

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS Department News



The American Legion Family



2017–2018 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ROBERT “BOB” HENDERSON

SEPTEMBER 2017



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

AS OF
AUGUST 25, 2017

TOP 10 DISTRICT AND DIVISION RANKINGS

District Commander

1	Mittelsteadt
8	Cooper, Jr
4	Darnall
10	Hellquist
13	Kraut
16	Hinton
14	Gosney
18	Torbet
12	Davis
5	Dearbone

Division Commander

2	ABDELNOUR
3	AARON
4	HOFFMAN
1	SICILIANO
5	ROSCOW

MEET YOUR NEW NATIONAL COMMANDER

Standing at the podium after being the first woman elected as American Legion national commander, Denise Rohan had one question for the delegates to the Legion's national convention in Reno, Nev.: “Are you ready?”

The Wisconsin resident challenged Legionnaires to work together to continue the organization's 98 years of service to the nation, and its veterans, military and their families.

“Are you ready to continue to join forces as part of the nation's largest veteran service organization's family?” Rohan asked. “Are you ready to Purple Up and show the nation that we are a family that not just takes care of our own members, we stand ready to take care of our active-duty military and their families, we take care of our veterans and their families and, in reality, when you look at our four pillars and all of our programs, are you ready to continue to take care of our entire nation's families?”

Rohan said her theme this year will be “Family First,” and that the theme is based on The American Legion's motto of “For God and Country.”

“I believe we were put here, where you are today, and in the positions you hold currently for the greater good,” Rohan said. “We are not here to judge one another. We are here to nurture and take care of one another. Families grow through love and

support for one another. As an American Legion family – we need to treat each other in that same spirit – like part of our larger extended family.”

Taking a cue from the U.S. armed forces, Rohan chose the color purple for her membership shirts. “I chose purple for this year's membership shirts to show that we are joining forces as an American Legion family,” she said. “Just like all branches of the military started working together and joined forces, they purpled up over the last several years, it is time for The American Legion family to also purple up as we all work together for the common good.”

A 33-year Legionnaire and current member of Post 385 in Verona, Wis., and U.S. Army veteran, Rohan has served as post and department commander. But when her husband, Mike, was first approached about joining The American Legion and Denise identified herself as an eligible veteran, she said she was informed ‘Women join the Auxiliary.’

“That post that denied me membership 37 years ago, they have a picture of me on the wall with a sign that reads ‘She could have been a member of our Post. Remember, women are veterans too!’” Rohan said. “It is a great reminder that since the birth of The American Legion back in 1919, our leadership knew that a veteran was a veteran regardless of race, religion or gender. Women could vote for national commander be-

(National Commander continued on page 10)



**‘Are you ready?’,
Denise Rohan (WI)**



From The Desk of Department Commander Bob Henderson



The State Golf Tournament is in the books and good times were had by all.

The 2.2 mile walk or run at Clinton was a success.

The National Convention is over until next year. Everybody that went to Reno had a good time, some won and some lost at the one arm bandits.

I met on August 30th with all five Division Commanders for their recommendations on Committee and Commission appointments. They are done and being printed up for approval at the fall DEC.

Labor Day as always starts off September where there will be parades lead by Color Guards from our Legion Posts. This is a great way we can be seen out in our communities.

September 9th will be the DEC meeting at 1:00 p.m. at the Elks Lodge

Commanders Social Hour at 6:00 p.m. followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m. with fellow legionnaires, our Legion family, guests and ME. I look forward to seeing you there.

On September 16th and 17th we are having the Division Officers Membership Retreat at Magnuson Grand Hotel in Raymond, IL. This is a mandatory meeting for all Division Commanders, Sr. Vices, & Jr. Vices.

Moving on to the 23rd and 30th of September the Department Committees and Commissions will meet for their scheduled Fall meetings at Department Headquarters. These meetings are important must be attended by the committee and commission members from each Division.

In between on September 25th the 1st Caravan Meeting will be at Department.

The second week of October will be Nationals Fall Committee & Commission meetings at Indianapolis.

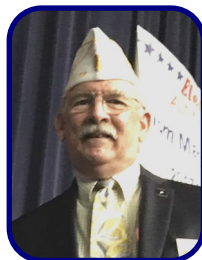
With all that is happening we don't want to forget that along the way we need to be working on membership.

There are a lot of Veterans showing up on My Legion. Org from 2016, 2017 & 2018 so I ask for you to get out there and get them into your posts.

We are all working to get to 100% then we can go for 103%. All these new Membership Committees in the Districts should be hard at work getting things going in their Districts. GOOD LUCK to all and Thanks for what you are doing this year.

Last but not least, I ask for our District Commanders to work with all the Posts in your District to get them to be thinking about Boys State. We need more Boys this year and in the future to attend Boys State. It is not too early to get out there and start working on those schools so we can to get more Boys signed up. These boys are our future leaders of America and potentially American Legion members. Show them your commitment and pride in this American Legion program.

AGAIN, THANKS FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE THIS YEAR.



From The Desk of Department Sr. Vice Commander Micheal Carder



Hello to everyone, the National Convention is over and we have a historical first in the American Legion our first Lady Commander, Denise Rohan, who from Wisconsin and she is a terrific individual. She is Legion Family orientated and will be a great inspiration to us all.

Commander Bob, Chad Woodburn and I met with Commander Rohan at the membership meeting early August and

once we set our membership goal for this year Commander Rohan asked the following be accomplished by the end of the year. First, she asked that all posts are to have their renewable members in the fold by 31 December 2017. Secondly, she asked that all posts complete their Consolidated Posts Report as soon as possible. Last year only 68% had fulfilled that task and having a higher number of completions makes a greater impression on Congress. We Can Do this!

ATTENTION: District Commanders— We currently have approximately 39 posts who have not yet certified their Post Officers. It is your job as a District

Officer to contact your posts and check on their status.

District Commanders your posts should have in place a membership team to help your Sr. Vice improve membership. It would be great if all past post commanders, past district commanders and division commanders were part of the Legion building team. Their knowledge is a WELL that's worth tapping into

Currently, membership is at 51%. wouldn't it be great to be over 60% come DEC September 9th. It can be done.

Look forward to seeing you all at DEC/ Commander's Homecoming.



From The Desk of Department Auxiliary President Marsha Haag



"Striving for Gold for our Veterans" is the theme I've chosen for 2017-2018.

We are athletes of either winter or summer sporting events that you may see during the Olympics. Our Divisions are continents while the Districts represent the sport. We are going to embrace "Teamwork". After all, there is no "I" in team. Our membership theme reflects that—Working together we will build a strong team.

Things are off to a busy start. July was of course, Department Convention and Installation for myself and Commander Henderson. I also had attended the election and installation of SAL Detachment Commander Hayse in Deland.

There have been a few visits already to Divisions for installations and Fall

dinners. It has been nice to be able to visit with our members.

August 4th and 5th was our Fall Board meeting. Each chairman presents her program. Commander Henderson and SAL Det. Commander Hayse, along with the Auxiliary membership chairman aka: "Scorekeeper" Janet Bacon made our membership wagers. Janet and I look forward to winning the challenge.

August 5th, the Livingston County Council, and my home Unit, Skinner Trost #122 of Cullom, hosted my homecoming event at the Chatsworth Post Home. Again, thank you ladies. You ladies did an awesome job, they are movers and shakers.

August 13th was Veterans Day at the State Fair which Dave and I attended. Auxiliary had a table with membership and program information to be shared. I am hoping we have made new contacts and met potential members.

Later in the day, 1st Vice President Deb and I, along with other members of our American Legion Family, participated in the parade.

Reno was the site of this years' National Convention where I was officially installed. There were breakout sessions for all attendees. It was nice to rekindle friendships with some folks we see only once a year.

Illinois is trying something new this year with having "Fall Forums" instead of the typical membership caravans. We will be at locations throughout the Department. The idea is to get more ladies out and engaged with the programs of the American Legion Auxiliary. It is designed to be an informative day; covering many topics and we will be collecting membership at each location. The Juniors are welcome to attend, there will be a separate agenda for them. Encourage

(ALA President continued on page 4)



From The Desk of Detachment Commander Paul A. Hayse



Well, Marsha Haag's homecoming, August 5, went well with a good turnout. The American Legion Auxiliary fall board meeting, August 4-5 was very informative with old and new friends met. I look forward to working with Marsha in the following year.

Commander Bob, Marsha, and I made a wager on membership percentages and I hope the Sons of the American Legion will help us come out on top!!!

National Detachment Convention will be over when this letter comes out. We will have more on events that went on in the next letter.

As you all know the four pillars for which the American Standards are: Veterans and Rehabilitation, National security, Americanism, and Children and Youth. My focus will be on gifts to Yanks this next year.

Our next D.E.C. will be September 15- 16 in Bartonville, IL. You should already have your reservations, if not, we are staying at Holiday Inn Express & Suites East Peoria. See you there!

PLEASE GET YOUR SQUADRONS CERTIFIED!!! If your officers are not paid by the middle of October, they will no longer be officers. New members are good they are the lifeblood, but always push for retention. Our old members with the knowledge is what we need to keep.

On a solemn note Corporal Edward Lee Borders SN#ER57508348, made it back home. His remains were account-

ed for June 5th, 2017 and arrived in Harrisburg, IL July 27, 2017. He died while captured in the Korean War. Date of loss February 13, 1951. He was laid to rest beside his mother, who passed on one month prior to him being accounted for. He was with the 82nd anti-aircraft artillery battalion. His battalion was overrun. He could have been my father.

We wish you all a good summer and look forward to our next letter.

RECRUIT, RETAIN, REMEMBER



Did You Know?

Office: 312-980-4266 Email: Raymond.Toczec@va.gov

That each year our Legion Service Officers from all of our State Departments meet in Indianapolis, Indiana for training? For three days they are furnished with a wealth of information from The National Veterans Legal Services Program and Department of Veterans Affairs including the Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Health Administration and the National Cemetery Administration. This training is sponsored by the American Legion VA&R Washington office. Here are some of the highlights:

- ® Veterans Administration debt letters should not be ignored. If a veteran doesn't pay the debt, request a waiver or agree to a payment plan that debt will be turned over to a collection agency. The fees associated with that are 28%! And it will cause a drop in your credit score of up to 150 points.
- ® Regarding debts, the Veterans Administration can also take up to 15% of a veteran's Social Security check.
- ® Those vets who are in the National Guard and Reserves have their Veterans Administration compensation check offset by the number of paid drill days per fiscal year. DOD and VA are years behind and soon over 300,000 vets will get overpayment letters.
- ® The National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis receives 1.5 million requests per year for records. Requests for copies of DD 214's take an average of ten days to be mailed.
- ® Vets can get free copies of duty rosters and morning unit reports if it's for a Veterans Administration claim. The number to National Personnel Records Center is 314-801-0800. They prefer a three month window on your request.
- ® Defense Finance and Accounting Service can help vets get pay vouchers to prove TDY and hazard pay which might help with a Veterans Administration claim. Their number is 800-321-1080.
- ® Vets may dispute a clinical decision at a VA hospital or request a different primary care provider. They should contact the Chief of Staff or Patient Advocate's office at the hospital.
- ® Vets who go to private hospitals for an ER visit only have 90 days to file for reimbursement if it's for a non-service connected problem. Service-connected conditions have two years. The important thing to remember is have someone notify the Veterans Health Administration immediately when a vet is taken to a private ER. And the veteran must have used a VA hospital or clinic within the last 24 months.
- ® On the vast majority of claims for service-connected death benefits for widow/ers the Veterans Administration must get a medical opinion.
- ® Certain Army MP's who did duty near or at the base perimeters in Thailand can possibly get Agent Orange compensation.
- ® The reason American Legion Service Officers don't refer veterans to private lawyers is because if they lose their case the Service Officer can be sued for negligent referral.
- ® The DMZ in Korea is 151 miles long and 350 yards wide. Agent Orange was used there from Aug. 1969 to Aug. 1971 and certain vets can get service-connected compensation for Agent Orange conditions.

Until next month stay safe, sound and happy

(ALA President continued from page 3)

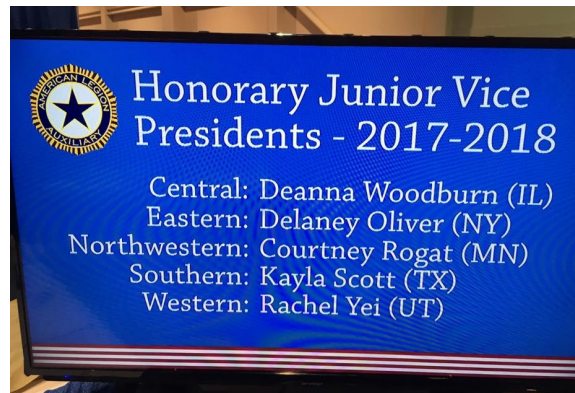
your Unit members to get this on their calendars. The ALA Today and our website will have registration information.

Dates: Sept. 17th – Bartonville, Sept. 24th—New Baden, Sept. 30th – LaGrange, Oct. 7th— Marseilles, and Oct 28th—Farmer City.

I look forward to travelling through the Department to greet as many as possible. I feel confident we can all work together for our veterans, the children and our communities.

We can and will reach **"GOLD"** for our Veterans.

NATIONAL ALA CONVENTION UPDATE: Our congratulations to Deanna Woodburn (IL) who was named Honorary Junior Vice President 2017-2018.





*From The Desk of American Legion Illinois Premier Boys State
Chairman Christopher Benigno*

www.illinoisboysstate.org

I'm sure everyone has been busy distributing the information for our program, and for that we are truly thankful. Also, don't forget to contact your local Chamber of Commerce to assist you in distributing the information throughout your business communities, this should help you when reaching out for sponsorships locally. All the information that you need are updated and available to you through our print shop at Department Headquarters.

We have been refining our program to make it the best boys state program out there today. We are also looking for individuals with specific skill sets to assist us in bringing the program to the next level. If you are, or know of someone in the following areas of expertise please reach out to us at info@illinoisboysstate.org, band director, production/lighting, technology and filming.

We would like to challenge all 760 posts to participate in recruiting and fundraising for your American Legion Premier Boys State program and that **every** post work toward the goal of sending two more boys over last year.

We have also been working on receiving bids from transportation companies that service the entire state. We believe that utilizing one company will be an asset, so that our chairman will no longer have to concentrate on the logistics and can focus more time on recruiting and promoting the program.

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to our program. Feel free to reach out with any suggestions or for any help that you may need.

**The 2018 American Legion Illinois Premier Boys State Application
is now available. The brochure is currently under construction.**



2017 NATIONAL CONVENTION VETERANS SERVICE PROJECT *LEAVING A LASTING IMPRESSION IN RENO*

More than 20 American Legion family members made improvements at the Bartley Ranch National Park, Reno, NV as part of annual national conventions service project. The volunteers cleaned up sage brush, poured and spread gravel for walkers, runners and those who ride horses down the trail.

"Not only do we work for our veterans but we work for the community which is a way to help here in Reno at the park." stated PNP Sharon Conatser who was interviewed and helped at the site.



Legacy Run donations top \$1.2 million

The American Legion Riders came into Reno, Nev., having ridden more than 1,400 miles from Dodge City, Kan., and raised more than \$550,000 for The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund. But the Riders were far from done.

After another successful Legacy Run, the Legion Riders and American Legion departments donated more than \$667,000 on The American Legion National Convention floor Aug. 22. That brought this year's Legacy Run total to a ride record \$1,224,653--the fourth straight year the ride has raised more than \$1 million.



Legion Riders present checks for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund during The American Legion's 99th annual National Convention in Reno, Calif., on Tuesday, August 22, 2017. Photo by Clay Lomneth

The American Legion Department of Minnesota led the way, donating \$200,000 on the national convention floor. Other top department donations on Tuesday were the departments of Missouri (\$78,241), Wisconsin (\$67,627) South Carolina (\$67,056) and Ohio (\$50,000). American Legion Post 133 (Millbrook, Ala.) donated \$15,133, while the Legion Riders from Stevens-Christian Post 557 in Wintersville, Ohio, contributed \$13,500.

"A far-flung motto used by the Legion Riders in "Legion first," said Legacy Run Chief Road Captain Bob Sussan, who also serves as chairman of the American Legion Riders Advisory Committee. "Many departments have in-state Legacy (Runs) to raise funds for the scholarship. Several years ago the American Legion Riders in the Department of Florida, on their in-state Legacy Run, noticed a sign on the wall. This is the expression on the wall...and many Riders chapters had adopted this saying: "For the cause, not for the applause."

The six-day Legacy Run, sponsored by USAA, drove through Kansas, Colorado and Utah before finishing up in Reno. More than 200 motorcycles completed the ride.

This year's ride was dedicated to longtime Chief Road Guard Verlin Abbott, who was killed in a motorcycle accident in Indianapolis a week before the Run left Kansas.

"This year was bittersweet," Sussan said. "This was Verlin's ride. He was my best friend, my right hand, and as I feel as though I've lost a part of me, he's gone but never forgotten, He will always ride with us."

The Legacy Fund provides college money for the children of U.S.A. Military personnel killed on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001, as well as children of post-9/11 veterans with a combined VA disability rating of 50 percent or higher. In 12 years, the Legacy Run has now raised more than \$8 million.

THANK YOU Illinois Legion Family! Thanks to your generosity, a total of \$33,559 was donated to The Legacy Scholarship Fund this year at National Convention.

Great Job!

Naperville Post 43 (**\$400**),
Naperville Riders (**\$4,000**),
Louisville Post 914 (**\$500**),
Detachment of Illinois
(**\$2,062**), Canton Post 16
(**\$700**), American Legion
Family (**\$25,897**).



President Trump signs appeals modernization act At American Legion Convention

President Trump signed legislation Wednesday at The American Legion's National Convention that will go a long way toward fixing the beleaguered VA appeals process.

"To fulfill our patriotic duties, we must take care of our great veterans," Trump told about 9,000 American Legion members at the second day of the general session in Reno, Nev. "One year ago at this gathering, I promised you that I would make it my priority to fix the broken VA system and deliver to our veterans the care they so richly deserve."

The Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 creates three appeals "lanes." Veterans would choose the one that best suits his or her needs. The three lanes will be:

- Local Higher Level Review Lane in which an adjudicator reviews the same evidence considered by the original claims processor.
- New Evidence Lane in which the veteran could submit new evidence for review and have a hearing.
- Board Lane in which jurisdiction for the appeal would transfer immediately to the Board of Veterans Appeals.

"I want to thank The American Legion for getting this done," the president said. "It's something they've been trying to get done for 40 years. And we've passed VA accountability legislation. The Legion has a lot of power and they use it well."

The law's impact will be felt for a long time. "No longer will veterans be waiting to get their appeals heard," Trump said. "And they will get decisions much more quickly in a fraction of the time."

As of last spring, more than 470,000 appeals of claims decisions were pending. The average wait time for these appeals to be fully adjudicated is five years. If nothing changes, by 2027 veterans will wait an average of 10 years to get a decision.

The bipartisan bill, H.R. 2288, was crafted with much input from The American Legion. It is expected to shorten the average wait time for final appeal decisions from five years to 125 days.

American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt welcomed the news.

"Today's signing is a major victory for America's veterans," Schmidt said. "I can think of no better place for the president to sign this bill than at the national convention of America's largest and most influential veterans service organization. The legislation is a simple, fair and appropriate way to ensure that our nation's veterans--and their families--receive their earned benefits in a timely and efficient manner."

During his speech to The American Legion, Trump also addressed other key issues:

- **Patriotism:** "The American Legion embodies the spirit of patriotism. That is the true source of our strength and the hope for our future. You cherish our values and you defend our great American flag."
- **American flag:** "It is time to heal the wounds that have divided us, and to seek a new unity based on the common values that unite us. We are one people, with one home, and on flag."
- **Infrastructure:** "We don't have to content with a dilapidated road system with crumbling buildings or rusted out factories. We can build gleaming new highways and state-of-the-art manufacturing and modern works of wonder. And we can do it all with American workers and American iron, aluminum and steel."
- **Young people:** "Every veteran here today is a part of a long, unbroken chain of American heroes. We salute your service. The American Legion not only teaches history, you help keep history alive. You teach young Americans to have pride in our history so that they will have confidence in our future, history and culture. For generations now, The American Legion has taught young people the principles of America. You've emphasized the need to preserve the nation's cultural, moral and patriotic values. You encourage the observation of patriotic holidays. You stress the need to enforce our laws, including our immigration laws."
- **Newly signed Harry Colmery GI Bill:** "Under this legislation, veterans can use their GI Bill at any point in their lifetimes."
- **Recent violence:** "We will never tolerate crime in our cities, bloodshed in our communities, or acts of hatred or terrorism against our citizens. We will always support our great law enforcement personnel."
- **Defense spending:** "We are committed to expanding and improving our missile defense systems to shoot down missiles in flight. We are getting better and better at it. We will develop better surveillance and long-strike capabilities to prevent our enemies from launching them in the first place."

Trump also noted positive gains in the way on terrorism, while noting that more work need to be done to prevent Islamic State and other organizations from using the Internet as a recruiting tool. "We will pursue an honorable outcome in Afghanistan," Trump said. "Our troops have already made a tremendous sacrifice. We will give the men and women in uniform the tools they need and the trust they have earned to fight and to win."



Senate Passes AMERICAN LEGION 100TH ANNIVERSARY Commemorative Coin Act

100 Percent of the funds raised for The American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin Act will go to support veteran programs



Every session, Congress authorizes the US Mint to produce commemorative coins that celebrate and honor American people, places, events, and institutions.

These coins help raise money for important causes. Part of the price of these coins is a surcharge that goes to organizations and projects that benefit the community. For example, surcharges on the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center commemorative coins helped build a new visitor center

under the U.S. Capitol's East Plaza.

Since the modern commemorative coin program began in 1982, the United States Mint has raised more than \$506,301,189 USD in surcharges to help build new museums, maintain national monuments like the Vietnam War Memorial, preserve historical sites like George Washington's home, support various Olympic programs, and much more.

The US Senate just passed S.1182, authorizing the US Mint to produce a commemorative coin to mark the 100th Anniversary of The American Legion (1919-2019). The funds raised by this act will help support many of The American Legion's veteran support programs.

Below is our statement:

"On the behalf of our nation's American Legionnaires, I extend our sincere thanks to the members of the U.S. Senate, especially Senators Joe Donnelly, Todd Young, Johnny Isakson and Jon Tester, for the passage of S. 1182, The American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin Act.

This bill will authorize the U.S. Mint to produce a commemorative coin celebrating the 100th birthday of The American Legion, the nation's largest wartime veteran service organization with more than two million members and 13,000 posts across the U.S..

The American Legion assists veterans and their families access the benefits they earned while defending our Nation. We ensure America's veterans receive healthcare and disability compensation for their injuries, and the education and training required to be contributing members of society following their military service.

1. 1182 is budget-neutral and will generate funds for veteran-support activities in every community in America – at no cost to the taxpayer. One hundred percent of the funds raised by The American Legion 100th Anniversary Commemorative Coin Act will go to support veteran programs.

Again, we are thankful for the Senate's steadfast support of our veterans and military families. We look forward to swift passage of this bill's companion, H.R. 2519, in the House of Representatives so that the President can sign this important legislation into law."

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



Labor Day
DEPT. OFFICE CLOSED
September 4th
~ ~ ~

Fall D.E.C. @ 1:00 pm &
Dept. Cmdrs. Homecoming
Champaign/Savoy, IL
September 9th
~ ~ ~

Gold Pin Cut-Off
12 Noon
September 9th
~ ~ ~

POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY
September 15th
~ ~ ~

SAL FALL D.E.C
Bartonville, IL
September 16th
~ ~ ~

Division Officers
Membership Retreat
September 16th--17th
~ ~ ~

AMERICAN LEGION DAY
September 16th
~ ~ ~

Dept. Committee & Commission
Fall Meetings @ Dept HQ.
September 23rd & September 30
~ ~ ~

Natl. Fall Cmte & Cmsn. Meetings
Indianapolis, IN
October 8th--12th
~ ~ ~

District & Division Membership
Workshop Div. & Dist. Cmdrs
9 am--3pm @ Dept HQ

Div. 1 & 2 on October 21st
Div. 3, 4 & 5 on October 22nd
~ ~ ~

National Legion College
Indianapolis, IN
October 29th--November 3rd
#



**The American Legion
Department of Illinois**

2720 E. Lincoln Street, Bloomington, IL 61704-6010



Enter to WIN

An M-15™ Carbine Rifle and other great prizes!

All Prizes are Proudly Made in Illinois

Dear Fellow American Legion Member:

Once again, we are delighted to include you in our exclusive 2017 Veterans Day sweepstakes, which offers you a chance to enter to win an M-15™ Carbine Rifle or up to a \$2,000 cash prize.

As your Department Commander and on behalf of the Finance Commission, we are very proud of what we've accomplished as an organization. This is truly a unique opportunity and a great way to support our very important Department of Illinois programs at the same time!



When you return an optional donation of \$5 per ticket, \$20 for 6 tickets or \$25 for all 12 tickets – you'll carry on our time-honored tradition of service to our troops and veterans.

On Monday, November 13, 2017, winners will be selected. You do not need to be present to win. Your help and support is truly needed, so please act today! Every single gift is vital and each gift is appreciated by all of us and by those we serve.

Please mail your Sweepstakes Tickets as soon as possible, but no later than November 3, 2017 to be eligible to win any of these great prizes:

Grand Prize: An Armalite M-15™ Carbine Rifle AND a Springfield Armory 1911 Champion™ Operator® Lightweight Pistol (or \$2,000 Cash)



Second Prize: A Springfield Armory 1911 Mil-Spec Pistol AND an XD® Pistol with Thumb Safety (or \$1,200 Cash)



Third Prize: A Springfield Armory 1911 Range Officer® Pistol (or \$900 Cash)

Your sweepstakes tickets give you a fair chance to enter to win one of these great prizes. And when you send an optional donation with your sweepstakes tickets, your generosity will be put to work immediately to help veterans in need.

So please, return your sweepstakes tickets as soon as possible, but no later than November 3, 2017, to be eligible to win. The tickets have been addressed for your convenience. Please be sure your name and address are correct, and include your daytime phone number on each ticket, as legibly as possible. Should you decide to make a donation, please make your check or money order payable to "The American Legion, Department of Illinois."

Thank you and God Bless America,

Robert Henderson
Department Commander
The American Legion, Department of Illinois

P.S. No purchase or donation is necessary to enter. A purchase or donation will not improve your chances of winning. Must be 18 years or older to participate. Good luck to all who participate and a very sincere "Thank You."

Recent fundraising letter mailed to all Legionnaires. Commander Henderson asks for your support. Contact Department Headquarters if you want or need tickets.



(Photo by Clay Lomneth)

(National Commander continued from page 1)

fore they could vote for the president of the United States. I know that women have been and continue to be in leadership positions in this organization.”

Rohan urged delegates to keep up the support for military families as servicemembers continue to be deployed across the world. “The American Legion family will stand tall next to our heroes and their families,” she said. “There are National Guard and reserve families living in your home towns who are feeling alone and afraid. Please continue to step up and make connections with those families. And, whenever possible, make that connection before the family member is deployed.

“Get to those Yellow Ribbon events that are happening prior to deployment. Get to know the Family Readiness Group leader for your units and let the families know what we do, who we are and what assistance we can offer on a daily basis.”

Rohan shared the story of being at a Veterans Day event in a community a few years ago. The main speaker, a Gold Star father, shared the story about his son who had been killed in Afghanistan. During his speech a girl in the choir began crying and was escorted to the back of the room.

“When the program was over, the mother, who I had never met, sought me out in the crowd,” Rohan said. “She wanted to say thank you to The American Legion on behalf of her family. You see, one of the times that her husband had been deployed there was a fire in her home, and they also had a broken water heater. The local American Legion stepped up, helped her apply for Temporary Financial Assistance and then came to her home and helped make repairs.

“The mom said she is confident that had it not been for The American Legion’s Temporary Financial Assistance program and the Legionnaires who helped repair their home, her husband may not have returned home safely. With things being taken care of at home, she knew that she did not need to trouble her husband with those issues. He could concentrate on his mission and could have one less worry on the battlefield, thanks to The American Legion family. Because that’s what we do and that’s who we are.”

Rohan said that along with Temporary Financial Assistance, she also will ask Legion family members to provide financial support to the Legion’s service officers program. “We witnessed history here yesterday as President Trump signing The Veterans Appeals Modernization Act of 2017 here on our stage,” she said. “This will help claims and appeals get processed faster, but we need trained service officers to assist in getting claims properly submitted. The faster we can get veterans the benefits they earned, the faster they can go on to lead happy, productive lives. It doesn’t just help the veteran; it helps the entire family.”

Rohan also said it’s time for Legion posts to start inviting the community in to show all the great work they are doing. She said hosting a Veterans Day meal is a perfect opportunity to do so.

“Make sure to include current and expired members, members of your holding post, Blue Star and Gold Star mothers, student veterans, military recruiters, members of the National Guard and reserve along with their families, veterans in local care facilities or hospitals and their families,” Rohan said. “Let’s light up social media with the world’s largest Veterans Day celebration this nation has ever seen. Let’s feed the entire community, because putting on great community meals is another great part of who we are and what we do.

“To make a difference in someone’s life, you don’t have to be brilliant, rich, beautiful or perfect. You just have to care enough to be there.”

Rohan was employed with the University of Wisconsin Madison as the assistant bursar of student loans until her retirement in 2012. She managed the University of Wisconsin Madison, University of Wisconsin Green Bay and University of Wisconsin Colleges’ \$120 million loan portfolio made up of approximately 200 different federal, institutional and state programs in compliance with all laws, regulations and policy.

Elected as national vice commanders were Bobby Bryant of the Department of Oklahoma, Larry Marcouillier of the Department of Delaware, Paula Stephenson of the Department of Utah, William Flanagan of the Department of Illinois and Byron Callies of the Department of South Dakota.

Appointing to the remaining national offices were National Historian Richard Dubay of Michigan; National Chaplain Robert Vick of Florida and National Sergeant-at-Arms Roy Helms.

Newly Elected National Vice Commanders

Elected at the national convention, five vice commanders act as representatives of the national commander. They may preside over meetings of the National Executive Committee or the national convention, and perform other duties for the commander. No two vice commanders can be chosen from the same department during the same year.



Photo on left: pictured L-R— Paula Stephenson (UT); Bobby Bryant (OK); National Commander Denise Rohan (WI); Larry Marcouillier (DE); William Flanagan (IL); Byron Callies (SD)



Photo on right: National Commander Denise Rohan Welcoming and Congratulating National Vice William Flanagan!

William Flanagan *Central Division* *National Vice Commander*



William Flanagan is a 50-year member of Poelker Post 321 in New Baden, Ill., and served in the U.S. Air Force for four years during the Vietnam era. As a Legionnaire, he has served as department commander of Illinois (2009-2010), aide to national commander (2007-2008) and on the National Foreign Relations Committee. He has also been active with the Illinois Department Safety, Law and Order Committee for more than 20 years.

We had a wonderful time in Reno at the Illinois Dinner and Slots Tournament. Department Historian Richard Schomer captured a photo that made it all worth while at the National Convention.

Pictured L-R:

Outgoing Dept. President Luella Buske, Outgoing Dept. Commander Cheri Stanton, Incoming Dept. Commander Bob Henderson and Incoming Dept. President Marsha Haag.

Thank you for your Service Cheri & Luella and Best of Luck to Bob & Marsha!



SEPTEMBER IS... National Disaster Preparedness Month

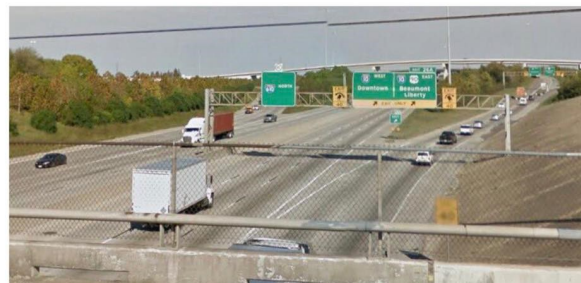


Hurricane Harvey Leaves Widespread Devastation in Texas



The brochures describe how to set up an NEF response team, locate affected Legion Family members, assist victims in filling out NEF applications and generate good public relations. NEF applications are also included.

"During times of crisis, families come together. Right now, priority one is saving lives," said American Legion National Commander Denise Rohan. "To all the people of Texas, The American Legion offers its support and prayers to the victims and the first responders in harm's way."



Heavy rain and severe flooding is ravaging Houston in the wake of Harvey, a category 4 hurricane that is affecting more than six million people, including American Legion Family members. And the Legion is ready to assist those in need.

The American Legion's [National Emergency Fund \(NEF\)](#) provides immediate financial assistance to Legion Family members and posts affected by natural disasters such as tornadoes, hurricanes, wildfires and flooding. The fund provides up to \$3,000 for qualified Legion Family members and up to \$10,000 for posts.

The NEF covers expenses such as temporary housing, food, water, clothing and other daily household items.

In order to qualify for an NEF grant, an applicant must:

- ◇ Have been displaced from his or her primary residence due to a declared natural disaster.
- ◇ Provide copies of receipts of items required to meet immediate needs, such as temporary housing, food, water, clothing, diapers, etc.
- ◇ **Be an active member of the Legion at the time of the disaster.**

Nearly \$9 million has been provided to Legion Family members and posts through the NEF since its inception. All contributions made to the NEF are used to meet urgent needs of Legion Family members.

Also, NEF media brochures are available for download under Internal Affairs on the Legion's publication web page, www.legion.org/publications, to help department and post leaders on best practices to follow before, during and after an emergency.

TFA program

While the NEF provides immediate assistance to Legion Family members, qualified children of Legion-eligible veterans may receive assistance through the Legion's [Temporary Financial Assistance \(TFA\)](#) program – the fundraising project of Rohan's during her tenure as national commander.

TFA grants can provide a lifeline to veteran families in need during times like these as they help meet the costs of shelter, food, utilities and health expenses. During disasters where a family has lost a home or it's been severely damaged, TFA could be used to help cover mortgage costs while that family pays for temporary housing.

TFA is limited to minor children (17 years or younger) whose biological parent, or legal guardian, is a veteran and is, or would have been, eligible for American Legion membership. However, Legion membership is not required to receive a TFA grant.

Those wishing to apply for a TFA grant must contact their local Legion post.

Illinois Strategy Showcases Collaborative Efforts to Reduce Nutrient Loads to Illinois Rivers and Streams

Biennial Report Recognizes Positive, Voluntary Steps to Reduce Nutrient Loss

DECATUR, IL -- As part of the state's on-going commitment to reduce nutrient losses, the directors of the Illinois Department of Agriculture and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency announced today the release of the state's Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy Biennial Report. This document, unveiled at the 2017 Farm Progress Show in Decatur, IL, describes actions taken in Illinois during the last two years to reduce nutrient losses and influence positive changes in nutrient loads over time.

Illinois' Strategy is one of numerous other state strategies developed and implemented over the 31-state Mississippi River basin, intended to improve our nation's water quality. Illinois' Strategy provides a framework for reducing both point and non-point nutrient losses to improve our state's overall water quality, as well as the quality of water leaving the state and making its way down the Mississippi River into the Gulf of Mexico.

"Illinois agriculture has a positive story to tell," said Department of Agriculture Director Raymond Poe. "We have seen a significant increase in the adoption of various best management practices. Our partners and stakeholders have done a tremendous job getting the word out about what we are doing in Illinois with the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy. Farmers understand the consequences of nutrient loss, and they support our quest to minimize losses."

"In just two years, we are already seeing the impacts of Illinois' Strategy on water quality," said Illinois EPA Director Alec Messina. "The collaborative efforts of our stakeholders are resulting in real improvements in Illinois' waters and we look forward to future improvements that will be gained as additional practices are implemented."

The biennial report contains an update to the original science assessment including nutrient load data from 2011-2015 for both point and non-point sources as well as sector by sector reports on activities conducted during the last two years targeted at nutrient loss reduction.

The report also contains information from a recent survey conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA-NASS) as well as other data from other existing sources to serve as metrics by which progress towards overall water quality improvements can be measured now and in the future.

The Agriculture Water Quality Partnership Forum (AWQPF) reports that the agriculture sector invested more than \$54 million in nutrient loss reduction for research, outreach, implementation and monitoring. These contributions have come from AWQPF members and other organizations that are working towards reaching the goals set forth in the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRs). Because of the proactive measures of the various agriculture groups, Illinois farmers have become broadly aware of a variety of strategies that mitigate nutrient loss through the adoption of best management practices. Highlights include a move toward split spring/fall nitrogen applications and an increase number of acres dedicated to conservation practices such as a use of cover crops.



Over the course of the last two years since the release of the strategy, significant strides have also been made in limiting the amount of phosphorus discharge from wastewater treatment plants in Illinois. In the last year, point source sector members targeted key decision makers and practitioners to spread the message of nutrient loss reduction through regulatory updates as part of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. As of 2016, nearly 80-percent of all effluent from wastewater treatment plants in Illinois is regulated under a NPDES permit that includes a total phosphorus limit. This number will continue to grow as existing permits expire or come up for renewal. To demonstrate the commitment toward nutrient removal, waste water treatment facilities report spending \$144.96 million to fund feasibility studies, optimization studies and capital investment.

The Illinois EPA, through its State Revolving Fund program, provides low interest rate loans to point source projects addressing water quality issues, including nutrient pollution. Last year, Illinois EPA provided/granted \$640,599,148 dollars to these projects. Illinois EPA also provides funding for nonpoint source projects designed to achieve nutrients reduction. Annually this program provides 3.5 million dollars to nonpoint source projects.

This biennial report will be updated again in 2019. The science, monitoring and activity from each sector will be updated to demonstrate Illinois' continued commitment to nutrient loss reduction.

"There is a lot more work that needs to be done," said Warren Goetsch, IDOA Deputy Director. "However, in releasing this report at the Farm Progress Show, we are introducing these successes to farmers who may be somewhat apprehensive about trying new management practices. Increasing the exposure of our message will keep this effort in front of producers so we can continue to make progress in the years to come."



For more Information:
Website:
powmiaremember.com
Phone: (901) 834-6349



Inaugural POW-MIA Remembrance Ride

Ride and Remember Colonel David Hrdicka
along with all of our POWs and MIAs



When:
September 16, 2017
Ride begins @ 11:00 am

Entry Fee:
\$8.00 per Rider
\$10.00 per Couple

Starting Point:
**Jefferson Barracks
POW-MIA Museum**
16 Hancock Ave, St. Louis, MO

Ending Point:
**Deer Creek USA Golf &
Fore Honor Event Center**
5300 Dulin Creek Rd, Hot Springs, MO

Join the POW-MIA Family
Support Rally after the ride at
Deer Creek. Food, beverages,
and entertainment available.



FISH FRY

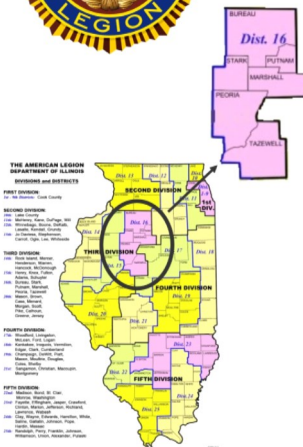
\$9.00 ~ Meal includes Walleye & sides
(Kids under 6 yrs. eat free)

OCTOBER 28, 2017 1:00 PM ~ 7:00 PM

Marine Corps League, Detachment 085
13370 Garmen Rd. Pekin, IL
(309) 346-8888



16th District AMERICAN LEGION Fundraiser



AMERICAN LEGION PROGRAMS

- ★ Youth Programs
- ★ Baseball
- ★ Boys State / Nation
- ★ Oratorical Contest
- ★ Scholarships
- ★ Scouting
- ★ Junior Shooting Sports
- ★ Youth Cadet Law Enforcement
- ★ Children & Youth
- ★ Family Support Network
- ★ Temporary Financial Assistance
- ★ Legion Riders
- ★ Operation Comfort Warriors
- ★ Gifts To The Yanks
- ★ Poppy Day
- ★ POW/MIA
- ★ National Emergency Fund
- ★ Homeless Veterans
- ★ Volunteering
- ★ Amateur Radio Club
- ★ Walk For Veterans
- ★ Legislative
- ★ Flag Advocacy
- ★ National Security



Sons of The American Legion 46th Annual National Convention Reno, Nevada — August 18 to 20, 2017



Detachment of Illinois representing at the 46th Annual Sons of The American Legion National Convention in Reno.

*Edna Taylor receiving the highest award
for membership in the nation for the 20&4
at the 20&4 National Convention.*



2017—2018 DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST. / DIV.	TIME	POST	CITY
09/15/2017	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	DEERFIELD POST 738	DEERFIELD
09/20/2017	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	LINCOLNWOOD POST 1226	LINCOLNWOOD
09/28/2017	8TH DISTRICT	8:00 PM	PARK FOREST POST 1198	CHICAGO HEIGHTS
10/01/2017	16TH DISTRICT	10:00 AM	HENRY POST 323	HENRY
10/01/2017	21ST DISTRICT	1:00 PM	EDWIN CORPIN POST 905	KINCAID
10/07/2017	3RD DISTRICT	11:30 AM	CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY	CHICAGO
10/08/2017	24TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	WEST SALEM POST 658	WEST SALEM
10/15/2017	3RD DIVISION	1:00 PM	ABINGDON POST 381	ABINGDON
10/15/2017	5TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	METROPOLIS POST 306	METROPOLIS
10/15/2017	12TH DISTRICT	TBA	MAZON POST 352	MAZON
10/18/2017	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	GEO. W. BENJAMIN POST 791	NORTHBROOK
10/20/2017	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	MCKINLOCK POST 264	LAKE FOREST
10/26/2017	8TH DISTRICT	8:00 PM	CHICAGO HEIGHTS POST 131	S CHICAGO HEIGHTS
10/29/2017	4TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	RUEL-NEAL POST 79	LEROY

It's that time of year again. If your District or Division would like your scheduled meeting dates, time and location posted in the Department News please submit them to:
American Legion, Dept. of IL ~ P.O. Box 2910 Bloomington, IL 61702 ~ ATTN: JOY WILSON
 If you have internet access you may email your schedule to: joywilson@illegion.org

NOTE: Please remember if any changes or updates regarding said posted meetings occur submit them as soon as possible to Joy Wilson in writing (or Email).

YOUTH PROGRAM DATES TO REMEMBER

★ **Oratorical Contest--March 3, 2018***

(*new location—Crowne Plaza Springfield)

★ **Boys State--June 9th-15th, 2018**

★ **Illini Girls State--June 17th-23rd, 2018**

★ **Youth Police---June 24th-29th, 2018**



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Phone: 309-663-0361 Fax: 309-663-5783
Email: hdqs@illegion.org Web: www.illegion.org

Department Commander Department Editor
ROBERT "Bob" HENDERSON MARTY CONATSER

Now Is The Time To Stand Together For Our Flag



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SEPTEMBER TRIVIA?

- Who distanced herself from politics by changing her last name to Davis at 22?
- Who piloted the first airplane to suffer a passenger fatality, in 1908?
- What river was Hernando De Soto the first white man to see and be buried in?
- Who was known as "Tanya" after a 1974 San Francisco bank robbery?
- What seventh king of Israel shares his name with a Herman Melville literary character?

ANSWERS:

1. Patti Reagan.
2. Orville Wright.
3. The Mississippi River.
4. Patti Hearst.
5. Ahab.





celebrating
LABOR DAY

Word Search

W	U	U	O	H	N	S	Y	A	D	I	L	O	H	Z
S	I	J	I	L	Y	P	P	H	S	O	C	T	L	X
D	E	M	W	E	E	K	E	N	D	U	G	E	I	S
E	T	P	S	I	J	I	L	S	Y	A	D	N	O	M
C	V	K	T	R	M	W	U	U	O	H	N	S	Y	G
F	Q	L	E	E	N	S	I	M	I	L	Y	P	U	H
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A	H	R	O	A	T	L	X	U	K	A	O	F	M	A
L	N	S	Y	G	N	I	D	N	E	Z	I	F	A	L
L	Y	P	P	H	R	O	C	T	L	A	B	O	R	P

See how many of these newspaper related words you can find in the puzzle.
The words can be forward, backward or diagonal.

1. LABOR	5. WORK	9. SUMMER	13. AMERICAN
2. DAY	6. LONG	10. NATIONAL	14. MONDAY
3. HOLIDAY	7. WEEKEND	11. USA	15. DAY
4. SEPTEMBER	8. ENDING	12. TRAVEL	16. OFF

Created by Sue Lindvall
Grand Forks Herald 2012