. The Marine went back to his seat and sat silently. The other students were shocked and stunned and looked on in silence. The professor came to, noticeably shaken, looked at the Marine and ask, “what in the world is wrong with you? why did you do that?". The Marine calmly replied, “God was too busy today protecting American soldiers who were protecting your right to say stupid stuff and acting like an idiot, so He sent me". The classroom erupted in cheers. I'll bet any Veteran or Legionnaire would have done the same or something similar in this situation.

The New Testament Book of Matthew has several versus that parallel this story. In chapter 4 verse3 Satan says to Jesus " if you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread". Jesus answered, "it is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but on every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God ". Then in verse 5 the devil took Jesus to the Holy City and had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple and said to Him "if You are the Son of God throw yourself down and not be hurt ". Jesus responded "on the other hand, it is written, you shall not put the Lord to the test. Then the devil left Him, and behold, Angels came and began to administer to Him.

Hope you all had a chance to get ashes as a reminder to repent and be grateful to God for the promise of everlasting life. Administered Ashes to all who desired them at the Vets Home yesterday, approximately 60. Ash Wednesday is a major event for most Christians at the Home. Don't forget to pray for our troops. God bless.

Say a prayer for our troops. God bless.

For God and Country,
Chaplain Ken
Welcome fellow Legionnaires. Finally, we are on the back side of winter. I know for sure that I am tired of all the snow and cold. Up here in the NEK we still have TONS of snow to melt to I hope the warmer days are upon us and to stay.

The second district is looking great for membership. As of February 20, we are at 85.92%. There are still 2 posts that are under 80%, so please make some calls and work on those renewals. If anyone needs help making calls, please feel free to reach out to me. I would also like to congratulate Henry L. Danforth Post 53 in Danville for being the first post in the 2nd district to reach 100%. Great job!

The time is nearing to get your CPR (Consolidate Post Report) completed and submitted. These reports are very important as they show National Headquarters what we are doing. You can do the manual form and send them in to Melodie at department HQ or the easy way and fill it out online through MyLegion.org. If you are unsure how to complete them that way, please reach out to me and I will be glad to talk you through it. Every post should have something to put on that report. Some examples, if you donate money to a school class trip, donate a flag to a school or local library, you post participates in parades, those are all things that you can use for your CPR. They only take about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. At the same time the children and youth reports are due. Unfortunately, even though Children and youth is included on the CPR this is a separate form that needs to be filled out and mailed into Dept HQ.

The next big event is Summer convention and you will be seeing more information on the soon. This convention is the important one as this is where all Department officers are elected into office. If you are interested in running for an office, including county commander please let myself or Melodie at Department HQ know.

Stay warm and think Spring!

I can be reached at 802-371-8097, by email cloutier.mark@gmail.com, or just shoot me a message on Facebook.

Mark Cloutier
Department of Vermont
2nd District Commander
For God and Country

Greetings from Washington County. As mentioned last month, the oratorical contest has been the highlight over the last month. Snowstorms and crazy schedules have made things a challenge, but I would like to recognize Freshman Jeswin Antony with sticking out the difficulties and working through the wickets to represent Post 59 at the state contest. I also would like to give a shout out to Karlene Devine for her dedication and flexibility to work us through the process. Now on to applications for scholarships and preparing our consolidated post reports where we show the numbers on all we do for our Legion Family, State, and Nation. Also,
March is here and hoping winter is winding down. Time to start working on your new slate of officers for (2020 /2021) your Post, for April around the corner. Approach your Members that come to meeting but sit in the back, if we get them active others may follow.

Congrats to Henry Danforth Post# 53, 100% Great Job, we all can do it District II.

District II is doing great on Membership. Let’s keep on working with buddy checks, phone calls or anything else that works!!!

REMEMBER MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERSHIP.

Please feel free to call or text me at any time and will find the answer for you or ask until I get the answer.

Please keep up the wonderful work throughout are Community’s.

Thank you all for serving.

Contact #’s Home-525-3895 Cell 272-2793
Perrondavid323@yahoo.com

David Perron
Caledonia County Commander
Sat. Mar. 7th, Avery Carter took first place for the second year in a row at the Oratorical Finals in the auditorium at the Pavilion in Montpelier. She surpassed 3 other students in presenting an 8-10 min. Prepared Oration titled “The Meaning of Life, Article 3, and the Power of Judicial Review”. The 3-5 min. Assigned Topic drawn randomly from 4 possibilities was Amendment XX which specifies the terms of President and Vice President, when Congress shall assemble and Articles of Presidential succession.

Avery is a resident of Dorset, VT and is a junior at Cate School, a private school in California. She was sponsored by Post 50 in Castleton, VT and received awards from Post 50, District 4 and $1500 from the Department.

Avery will go to Indianapolis, IN with her Dad, Philip for the National Finals 17-19 April, 2020. Expenses for the contestant and a parent/chaperone will be covered by National HQ.

The National Winner receives $20,000, second and third place receives $17,000 and $15,000 respectively. Each Department winner who is certified and participates in the First Round will receive a $2,000 scholarship. Each First Round Winner who participates in the Second Round, but does not advance to the Finals, will receive an additional $2,000 to pursue education beyond high school.

Other Department of Vermont contestants:

2nd place Maggie Sides, senior at Champlain Valley Union High School
Speech Title: “Our Core Civic Duty”
She was sponsored by Post 91, Colchester

3rd place Jeswin Antony, freshman at Harwood Union High School
Speech Title: “We, Cyber Patriots”
He was sponsored by Harry N. Cutting Post 59, Waterbury

4th place Michael Christesen, freshman at The Sharon Academy
Speech Title: “On Reform of the Electoral College”
He was sponsored by Post 8, Norwich

“Take homes” for Legionnaires from the March 7th experience:

The “panel” of contestants was asked by an audience member, “What could be done to assure more participation by Vermont high school students?” They all agreed that if it hadn’t been for personal contact from someone, none of them would have entered the competition. For one student, that came from Auxillary President, Corrina Colson. For two other students, that personal contact came from a teacher in their school. For one contestant, that came from a previous scholastic opportunity offered by a local post. They all agreed that the best way to hook motivated students is someone from the local American Legion Post make direct and face-to-face contact with the school.

We had 4 “civilian” attendees that were there because they saw an “invitation” in their local Front Porch Forum. (Thank you, Mark Cloutier)

This contest couldn’t have taken place without the efforts of the Legion Family. I am so proud to work with such willing volunteers from SAL, Auxiliary, Legion Riders and The American Legion. You enabled us to have a professionally presented contest fitting of an American Legion Department. Thank you, all.
Hi Legionaries,

Another month is upon us and a lot of things are happening in our Children and Youth programs. We have our State Oratorical contest happening on March 7 and I wish our contestants good luck. I plan to attend this program.

Our baseball teams are submitting insurance forms for their teams and putting together their teams. Good luck this season and no injuries this season.

We have the Bullying contest now going on and I hope to see a lot of posters this year.

Happy St. Patrick’s Day and let’s be safe on this day and enjoy your St Patrick’s day meals within your Posts.

Maybe one more month of snow yet to be had.

Let’s not forget to check in on our shut-ins. They might just only need for us to go and say hi to them.

Last, I am sorry to learn that we have lost another Past Department Commander Leonard Normandeau. I am surly going to miss him. My prayers are with his family.

God Bless America,

PDC Barbara Bushaw
Children and Youth Chairman

Anthony E. Morgan

Anthony Ernest Morgan, 70, died Tuesday, Dec. 24, 2019, at his residence. He was born on Dec. 17, 1949, in Rutland, the son of Wallace and Teresa (Kenney) Morgan. He graduated from Otter Valley Union High School and Castleton State College with a degree in history. Mr. Morgan married Christine Crawford Aug. 18, 2005, in Hawaii. He was employed by the State of Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity in Waterbury for over 25 years, retiring as the director. He was a member of the Sons of the American Legion in West Rutland serving as the National Chaplain in 2005. Mr. Morgan established the West Rutland Food Shelf and was currently the executive director of the Rutland Community Free Clinic. He enjoyed gardening, golfing, and being an advocate for veterans' needs. Survivors include his wife of West Rutland and five stepchildren Francis, Damian, Sheena, Shelby and Reilly. He was predeceased by a brother, Ralph, in 1988. Burial will be at a later date in Rochester. Memorial contributions may be made to Rutland Community Free Clinic, 145 State St., Rutland, VT 05701. Arrangements are by Aldous Funeral Home.

Past National Chaplain, Past Detachment Commander Anthony Morgan, will be honored for his life-long work for our communities, at our Vermont State House, Montpelier, VT. Date: April 15, 2020 at 1pm. We encourage members of the American Legion family will join Christina Morgan and her family as Tony is honored.
Department of Veterans Affairs 800-827-1000 www.va.gov
American Legion Headquarters 317-630-1200 www.legion.org
Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs 802-828-3379 www.veterans.vermont.gov
Veterans Hospital - White River Junction 802-295-9363 www.whiteriver.va.gov
Department of Vermont Headquarters 802-223-7131 www.vtlegion.org

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Corrina Colson - Department President
Ccolson.alavt@gmail.com
## Upcoming Events

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<td>District Three Membership Engagement</td>
<td>Post 10, Barre</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Department Executive Committee Meeting 12:00pm</td>
<td>Post 3, Montpelier</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Leadership Training</td>
<td>Post 31, Rutland</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Leading Candidate Paul Dillard Visits Vermont</td>
<td>Cedar Knolls CC Hinesburg, VT</td>
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<td>5-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Department of Vermont Golf Tournament</td>
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<tr>
<td>19-20</td>
<td>Department of Vermont Convention</td>
<td>Burlington</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-26</td>
<td>Law Cadets</td>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-26</td>
<td>Boy’s State</td>
<td>No. Vermont Univ.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Legion Recognition Night 7:00pm</td>
<td>No. Vermont Univ.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Legion Riders Summer Meeting</td>
<td>Post 30, Lyndon</td>
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<td>August</td>
<td>National Convention</td>
<td>Louisville, KY</td>
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<td>September</td>
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<td>3, 2020</td>
<td>National Convention</td>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Boy Scouts Salute to Veterans Parade</td>
<td>Ludlow, VT</td>
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<td>7, 2020</td>
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**Department Historian**

**Ray St. John**

**Historian Report March 2020**

For the month of February, the commander has attended or visited the following:

**February**

- 3 – USS Vermont meeting in Berlin, VT
- 5/12/19/26 - Went to Headquarters
• VA Hospital in White River visiting patients
• Visited Geno-Robinson Post 11 in Bridgewater
• Attended a Meeting at Rutland Post 31
  14th - Eagle Scout Luncheon in Montpelier

March key dates
  15th – American Legion Birthday (101st)
  19th – Start of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2003

I am sorry to hear that PDC Leonard Normandeau went to post everlasting on Sunday, February 9, 2020. We grew up together on Barre Street in Montpelier and had a lot of good times visiting different Posts when was the District 3 Commander and again when he was the Department Commander. He will be missed by all.

The Eagle Scout Luncheon had a good attendance this year, but was smaller than usual, of the 65 Eagle Scouts, only 27 were present for their certificate.

Again, I am asking all the Post Historians to PLEASE try to do a legacy / scrapbook of their Post home to let the members know what you have done this year.

Ray St. John
Department Historian

Department of Vermont Convention 2020

The 2020 Convention was voted on and will be held at the DoubleTree in Burlington, Vermont.

Annual Convention - June 19 - 20, 2020
THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF VERMONT
DEPARTMENT COMMANDER - RONALD “RON” LAROSE
“TESTIMONIAL AND ROAST”

Saturday, May 9TH, 2020
BRISTOL POST #19
56 Airport Drive, Bristol VT
B.B.Q. ½ Chicken, Potato Salad, Baked Beans, Rolls and Dessert
Iced Tea and Lemonade

$15.00 per Person **** “Informal Attire”

Social at 5 P.M. – Dinner at 6 P.M.
“Roast to Follow Dinner”

Please RSVP By May 1, 2020

Make Checks payable to: Bristol Post #19
Mail Checks and Reservations to: Alan Smith, PO Box 292, Bristol, VT 05443

NAME: ____________________________________________
(Print)

Post/Unit/S.A.L. Affiliation _______________ Number Attending: __________

Amount Enclosed: $ __________________
(Tickets will be at the door)
## ENDORSEMENTS OF DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

**YEAR: 2020 - 2021**

The Legionnaires listed below have been endorsed for the following offices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFFICE OF:</th>
<th>LEGIONNAIRE</th>
<th>SPONSORING POST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEPT. COMMANDER</td>
<td>CATHERINE TESTER</td>
<td>#50</td>
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<tr>
<td>SR. VICE COMMANDER</td>
<td>TOM SCANLON</td>
<td>#27</td>
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<tr>
<td>NO. AREA COMMANDER</td>
<td>MARK CLOUTIER</td>
<td>#07</td>
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<tr>
<td>SO. AREA COMMANDER</td>
<td>CHRISTINA MOORE</td>
<td>#87</td>
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<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;ST&lt;/sup&gt; DISTRICT COMMANDER</td>
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<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;TH&lt;/sup&gt; DISTRICT COMMANDER</td>
<td>WILLIAM FERMAN, BILL BROTHERS</td>
<td>#49, #49</td>
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<td>ADDISON COUNTY COMMANDER</td>
<td>ALAN SMITH, SR.</td>
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<td>BENNINGTON COUNTY COMMANDER</td>
<td>JOE BUMP</td>
<td>#13</td>
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<td>CHITTENDEN COUNTY COMMANDER</td>
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<td>CALEDONIA COUNTY COMMANDER</td>
<td>DAVE PERRON</td>
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<td>FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMANDER</td>
<td>BRIAN MARKWELL</td>
<td>#60</td>
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<td>LAMOILLE COUNTY COMMANDER</td>
<td>ROLAND CLEVELAND</td>
<td>#33</td>
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<td>DEPT. FINANCE OFFICER</td>
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Greetings Riders,

Our Annual Winter Meeting was held on Saturday, February 29 at Post 7 in Hardwick. It was attended by 19 Riders representing 6 Chapters. As our bylaws require 5 Chapters for a quorum, the meeting was able to officially proceed. Your Department ALR officers for the coming year subject to approval at the Legion Department Executive Meeting in April are:

- Director – Lou Furry
- Asst. Director – Mark Cloutier
- Secretary - Corrinna Colson
- Treasurer - Janet Pringle
- Safety Officer – Keith Arlund
- Road Captain – Dave Hendee
- Sgt.-at-Arms - Chris Wood

District Representatives are:
- District 1 – Ken Trombley
- District 2 – Dale Manning
- District 3 – Chris Wood
- District 4 – Vacant
- District 5 – Andy Sheldon

We would like to see the District 4 vacancy filled. If anyone from District 4 is interested in serving on the Department ALR Executive Committee as the District Representative, please submit your name to any of the officers for forwarding to the ALR Executive Committee to be considered for appointment to the position.

Our Summer Meeting is scheduled for July 25 at Lyndon Post 30. It will be held in conjunction with a ride by the Post 30 Riders to benefit the Rutland Open Door Mission, a shelter for homeless veterans. Details of the ride/meeting are still in planning and more information will be forthcoming as it becomes available.

Road Captain Dave Hendee was tasked with organizing our ride to Convention in June, and again, information will be provided as it becomes available.

And last, but certainly not least, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my home Chapter at Post 7 in Hardwick for their hard work and generosity in making the Winter Meeting successful. From gas cards and donations of Cabot Cheese for door and raffle prizes, to cooking and offering a delicious spaghetti lunch, to setup and cleanup of the hall and kitchen, they just jump in and get it done. Their support of me in my role as Department Director goes above and beyond the call of duty, and I can’t begin to express my gratitude and appreciation. Thank you so much!

Looking forward to riding season,

Lou Furry
Director
SONS MEMBERSHIP GOES ONLINE

A message from Ken A. George, Member Engagement Coordinator

Recently national released the ability for adjutants to file online their membership transmittals on mysal.org. This was a long-time request that has finally has been fulfilled. However, I have reviewed the usage report, and I am disappointed to see that less than 10% of squadrons have not opted to use the online transmittal process. If you are not using the new platform, here are some advantages to using the mysal.org online transmittal process.

1. Once you set up your account and after your first transaction, renewals and new members get posted to your roster within 5 business days.
2. You can download real-time reporting of your SAL roster.
3. The system will not let you post a payment twice and will also advise you if a member missed renewing from previous years.
4. No postage everything is online. If you did send via USPS, your transmittal could take up to 6 weeks to post members to your roster.
5. No middle man you send your transmittal straight to national for processing and national sends a check to your detachment for their share of the per capita.
6. No excuses for missing target dates and reason to blame anyone for sitting on transmittals. Give you the ability to own your membership process.

I used online transmittals when I was a post adjutant. It was a serious game-changer in processing membership at the post level. The first time you use this feature, it will take up to 15 days to post your transmittal. It takes a little longer because essential links must be established and tested. Once completed, all your

(Continued on page 23)
transmittals will post within 5 business days and no longer than 7 days (holidays, weekends, etc.). I used to send my transmittals on Monday, and it was posted by Friday (easy, peazy). Another feature to mysal.org as an adjutant is you can complete your Consolidated Squadron Report (CSR) online and hit send. No longer do you have to send your CSR via USPS or print out and scan the report. When you hit send, it goes directly to national for processing, again taking out the middle man.

More and more reports and publications are going to be posted online only and available for print at the local level. The faster the squadrons can adapt, the easier this transition will be and will also ensure no one is left behind. I am asking everyone in this email to help everyone and make this process easier. I would like to see online transmittals increase to over 20% by the end of March and increase each quarter. By the Fall 2020 meeting, we should be over 60% of squadrons using online transmittals on mysal.org. I have included the usage report and the documents on how you can set up your mysal.org account. You will have to request access as a squadron adjutant. You will not be able to use your personal mysal.org login and the individual member at this time cannot renew online. However, that will be coming soon.

If you need anything further, please feel free to contact **Ken A. George, Member Engagement Coordinator, National SAL & ALR Liaison, Phone 317.630.1376 Fax 317.655.1509.**

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**Leonard Normandeau**

Leonard Normandeau of Barre, Vermont, passed away Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020. Born in Montpelier, Vermont, on May 8, 1935, he was 84 years of age. He attended Saint Michael’s High School, graduating in 1953. There, he met his wife of 58 years, Rosemary White Normandeau. Leonard attended UVM for a short time before enlisting in the Navy for four years Leonard grew up on Lake Champlain, calling South Hero his second home. Leonard was very active in his community, including a term as a Barre alderman. He also was a proud member of several local clubs, including The Elks, The Canadian Club, Mutuo, VFW, and American Legion Post #10 of Barre, Vermont. His roles at the American Legion included Post Commander, District Commander and their Finance Officer. Leonard was predeceased by his wife, Rosemary, and their infant son, Phillip. There will be no calling hours. Charitable donations can be made in Leonard’s name to the American Legion supporting the Boys State Program, The Law Cadet Training Program and the 40 & 8 Nurses Training Program. Send donations in care of Melvin McKnight, Voiture Locale 646 Barre Post #10, P.O. Box 198, Barre, VT 05641. Memories and condolences may be shared with family at ceanbreen@gmail.com.
5 Attributes of Financially Prepared Veterans
Veterans share 6 top insights for financial preparedness

56% of all U.S. veterans say they are behind in saving for a secure retirement.¹

This is a key finding from the 2019 Veterans Financial Preparedness Report a national study of more than 1500 veterans, published by the LIT for the departments of The American Legion.
The good news is that the American Legion departments and posts can help by sharing the education with our veterans of all ages, including candid advice for getting ahead and spotlighting attributes that are shared by financially prepared veterans.

Making it as simple as possible:
• Attached is a ready-to-print article for your winter meetings
• You can also use it as an attachment for your email blasts
• Also attached is a digital banner for your website. (Link to www.TheLIT.com) so your members and prospects can read or download the free report.
• Attached is an article with Advice from Veterans for your newsletters that spotlights real-world advice from one veteran to another.

Please forward this email with attachments to your:
• Your Department/District/Post Newspaper or Newsletter Editor
• Your Department/District/Post Social Media Manager (Facebook, Email, or Twitter)
• Your Department/District/Post Website Manager
• The person in Department/District/Post responsible for sending press releases out to news media outlets.
• Media/Press Association members

We believe this research and the educational content will bring a win-win for the departments and the Legionnaires reading them.
We are excited to see the conversations this produces among veterans. Please don’t hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or need assistance getting this information out to your team. Thank you for supporting this effort!

Sincerely,
Carl Adamek
Administrator, Legionnaire Insurance Trust

¹Veterans Financial Preparedness Report 2019, a national study of 1500 veterans, conducted by The LIT for the Departments and Posts of the American Legion.

CONTACT:
For questions about the LIT program, contact:
Amanda Smith
Legionnaire Insurance Trust
asmith@agia.com
805-566-9191 ext. 2535

For questions about the report or materials you need:
Kim Crisanti
Researcher at LightForce Marketing
info@lightforcemarketing.com
708-466-6063
As American Legion members, our most sacred responsibility is to look out for each other and our fellow veterans. As a way to reach out to members and former members who may need help, the National Executive Committee passed Resolution 18 during Spring Meetings in May 2019. The resolution calls for Buddy Checks to be conducted Legion-wide on the weeks of The American Legion’s birthday, March 15, and Veterans Day. However, American Legion posts are encouraged to perform this vital function whenever it makes the most sense in their communities.

The idea is to reconnect with veterans who may need assistance but don't know where to go or who to ask. These contacts may be made by a personal visit, phone or email, or a combination. The important part is to reach out to veterans in your community to let them know you care and can provide whatever assistance they may need. It's what we do for our battle buddies.

**Commander’s project 2019-2020**

My commander’s project involves two targets: Green Mountain Council Mount Norris Boy Scout camp and the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington.

As most of you know, I have been very involved in scouting for many years and I wanted to give back to Green Mountain Council what it has given the youth of Vermont. I hope to raise $5,000 for new tents for one camp site at Mount Norris.

For the Vermont Veterans Home, they are in the early stages of designing and constructing a veterans mobility trail around their campus to be used by the residents and their families. Initial estimates are around $100,000. I am asking for donations toward this project with no specific goal in mind. Whatever amount we raise will be used as seed money for this project.

I thank all legionnaires and posts for their consideration towards my commander’s project.

Ron LaRose
Department Commander
Boys State Update – March 2020

It’s been a busy month around the homestead…

The school mailing was sent out on February 27th, and the e-mails and phone calls have started to come in. We are receiving the names of new school counselors and contacts and will be updating our contact list for the next week. We will then post it our web site at VTLegion.org so our members in our Posts can know who to access in their local schools.

Post mailings were sent out on March 3rd. Each Post contact will receive a few copies of the information sheet and applications. This had helped us save on copying and mailing expenses. Additional copies of these forms are available on the web site as well.

NEXT MAN UP – In the past several months, we have lost three great gentlemen and supporters of our Boys’ State program – Dell Hill, Dan Hiliard, and Leonard Normandeau. We are in high hopes that someone in the Morrisville, Hartford, and Barre area will step up to become our school liaison – being the next man up – in support of the program and in their memory.

Put June 24th on your calendar and plan to attend Legion Recognition Night at Boys’ State. We’ll have a band concert that starts at 7:00 PM followed by the Inauguration of our 2020 Boys’ State governor. You can get from where you are to Lyndon! It might just take a little longer!

Please feel free to contact me if I can help support you in any way. Phone calls and e-mail work the best! Let the games begin!

Dave Cobb

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW NOW

Vermont is now experiencing community spread of COVID-19, which is why everyone is being encouraged to engage in their activities while keeping a safe distance from others – or to stay home when possible. This will help slow the spread of the virus and protect people who are more vulnerable.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 and mild illness, you can stay home and treat your symptoms. Not everyone needs to be tested. Testing is not treatment and we have limited ability to test. Newly added to the list of travelers who should stay home and monitor their health for 14 days are people returning from Chile, Pakistan, Thailand and Turkey (link is external). See the full list of countries (link is external). Call the Health Department at 802-863-7240 for monitoring information. If you have symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing call your health care provider.

WHEN TO CALL

If you have questions about COVID-19: Dial 2-1-1. If you have trouble reaching 2-1-1, dial 1-866-652-4636. If you are returning from travel, check this list of countries (link is external) to determine if you need to call Health Department Epidemiology at 802-863-7240.

If you are sick or concerned about your health: Contact your health care provider by phone. Not everybody needs to be tested. Do not call the Health Department. Do not go to the hospital, except in a life-threatening situation.
Rutland Flag Retirement Ceremony
Rutland Post 31 conducted a Flag Retirement Ceremony and burned over 2,000 flags on February 23. Great show of Legion Family with over 20 legionnaires, SONS and Auxiliary participating.

CONGRATULATIONS to the six posts who have achieved 100 percent membership and are part of the 100 Percent Club.

- Norwich University Post 1819 – Northfield at 105.26 percent with 80 members
- Ora E. Paul Post 24 – Woodstock at 102.47 percent with 83 members
- Mad River Post 75 – Waitsfield at 100 percent with 23 members
- Henry L. Danforth Post 53 – Danville at 100 percent with 20 members
- Manchester Post 38 – Manchester Center at 100 percent 13 members
- Cecile A Davis Post 17 – Whittingham at 100 percent with 14 members
REAL, ALFRED 01
JACOBS, LLOYD 01
STANISLAS, NORMAND R 01
BELANGER, JOSEPH 01
FAGON, ALFRED 01
RAYMOND, PAUL L 08
WATSON, GARY H 08
NORMANDEAU, LEONARD 10
OLSEN, DOUGLAS 10
MEZOWICZ, JOSEPH 13
VACHON, JR., RICHARD 13
WALCHLE, RANDLE D 23
BOUSQUET, ROBERT 23
SPENCER, STEPHEN 25
GADWAH, DEAN N 26
GRAIFF, LOUIS W 29
HEBERT, ARMAND A 30
GAUDETTE, JOHN J 47
POULOS, PAUL 58
COLBY, MAURICE A 58
TABOR, WILLIAM P 66
RYLANDT, W THOMAS 91
PARENT, PAUL L 91
VALLA, JAMES 91
BENNER, SR., PATRICK DR. 100

“Whereas, we humbly bow to the will of Devine Providence, while ever cherishing in our hearts the memory of distinguished service to our country and outstanding contributions to American Legion comradeship. The American Legion does mourn the passing of these comrades.”
CMDR Rose opened the meeting, quorum present.

CMDR. LAROSE: Motion made and seconded to accept minutes of previous DEC meeting. Minutes were sent to prior to Mid-Winter.

C. TESTER: On the raffle it stated that it would be at the Mid-Winter and actually it should be the June Convention.

CMDR. LAROSE: Any other comments?

S. GARLAND: I don’t know whose idea it was to send those minutes out to everyone but it was great to see it especially for folks that can’t be here or make it. Thank you.

CMDR. LAROSE: The minutes were condensed for the bulletin and mailed to all members. There being no other changes the Motion to accept passed. Finance report prepared by Dennis has been distributed. Motion by Scanlon, second by Woodward to approve. Motion accepted.

CMDR. LAROSE: Milt has gave the Service Officer Report at the conference meeting.

I’ll take a breath at each of these and you fire your questions. Spring Conference in DC March 8 – 11th, is a Sunday through Wednesday. Next DEC Meeting: April 26th at Post #3 Montpelier at noon. It will also be in the bulletin.

Cathy Tester has training scheduled for May 16th at Rutland #31 and we have a commitment from the North Eastern Regional Vice Commander – Frank MacDonald to attend that so that is good. His visit on May 15th will include lunch at noon in West Rutland Post 87, afternoon (3:00 PM) visit to Chester Post #67 and Friday night dinner (5:30PM) at Ballard-Hobart Post #36 in Ludlow.

Leading Candidate for National Commander is Paul Dillard out of Texas. He will be visiting Vermont the first weekend in June. The itinerary is not complete but he will attend the Former POW Dinner a Bristol Post # 19 on Saturday June 6, 2020.

The Committee Chairmen for Convention and Conferences had to step down for health reasons, so I have asked Keith if he would chair with that committee until June, so I’m looking for a motion from the floor here to appoint Keith to that position.

Motion made by Stebbins, Second by Bushaw to appoint Keith Arlund as chair.

There has been some concerns and some questions about Post #31. Let’s see if I can bring you all up to date on what has transpired in fifty words or less. Most of you know Post #31 has had some difficulties in the last year. The Post reached out to Linda Perham and asked her if she would help. She has transferred to Rutland to become their Adjutant. I talked with her weekly about what was going on. Linda agreed to work through all of this and is the right person for this job. She worked with the IRS, Tax Department. The post needed to get a new employer ID number. They said, “Once you pay your taxes we will do that”. Linda enlisted the help of some people that were very active in the Post years ago. They agreed to help and were able to remortgage the building I think to the tune of $80 to $90 grand. The DEC approved a temporary loan in the amount of $5,000 to assist that was recently repaid.
There was another amount of money that Stub Sherman suggested went that way and I think it was earmarked for baseball.

L. S. STEVENS: I think it was the residual from the Regional Tournament from years ago that had not been used.

C. TESTER: Yes, they are doing much better. I believe they are up one hundred members from last year.

CMDR. LAROSE: Things are turning around for Post #31 but it has been a long uphill battle. Now the other questions asked of me is Linda the Adjutant, the Commander, The Finance Officer, the Janitor, the Bartender, the Steward? I don’t have to say as you all know Linda, she is intimately involved in all those positions. She is the Adjutant and I am sure she has a Commander, a Finance Officer and so on for the post. I am going to a meeting in two weeks own there for a regular Post Meeting. I am optimistic.

Is that the only problem we have around the State? For those that are Past Department Commanders here you need to get out and shake the hands, squeeze some flesh, and smile a lot. It’s those things that pop up at Department Headquarters or a call at home late at night. Those are the things that kind of turn you off being in this position; but it is part of being in this position so I have entertained some interesting things since I have been here.

Five months to go, but I’m not counting. It’s been a pleasure serving the Department, I am just surprised at some of these things. As I’ve said before Convention, I lived a sheltered life in the Legion in Addison Country. There are three posts: Vergennes, Bristol and Middlebury. They all have a bar, they all have a banquet hall and I thought they were all that way. Not quite all that way and as I climbed the ladder I become much smarter. I will hopefully have more information on that at our next DEC once I meet with Linda.

Dave Cobb, you heard his report earlier today. He wants to raise his delegate fee for each candidate from $275 to $300 hundred. We talked yesterday, the present budget at $275 does not quite meet their needs. So, we need the DEC to approve this rate. What’s your pleasure?

Motion by Bushaw, second by Peron to raise the Boys' State delegate to $300.00.

D. COBB: Its bee 6 years since we have raised the delegate fee.

CMDR. LAROSE: This program is probably the most expensive one we run from the Department. It made sense that we raise it to keep this program solvent. Any other comments? Motion passed.

Districts will be holding caucuses, they have monies to disperse and you need to look at our Programs. Boys State, Oratorical, Boys Scouts, and programs like them and that you hear about at these conferences and convention should be considered by your caucuses for possible donations. The biggest thing that came to mind for me yesterday sitting in with Boys State meeting is Chittenden County. There is only one post and there are eight high schools. So, this $300 dollars, the extra $25 dollars will give a few extra bucks for his program.

Here is a sensitive one, remember I said I would undertake this last year and I made a couple of calls. We have four Posts that aren’t meeting the minimum of 15 members and a fifth Post that is Manchester which we manage at Department. I am drafting a letter to send to each Manchester Post member telling them that because of no leadership in that Post there is no reason to treat this charter as active. We are going to recommend to them that they transfer them to another local post.

The other four Posts: Whittingham Post #17, Rochester Martin – Fales #43, Dorset Mcbride - Harwood #44, Newbury Earl - Brock Post #78 are all struggling. They can’t even get to the required fifteen. So, what we have been talking about is suspending their charter for a period of time to see if they can revitalize themselves. Whatever time we set six or twelve months, at the end of that period we will probably have to take some action if they haven’t. Your input? Talk to me? I am only talking about those that are under the minimum 15
Inaudible: Cmdr. We should look at Whittingham, they are right next door to Readsboro; they are within five miles. So when you look at where they should go or recommend I would recommend they go to Readsboro. Manchester is twelve miles from Arlington, if you are going to give them an option I would move them into something close by.

CMRD. LAROSE: We are going to look at what you are saying, the geographics.

F. STEBBINS: I make a motion we do what you suggested, give them six months to a year. Not pull their charters but suspend it and give them that time to build themselves back up.

R. OTEY: There are a couple of things to consider one is: If we choose to do this we do have to follow the procedures to the letter. The notification requirement and the way in we give them notice actually has a certain process. You cannot deviate from it and kind of give them more or less than what they are asking for and they have a certain amount of time. The other thing to consider is that even though we are talking about it here there is a particular procedure. We need to be careful that people are not reaching out to individual members to give them a “heads up.” We need to notify people properly and not scare them. They should not be getting multiple opportunities with different interpretations on what is going to happen. The last point I have been trying to figure out is whether or not this will have an impact on what our attendance requirement is at Convention. In here it is two thirds of the chartered Posts and a suspended Post is technically still chartered. I’m sorry fifty percent; something else is two thirds. We have a couple different areas where there is a certain percentage of chartered Posts and I think we may need a call to National to clarify whether a suspended Post would be considered still chartered because we could hurt ourselves. We could help ourselves if they are not counted it might hurt us if less people are inclined to come to convention because we have suspended their charter.

CMDR. LAROSE: Other comments?

C. MOORE: One, I don’t see where it would hurt our attendance or delegates, these folks aren’t attending anyway and they have had two, three, four years that a lot of them have been under where they are supposed to be with their memberships. If they were going to fix it they would have fixed it, does that make sense?

CMDR. LAROSE: The point that Rebecca is making is that when we go to Convention fifty percent or greater of our Posts need to be there. So the question is whether a suspended Post is counted toward that or not?

C. MOORE: Correct but what I am saying is they already don’t come so we don’t factor them in anyway.

R. OTEY: So my point is if you tell me I am suspended I am definitely not showing up and I don’t like to assume because I don’t know all the individual people and that there is not a reason why they have not been here in the past. Maybe they are looking for an opportunity to come and I think if we just let them know their options and encourage them while we are going through this process that we still want them to be involved in some way. That’s important because if we turn them off from the Legion not only does it matter that they show up but their word of mouth can hurt us just as much. We need to make sure that the image we are providing is the image that we want to get behind. Even if somebody is in the middle of nowhere and nobody else around them supporting them as a Legion member that we want them and that we are going to find a way to include them. So that was my point, I just don’t want people to feel like there is a percentage that don’t show up if they might have come we might have one more Post that’s here.

CMDR. LAROSE: These five Posts are literally not involved with any Department activities. Haven’t been for years. Cathy?

C. TESTER: We have not received a Consolidated Report from them in many years. Most of them their membership has declined so five years ago they might have been at twenty two members. As membership
has declined and we are looking at this because our bylaws state if there are less than fifteen members we are to suspend them until we can get them up. If we want to pull the charter we have to do something else. I think National will tell us that we have to do some type of membership engagement to bring them back and if that is not successful then National will allow us to go in front of the NEC.

R. SHEELEY: They will instruct on how to revitalize first.

C. TESTER: Right, so we certainly have to look at all avenues.

C. WOOD: A comment, I was thinking of the conversation here it seems to me the County Commander, or the closest Post, should mentor these posts. Go in and help them get on their feet. There may be a Post nearby that is successful and knows what they are supposed to do. I mean I have struggled with one of the smaller Posts in our county. They just don’t answer my emails or my phone calls which makes it really difficult. If folks have some kind of authority to maybe go in and mentor some of these Posts and help them get back on track they show up at Conventions. I think we should encourage the closest Post or the County Commanders to go in and help them.

CMDR. LAROSE: Or at least ask the question, do you want to play Legion or not?

J. BLANCHARD - PATENAUD: I remember when General McKnight was with us. I mentioned to him that we want to get new National Guard members here at the same time he wants to help us as well. I told him to tag team. Is there any way we can connect with him again and get some of his military people that are down in that area, a lot of people didn’t know they could join the Legion.

CMDR. LAROSE: That’s a possibility, reconnect right Tom? Other comments? This didn’t happen last night or last summer.

R. SHEELEY: The problem with some of these was here when Dick and I were Commander. Manchester if I am not mistaken sold their Post home, paid PUFL’s for all of the members and said this is it. They are very happy to be a paper PUFL Post of WWII and Korea Veterans. They have been that way for fifteen or sixteen years and no matter how many letters you write to them or go and knock on the Commanders door (if they have someone designated as the Commander) it’s very difficult to get a response from them. “Nope, I got my card, I got it for life and that’s all I need”. How do you revitalize? The instructions are to take the charter away for a lack of membership and there is a whole procedure for this.

R. OTEY: Suspension is most appropriate right now. We should not pull the charter because before you suspend it. Give them an opportunity, or at least check in again, so they have had the opportunity from Nationals prospective.

CMDR. LAROSE: Give them the time to get back up to where they should be.

R. OTEY: Then you can have the conversation: “if you guys want to transfer to other Legions because you guys don’t have the membership for your Post.” Or, “Do you want to be part of a Post at all anymore”? “Do you want new people to be added to your Post that you can help mentor or to fill in some of the rolls”? It is a combination but it would happen while they are on suspension.

K. DEVINE: Catherine mentioned re-engagement as a requirement before we shut down a Post. I haven’t been involved in revitalization efforts but it sounds like they are successful. I bet they are successful because of a certain conversation that takes place. I wonder if those four Posts should be targeted for revitalization. Then we can say we have tried it. We have done the re-engagement piece and then we may be able to get them to transfer to other Posts voluntarily.

CMDR. LAROSE: Along with that I will ask a District Commander, have the revitalizations we have already held, have they included from these four Posts? Have they been in those Districts?
C. MOORE: Yes

CMDR. LAROSE: Were they contacted?

C. MOORE: You would have had Manchester’s information. Question to Dave: did any others answer phone calls?

D. WOODWARD: Nobody answered those calls. We also had Dorset, there is very few to start with in Dorset as far as Veterans. I have reached out to their Posts for the last several years. Whitingham and Dorset including the individual in Whitingham. I have been to his house a couple of times. He has two dogs and unfortunately he is still fighting the Vietnam War. He didn’t want me there, didn’t want anything to do with Department. I mentioned possibly Wilmington has a Post, possibly transferring. He refused and called the Commander expletives. This is what I was dealing with when I was there. Dorset: when I reached out to them they are getting $3,000 dollars from the Town to run the Dorset parade and that is all they do and endorse. He told me they were thinking about going to Wallingford or Arlington. He said "they are just ried."

CMDR. LAROSE: Now if they received a letter notifying them that were going to be suspended what kind of reaction do you think they would have?

D. WOODWARD: Well Bruce in Dorset; he may respond but I think he and his members are ready to just say let just go somewhere else. I don’t think they want to quit being Legion members. I just don’t think they want to have a Post anymore. That’s my opinion.

CMDR. LAROSE: I am assuming they do not have a Legion building?

D. WOODWARD: They don’t, they meet at the VFW in Manchester. I mentioned to him the PUFL’s from Manchester and he said, “I don’t want them transferred into us!” In Whitingham, I was talking to a wall. His didn’t want me in the house, his dogs were almost attacking me. He would not even think about merging with Wilmington. That’s the only two I have really dealt with. Bruce Charbonneau would actually get In touch with me from time to time and I was able to talk to him. He has been the glue for that Post for a long time. It used to be an old guy, he was the Adjutant and I can’t remember his name and was in his 90’s. Bruce is trying to do it all.

CMDR. LAROSE: What District is Rochester in? 5th? And your suggestion is?

R. FARRAR: I didn’t get a call back? I have called them for meetings and such and have got no calls back. None.

CMDR. LAROSE: Ok, Newbury?

D. FARMER: Excuse me Commander. I have a feeling that Rochester that they had a lot of Korean War and WWII Vets. As a matter of fact on a walk through at the VA Hospital with Ken Coonradt I saw their Adjutant of three years ago and their Commander Mr. Betis. He is a Korean War Veteran. The only one that I know of that was young would have been Mr. Betis Son who was a Gulf War Veteran. The Adjutant who is a Vietnam Veteran and he is the retired Town constable.

M. ASHFORD: Mr. Betis has been doing it all for quite some time and has been in and out of the hospital for several years. He has contacted the office on numerous occasions for things.

D. FARMER: So I have a feeling that if we talk about revitalizing Rochester where are you going to be revitalizing from? I don’t speak being facetious because those Veterans in the surrounding area have other Posts to go to that are active.

CMDR. LAROSE: There is Bethel and Randolph nearby.

D. FARMER: Over the ridge you have Brandon and Middlebury.
CMDR. LAROSE: Newbury, what District is Newbury in? 3rd? Is that District Commander here? Barb?

B. BUSHAW: Question, if it is an honorary lifetime member and they transfer over to another Post will they will probably lose their honorary membership?

C. TESTER: They won’t lose years. They may lose their honorary status (and may have to start paying dues again). That lifetime payment is specifically from that Post. A Paid Up For Life membership is for a Legion anywhere.

B. BUSHAW: I can almost guess that a few of those out there are honorary members within their Posts.

C. TESTER: So we will need to look at that. Certainly if it is one or two people we can look at that.

CMDR. LAROSE: Ok, we are not going to beat this to death anymore. My thought was that we need to contact National to find out how do we properly suspend or pull a charter. Then maybe if it appears we are in agreement that we just suspend them to just get their attention. If you would draft a proper letter for my signature that we could potentially send to those, does that work for you people?

F. STEBBINS: Do we need a motion?

CMDR. LAROSE: And that was your motion?

M. ASHFORD: Wait a minute I need a Motion and a second, did someone second that?

CMDR. LAROSE: The motion made and seconded is for Rebecca to do some research at National on suspension and terminating a Post Charter and that she will draft a letter for my signature to be sent to these few Posts. Any further comments on this motion?

C. WOOD: What does suspension mean for a Post? What does that mean?

R. OTEY: I will confirm with National but it is my understanding that the privileges of operation are suspended, so if they come here they would not have a vote, they cannot participate and will not be able to run a parade, basically it stops because they don’t have the requirements to make that Post exist. Our Bylaws require for a Post to exist that there be (15) fifteen paid memberships by a certain time of the year. They can “cure” it at any time or we can offer them the ability to transfer to Posts which only requires that Post let them go and the new Post accept them. It is not hard and so that is what a suspension is. A suspension is only different from a revocation in that you give it and you can give it back. If you revoke a charter or you pull it entirely they would have to apply for an entirely new charter which is the difference and in my opinion a harder process.

CMDR. LAROSE: When you call National I would also ask under suspension do they count, those five Posts, against our total for Convention?

R. OTEY: I will ask and make sure we are aware of everything.

CMDR. LAROSE: Any other discussion on the motion? All in favor. Opposed? Motion carried. Now if we have some luck and she can fit it in her busy schedule with our DEC on April 26th we should have some information to share with you folks and hopefully the letters will have gone out.

R. OTEY: Sir, the Bylaws actually say that they should be paid up February 1st so we will need to look at the deadline too. So, we might have to act slightly quicker but we will see how much room we have to wiggle.

ADJ. ARLUND: If they are out by February 1st then they can be suspended?

R. OTEY: That’s my understanding, but I will double check with National to see if we are not on a time line.

CMDR. LAROSE: I appreciate your due diligence. I appreciate your input as you know this is sensitive. If you’re a Post Legionnaire and all of a sudden we are talking about taking away your Post or suspending it, it’s
tough to swallow. I know some are trying to keep the bloodlines going. Does anyone else have anything to bring before this body?

K. DEVINE: I am going to ask for a financial request. The purpose is to secure at the Vermont capital the Pavilion Auditorium as the place of the 2020 Department finals on Saturday March 7th. The location is centrally located for attendees and for participants coming from across Vermont. Concluding the finals at the Vermont capital provides an acknowledgement of the efforts extended by the student competitors in advancing to the finals. The venue is befitting of the American Legion and the District winners. Use of the space requires a sponsorship by a Legislator and thanks to Department President Corrinna Colson who contacted Representative Chip Torino. He submitted the sponsorship information. I completed a request to use the space and summed it on the 22nd of January. There is a fee related to this. I am asking because it is on a Saturday they don’t provide security which is required at $42 dollars an hour for an officer. I didn’t ask but I am assuming that is one officer. I anticipate that we will be utilizing the space from 9:30 to 2 p.m., which is four and a half hours so the total fee request would be $189.00 dollars pending review and approval by Deborah Farrell the Executive Manager of the Government Business Services Committee.

CMDR. LAROSE: Motion by Tester, second by (inaudible) to approve the fee of $189.00. The Commander requested an amendment to increase to $200.00. Motion and second agreed to minor change.

CMDR. LAROSE: What if we make it up to two hundred just in case?

K. DEVINE: That’s fine with me.

C. MOORE: Is there a budget for Oratorical?

K. DEVINE: Our budget is awards and travel for someone to go to National.

C. MOORE: Have you done any fundraising on your own for Oratorical?

K. DEVINE: No.

CMMDR. LAROSE: Do you try to go to the capital every year?

K. DEVINE: No, this will be the second time. We have done it at the VA several times as well. Fundraising is a real challenge. This is a program much different than Baseball, Boys State, we don’t go out and ask the Posts for sponsorship so the funds for Oratorical come from the general fund.

C. MOORE: So my questions is: there are District funds that need to be given out, why not go to the Districts and have them give donations?

K. DEVINE: That is a possibility.

CMDR. LAROSE: The problem we have is we don’t know when those caucuses will be held and this is a month away.

K. DEVINE: And Districts also gift an award for the District contest. So, it’s nominally maybe $100 dollars but when you start dividing it up within the causes…

CMDR. LAROSE: Any other discussion on the motion. The motion is up to $200 dollars to support the security at the State House on March 7th for Oratorical. All in favor. Opposed? Motion carried. Thank you.

C. TESTER: At the last DEC we talked about a raffle for all of the Americanism programs including Oratorical and Boys State. We have asked each DEC members to provide a gift certificate or cash, so if you have them please give them to Melodie. I have had a few handed to me. I don’t know how many we have, we do have a full round of golf and a cart valued at like $225 dollars from Middlebury College. That is one of the big prizes, maybe others can get some big prizes? So, a reminder: remember to turn in your gift certificates so we can get a list together and two; what should we charge for a raffle ticket? So my thinking is maybe three
for $25, I will be expecting all DEC members to sell. We will put it out to the Posts as well. Does that sound ok for a price? I didn’t want to make that decision before I talked to everyone here and got approval.

CMDR. LAROSE: Anyone opposed to her recommendation? Look at that; majority.

C. TESTER: Great, we are done. Don’t forget to turn in your gift certificates. Thank you.

F. LATOUR: I am looking on page three of the Constitution and Bylaws of the American Legion department of Vermont. The preamble. I make a motion that we strike “the great wars” and we replace it with “all wars”. To go along with National.

D. WOODWARD: 2nd.

CMDR. LAROSE: Motion made and 2nd that we make the change to the Preamble in accordance with National. Motion carried.

K. ARLUND: It’s not actually part of the Bylaws. It is merely printed in the handbook.

CMDR. LAROSE: Alright, any other business? Anything else.

The Chaplain offered the benediction and the Meeting Adjourned at 2:38 P.M.

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### Interesting facts from our History Pages

- On May 24, 1919 the Department of Vermont received its Temporary Charter.
- The first Department of Vermont’s American Legion Convention was called for October 30, 1919, to be held in Burlington, Vermont. There were seventy-five Posts in the state, with a total paid up membership of 4,249. By December 31, 1921 the paid-up membership reached 5,365.
- In November 1919 the Headquarters for the State of Vermont was established in Middlebury, then following the 1920 Department Convention was moved to Montpelier where it remained until the latter part of 1921 when it moved to Burlington, VT.
- In 1921 at a National Convention in Kansas City, H. Nelson Jackson from Vermont received the honor of being elected the First National Vice Commander. Also, in June, 1922 he was elected as the Delegate representing The American Legion at the British Legion Convention in London.
- Because the early records of The American Legion, Department of Vermont were destroyed by a fire, our founder H. Nelson Jackson wrote the book “History of The Department of Vermont, The American Legion, Inc. which covers the years 1919 to 1950.
- The First World War II Veteran is elected as the National Commander on September 1, 1949. Vermont’s first World War II Commander was Mr. Campbell.
- On August 25, 1983 the first Korean War Veteran is elected National Commander. Vermont’s first Korean War Commander was Robert Bergeron.
- On September 8, 1988 the first Vietnam War Veteran is elected National Commander. Vermont’s first Vietnam Commander was Milt Willis.
- On December 3, 1991 Veterans of Desert Shield/Storm are approved for membership. Vermont’s first Desert Storm Commander was Linda Thayer Perham.