

# AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS Department News



*The American Legion Family*



2018-2019 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER MICHEAL M. CARDER

AUGUST 2018



## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

TOP 10 DISTRICT  
AND DIVISION RANKINGS

District Commander

**No  
MEMBERSHIP  
RANKINGS  
AT THIS  
TIME.**

Division Commander

## Meet our 2018 ~ 2019 American Legion Family Illinois Leadership



*American Legion  
Department Commander  
Micheal M. Carder*



*American Legion Department  
Sr Vice Commander  
Roy Weber*



*ALA Department President  
Debra Lewis*



*SAL Detachment Commander  
Eugene Gort*

## *From The Desk of Department Commander Micheal M. Carder*



**M**y fellow Legionnaires we are starting on a second century of Service to God and Country and I sincerely thank you for electing me as your Commander for the 2018 - 2019 Legion year.

It is now our legacy to carry the American Legion forward into the next 100 years and beyond. Basically, we will be both handing it forward, and paying it forward to veterans of the present and future. We must start by recruiting and reconnecting with past blue cappers. Recruit ALL veterans both men and women.

It is our duty to improve our efforts in supporting our fellow veterans with increased rolls in Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, Veterans Employment and Veterans Education.

We cannot forget the veterans families with our continuous support of TFA, NEF, the Legacy Run, and the Samsung Scholarship. Each one of

these programs help us to remain family orientated—And FAMILY is number one!

At the beginning of each year new year it is tradition to make a resolution...why not make your 2019 Legion Year resolution one that recruits the younger veteran!

Embrace them, mentor them, make them feel wanted. Listen to their thoughts, implement their ideas, you might be surprised at what grows from a small seed. Let them inspire you.

As we begin our new year we must promote the many legion programs, Boys State, Baseball, Boy Scouts, the Department Oratorical Contest, Youth Police, the Poppy program, GTTY, and so many others.

My theme is **“Knocking For Membership”**. Take the time to make the social connection by knocking on that veterans door.

How do we do this? We increase our use of social media. We promote ourselves on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. there are over ten social media sites to get connected with. Most everyone is now on some social media for some it's an essential

source of information.

Invite your younger veterans in to help you build your social media site and website. If you take the time to build that connection with your local veterans they WILL come. With the use of social media, we can stand up and say without hesitation **This Is Who We Are & What We Do**. Believe me, they will come. This is just another way of “Knocking For Membership”.

I challenge every post, district, and division to develop a web site and social media site. When you do, share your links with Department so they can place it on the [www.illegion.org](http://www.illegion.org) website to help you get connected.

Once again, Thank you for the great honor of being your 2018—2019 Department Commander.

I look forward to working with Auxiliary President Deb Lewis and SAL Detachment Commander Eugene Gort, together we are already a great team and we promise to lead our American Legion Family into the next 100 years.

## *From The Desk of Department Sr. Vice Commander Roy Weber*



**M**y fellow Legionnaires, as this is my first newsletter article, I will make it brief.

First of all I want to thank you all for your support at the Department Convention. It is an honor to represent the Department as your Sr. Vice Commander.

To get off to a running start I ask all District Commanders to make sure all their Post officers are certified and so

they can receive their 2019 membership cards.

As you all know an early start, to renew membership, is key, to maintaining our great Legion programs.

Commander Mike did a fantastic job last year and has some great idea's for the coming year's membership. The membership teams organized by PDC Bob Henderson have proven to work, I intend for them to continue.

When this issue hits the streets, I will have attended the National Membership Conference in Indianapolis. I am sure that with Commander Mike's guidance, we will have some new ideas

on maintaining our Illinois membership and programs in the Department.

With the help of our new officers and all the blue cappers I will strive to make the Department of Illinois proud. I am looking forward to travelling throughout our state for the American Legion. Let's make this 100th year a Great One for the American Legion.



## From The Desk of Department Auxiliary President Debra Lewis



Hello Illinois American Legion Family,

Warm greetings from the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Illinois. We congratulate Commander Henderson, Commander Hayse, and President Haag on a successful administration. They set a wonderful example of what our Legion Family can achieve when we work together for the good of our organizations. Commander Carder, Commander Gort and I will give our all to continuing this legacy; we are strongest when we work as a family.

I am a 41-year member of the Craig-Reed American Legion Auxiliary in Cisco, Nineteenth District, Fourth Division. I grew up outside of Illinois but moved back here in 1999 and have been an active member of my community and The American Legion Auxiliary since then. Illinois has always

been home base for my family and the warm Illinois welcome can never be forgotten. Part of that welcome for me has always included the American Legion Auxiliary which led to the selection of the 2018-2019 theme "**Respect, Preserve, Conserve**". It is through respect for one another, both our differences and similarities, and respect for the sacrifices of our veterans and active duty military that we can preserve and conserve our organizations. We must focus on improving member experience by getting back to the basics of working our programs, being civil with one another, and serving with love and joy to improve our membership. If we focus on these highlights we will solidify our foundation for the next one hundred years.

A graduate of Parkland College and the University of Illinois; I have worked at Cunningham Children's Home in Urbana for 11 years. As a supervisor in the residential program, I work with children who have emotional and behavioral disorders related to complex

trauma. While my work is challenging on a daily basis, it is truly a joy in my life. My professional work has helped influence this year's Auxiliary special project; Bright Star Equestrian Center in Petersburg, Il. Bright Star provides equine groundwork and riding therapy to Veterans and children with special needs free of charge. They have several programs that have well researched evidenced based outcomes.

It's only been a short time since installation; official duties will begin shortly with District and Division Installations, Fall Board Meeting August 3rd and 4th in Champaign, and Veteran's Day at the Illinois State Fair on Sunday August 12th. I hope to visit many of you on my travels. I love to get out there and work with The American Legion family so if you have a project coming up you'd like help with, drop me a line or give me a call, I want to roll up my sleeves and get my hands dirty!

## From The Desk of Detachment Commander Eugene Gort



At the 55th annual convention of the Sons of the American Legion, I Eugene Gort, was elected Detachment Commander for the 2018—2019 membership year. I am a 24 year member of the Sons from Squadron # 974 in Franklin Park. I gained my eligibility from the service of both of my parents and my grandfathers. I have been active within the Sons for the last ten years; holding offices from the squadron to the detachment level. One of the reasons I became active was the ultimate sacrifice paid by one of

my high school friends Pvt. Randol Shelton during the Iraq War.

The American Legion Family has provided many opportunities for me to honor not only the service of my parents, but also the service of my friend.

The theme for the 2018—2019 year is all about "**Building Bridges for Success**." There are three bridges that we are looking to build over the next year. The first one is between the different entities of the American Legion Family, and from our national organization down to the squadron level. The more effectively we can communicate the better we will be able to support the four pillars of the American Legion. The second bridge is

between ourselves and the future leaders within our organization and our county. By instilling strong American values on the children and youth today we can create the future leaders we hope for tomorrow. The last bridge we are looking to build is between ourselves and the general public. Too many people don't know all the great things that the American Legion Family does for our veterans, our country, and our communities. It is important that we get out and share all the amazing things we do. I look forward to working with President Deb Lewis and Commander Mike Carder. Together as a team we will have a very successful year.



# Did You Know?

Office: 312-980-4266 Email: [Raymond.Toczec@va.gov](mailto:Raymond.Toczec@va.gov)

That as Chairman of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division VA&R committee I am required to make a report each year to that Division. I thought it would be informative to our members who live outside the 1<sup>st</sup> Division to see what we have accomplished up north. Part one was in last month's newsletter, here is part two:

Our 1<sup>st</sup> Division website is a good place to find current information affecting veterans benefits and programs. Check it out at <http://www.ilfirstdivision.org/>. We have finally added a "tab" entitled Posts to Rent. You can get a drop down menu listing all the Posts and point-of-contacts for those who rent their halls. PLEASE LET OUR WEBMASTER, JOHN LOS, KNOW IF THERE ARE ANY CHANGES IN THAT POSTED INFORMATION.

By now most service-connected disabled veterans are aware of the great property tax reduction/exemption but if not here is what they receive based on their service-connected disabled rating:

Vets rated 30-40% \$2,500 reduction in assessed value  
Vets rated 50-60% \$5,000 reduction in assessed value  
Vets rate 70% or more NO PROPERTY TAXES!

If you were not aware of this you can contact your property tax office and ask for an amendment to your tax bill. This benefit in most respects passes on to the surviving spouse but be sure the spouses name is on the title. As a current Veterans Administration letter will be needed each year when filing veterans are encouraged to sign up for an eBenefits account so they can print out these letters right from home.

There were several major changes in Veterans Administration benefit laws. The first was regarding contaminated water at Camp Lejeune. Several types of cancers and Parkinson's disease can now be considered service-connected in most cases. There was a change in the Bronze Medallion for veterans who purchased headstones for private cemeteries. Veterans who died all the way back to World War I can now have their families order the Medallion to place on these private headstones. And finally veterans can now get official pre-authorization to be buried in a Veterans Administration National Cemetery. This includes their spouse.

The Veterans Administration has rolled out a new appeals program called RAMP. It is expected to shorten the wait time for appeals. Right now they average well over 3 years and RAMP will take under six months.

I continue to push our comrades to take advantage of both the eBenefits and the My healthvet websites. There are very useful tools and one can check their claims and appeals or e-mail questions to their doctor. The veterans scratch off lotto tickets are still being sold by the State of Illinois and your Department benefits in part from their sales.

I attended several town hall meetings at the VA Regional Office and Jesse Brown hospital. I made our presence known by wearing my cover and asked several pointed questions from the floor. I will continue to attend these events and ask others to come out and wear your blue hats.

The 9<sup>th</sup> District e-mail blast is working extremely well and over 200 members in that District have signed up for it. In the last 12 months over 230 separate e-mails have been sent. It is an extremely good tool for get veterans' information out in a timely manner. Other districts are encouraged to set one up.

The Veterans Administration will be issuing a universal veteran ID card early next year (or so they say). This card is now 4 years overdue. Details will follow as they are made available.

In closing, I wish to thank outgoing Commander Siciliano for letting me serve on this committee and as one of the Division Service Officers. If you should have any comments or concerns regarding this report or a question on any VA benefit program please call our office at 312-980-4266, or e-mail me: [Raymond.Toczec@va.gov](mailto:Raymond.Toczec@va.gov).

**A report is only good if someone reads it. Hope you did!**

# Save the Date!

Go to: [www.illegion.org](http://www.illegion.org)  
to register for The American  
Legion State Golf Tournament

**August 4 & 5, 2018**



*Come early and enjoy Danville, IL!  
Friday, August 3rd*

## Golf Practice Round Discount

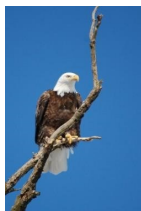
\$20 - 18 holes with a cart, call in advance to schedule tee times!  
Harrison Park Golf Course (217) 31-2266  
Turtle Run Golf Club (217) 442-8876

## Putting Contest

Free 3-hole Putting Contest at Turtle Run Golf Club  
Friday, August 3: 11AM-3 PM Prize: \$100 Visa Card and \$100 cash  
to Legion of choice

## Pontoon Boat Ride

Lake Vermilion Wildlife Sightseeing Tour!  
*Enjoy a scenic pontoon boat ride on beautiful Lake Vermilion. Available 12-6 PM, approximately 1 hour and is free to all AL State Golf Tournament participants and their spouses. Beer and soft drinks will be available.*  
Contact **Greg Barrett 217/304-0636** to reserve your space today!



## American Legion Dinner

American Legion Post #210  
201 Prospect Place  
Drink & Dinner specials starting at 5:30 PM

## Danville Dans Game

6:30 PM - Danville Dans vs. Terre Haute Rex  
Historic Danville Stadium 401 Highland Blvd  
**Free admission** – just identify yourself at the ticket gate as a Participant in the American Legion State Golf



## Downtown Danville

Visit our **"Everything but Ordinary"** Shops and local attractions  
in Downtown, Danville, IL.

## PLAY? SPONSOR? INFORMATION?

Email: [ALStateGolf@gmail.com](mailto:ALStateGolf@gmail.com)  
1-800-383-4386  
Chairman: Gregg Alpers

*Saturday August 4th  
An Evening at the Legion Post 210  
Everyone Welcome*

**American Legion State Golf Tournament Begins  
Opening Ceremony at Harrison Park Golf Course**

## Dinner

Dinner included for all golf participants in the event immediately following round of golf.

Additional meals can be purchased for \$12.00.  
*(Half Rack of Ribs, 10 oz. Ribeye Steak, or 10 oz. Grilled Chicken)*

## Speed Painter

Local artist, John Jansky will demonstrate his speed painting talent. Paintings will be auctioned off immediately following.

## Live Music & Entertainment

Rodman Rail and others

## Fireworks – at dusk



*Sunday August 5th*

**American Legion State Golf Tournament  
Continues  
Announcement of Winners and Closing  
Ceremony at Turtle Run Golf Club**



*State Golf Tournament proceeds help support  
Dept. of Illinois American Legion programs*



# 100th National American Legion Convention



Illinois Hotel housing will be at the Hyatt Regency

Website: <https://minneapolis.regency.hyatt.com>

National Convention Information can be found on the Legion Website at [www.legion.org/convention/resources](http://www.legion.org/convention/resources)

The National housing form can be found online at [www.illegion.org/event/national-convention](http://www.illegion.org/event/national-convention)  
Or contact Department Headquarters to have a form mailed.

## Illinois Party Monday, August 27th

Experience the Twin Cities is honored to have been selected to provide tour experiences during the 100th National Convention of The American Legion in Minneapolis, MN. Should you wish to take advantage of any tours, please keep in mind you are responsible for registering and paying for any and all charges associated with each tour.

- ★ MINNEAPOLIS HISTORY & THEATER TOUR
- ★ MINNEAPOLIS LANDMARK SIGHTSEEING TOUR
- ★ "Hands On" MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC ART WALKING TOUR
- ★ CRAFT BREW HOP BREWERY TOUR

- ★ MALL OF AMERICA SHOPPING SHUTTLE
- ★ PADDLEBOAT LUNCH –or– DINNER CRUISE
- ★ MYSTIC LAKE CASINO GAMING SHUTTLE
- ★ HISTORIC FORT SNELLING—Defending Minnesota
- ★ HISTORIC STILLWATER EXPERIENCE –Food, Wine, Beer & More!

### TOUR REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT:

- ◆ Check out what's being offered when via [www.legion.org/convention/resources](http://www.legion.org/convention/resources)
- ◆ Registration for tours will be available in a variety of ways:
  - o Online ([www.legion.org/convention/resources](http://www.legion.org/convention/resources)) click on TOUR OPPORTUNITIES specifically for The American Legion OR phone at 612-750-9898
  - o On-site at the Minneapolis Convention Center during the 100th National Convention.
- ◆ Register early to ensure your spot as some tours have capacity limits and/or earlier registration deadlines
- ◆ Payment for each tour will be the responsibility of the individual who books the tour and not of The American Legion.
- ◆ Per participant pricing varies on the tour selected and/or any customization included.
- ◆ Once a tour is purchased, all payments are non-refundable, except in the case of a tour registrant not being able to attend the Convention or participate in a registered tour due to sickness or death.

### The American Legion's 100th National Convention



**American Legion Family Night with the Minnesota Twins!**

**Saturday, August 25th at 6:10 PM • Target Field  
Minnesota Twins vs. Oakland A's**

#### Highlights to your event:

- Field Box Seats for \$36
  - Home Plate View Seats for \$23
- Seating is limited

Tickets are available only on a first-come, first-served basis

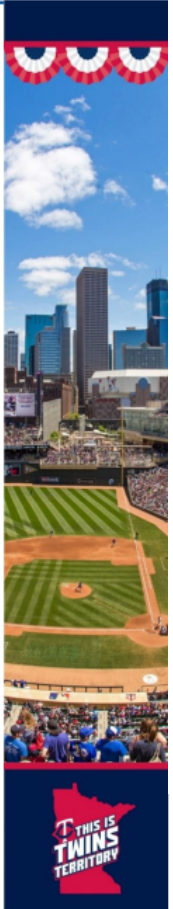
**Come and see your National Commander  
Denise Rohan throw out the first pitch**

#### HOW TO ORDER

- Call 1-800-33-TWINS (hit "0" to speak to an attendant). Phone lines are open during business hours and most evenings/weekends during Twins games.
- At the START of your call, be sure to reference this special American Legion promotion.
- VISA, MASTERCARD, DISCOVER and AMERICAN EXPRESS are accepted. A \$5 service/handling fee will be added to each order.
  - Your tickets will be delivered by email.

*No exchanges or refunds; offer not valid with any other discounts, promotions or on day of game. Game date and time are subject to change*

Questions or have a group of 25 or more? Contact Brian Bessler directly at (612) 659-4083 or [BrianBessler@twinsbaseball.com](mailto:BrianBessler@twinsbaseball.com)



**AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING RESERVATION FORM**  
**2018 NATIONAL CONVENTION—MINNEAPOLIS, MN AUGUST 24—30, 2018**

Illinois Housing: Hyatt Regency 1300 Nicollet Mall Minneapolis, MN 55403 (612) 370-1234 *(Rooms will be assigned on a first come first served basis.)*

**\*\* HOUSING DEADLINE: JULY 24, 2018 \*\***

*(Please Print)*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Member of: Legion Auxiliary SAL *(Circle one)*

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION ONLY** \* *There is no charge if under the age of 18.* \*

Registration fee of \$25.00 must be paid to Department for each adult that is to attend the National Convention regardless of housing arrangements. Those individuals who do not pay the registration fee with this form will be responsible for obtaining their own credentials.

**ADDITIONAL OCCUPANTS**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Member of: Legion Auxiliary SAL *(Circle one)*  
*(If your name is listed above—DO NOT LIST HERE)*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Member of: Legion Auxiliary SAL *(Circle one)*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Member of: Legion Auxiliary SAL *(Circle one)*

*\* There is no charge if under the age of 18 \**

PLEASE LIST NAMES and AGES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RESERVE THE FOLLOWING:**

King (1-2 person) @ \$137.00 \_\_\_\_\_ **Arrival Date**

Doubles (1-2 person) @ \$137.00 \_\_\_\_\_

ADA King (1-2 person) @ \$137.00 \_\_\_\_\_ **Departure Date**

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER APPLICABLE FEES:**

Convention Registration Fee: \$25.00

Additional Occupant in room: \$20.00 pp/day (3-4 People)

Rollaway Rate Per Day: NOT AVAILABLE

Parking: Self \$19 per day; Valet \$38 per day

ROOM RATE (First night): \$ 137.00

FIRST NIGHT ROOM RATE TAX (13.4%): \$ 18.36

ADVANCED REGISTRATION FEE (\$25 Per Person): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL : \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**PAYMENT METHOD:** Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Make all Checks Payable to: *American Legion Department of Illinois*



Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ CSC # \_\_\_\_\_

*(card type: select one)*

*(code on back of card)*

*add room rate, tax, and registration fees*

**IMPORTANT NOTES:** *(please read then initial each box indicating you have read and understand the information provided)*

- REGISTRATION FEE:** Each adult who will attend the National Convention **MUST** pay a registration fee of \$25.00. **This includes Auxiliary.** If the registration fee is not paid you will have to obtain your own credentials once you arrive at National Convention. All registration fees should be paid to the **American Legion Department of Illinois** along with all first night's room rent and applicable fees which are required by the Hotel.
- CANCELLATIONS AND CHANGE S:** All cancellations must be made in writing to the Department Adjutant and **MUST** be in to **Department Headquarters in Bloomington by 4:30 pm on July 24, 2018.** If the cancellation is not in our hands by the date indicated you will be responsible for the first night's lodging to the Hotel. Contact Department Headquarters Office with any changes.
- LATE HOUSING REGISTRATION:** Arrangements will need to be made yourself and registration is to be paid at National at the National Convention Center
- RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:** *American Legion Department of Illinois 2720 E. Lincoln St., Bloomington, IL 61704*

**NO CARBON REQUIRED**

**RETURN WHITE COPY TO: DEPARTMENT OF IL**

**KEEP YELLOW COPY AS RECEIPT**



# Commander Carder's Homecoming

## Saturday, September 22, 2018

### D. E. C.

- ◆ 1:00 PM--Department Executive Committee Meeting  
CROWNE PLAZA—Chicago SW Burr Ridge  
300 S Frontage Rd, Burr Ridge IL 60527

### Dinner with Commander

- ◆ CROWNE PLAZA—Chicago SW Burr Ridge Grand Ballroom
- ◆ Social Hour 6:00 PM & Dinner 7:00 PM
- ◆ Entertainment following
- ◆ Business Casual Attire



Dinner Menu: Choice of: Chicken Breast w/ lemon sauce -or- 8oz London Broil, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Garden Salad w/dressings, and Cookie tray.

Dinner: \$35 per person

Make check payable to: **Evanston Post #42**

Dinner reservations should be sent to: **Dan Fleming ~5007 Dobson St. Skokie, IL 60077**

Dinner reservation deadline: **Sept. 10, 2018**

Questions? Contact Dinner Chairman: **Dan Fleming (847) 769-5242**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Division # \_\_\_\_\_ District # \_\_\_\_\_

**Dinner Selection:** \_\_\_\_\_ *Chicken Breast* (or) \_\_\_\_\_ *London Broil*

(For Group Seating: Please List Names for table of 8 \***Include dinner selection**)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## Housing

### CROWNE PLAZA

Chicago SW Burr Ridge  
300 S Frontage Road  
Burr Ridge, IL 60527  
(630) 325-2900

[www.cpchicagosw.com](http://www.cpchicagosw.com)

Double Queens -or- King  
\$109 plus tax each night  
(includes breakfast)

Cut off date for  
room block is  
August 21, 2018

*Book Early!*

**REMINDER:** All Dinner Reservations should be sent to:  
**Dan Fleming ~ 5007 Dobson St. Skokie, IL 60077**





## VETERANS & GOLD STAR FAMILIES DAY AT THE ILLINOIS STATE FAIR

**Sunday, August 13, 2017**  
**9:30 am – 4:00 pm**

Veterans & their families are admitted to the grounds for free. A veterans parade and activities are some of the highlights for the day. Discounted ride passes for families of military veterans.

### The Veterans Day Activities are held at Lincoln Stage

- @ 9:30 am *Celebration of Life*
- @ 10:30 am *JROTC Drill Team & AmVet Kid's Corner*
- @ 12:00 *Veterans Day ~ Main Program*
- @ 1:00 pm *Free Veterans Lunch @ Rising Star Tent*
- @ 3:00 *JROTC Drill Team Awards Ceremony*
- @ 4:00 pm *Veterans Day Parade*

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

ALA Fall Board  
 August 3rd--4th  
 ~ ~ ~

ALA DEPT. PRES.  
 HOMECOMING  
 August 4th  
 ~ ~ ~

National Membership Workshop  
 Indianapolis, IN  
 August 9th--11th  
 ~ ~ ~

Baseball World Series  
 Shelby, NC  
 August 16th--21st  
 ~ ~ ~

Legacy Run  
 August 18th--23rd  
 ~ ~ ~

**100th National Convention**  
**Minneapolis, MN**  
**August 24th--30th**  
 ~ ~ ~

**LABOR DAY**  
**DEPT. OFFICE CLOSED**  
**SEPTEMBER 3RD**  
 ~ ~ ~

Department Appointments  
 Meetings with Division Cmdrs  
 @ DEPT HQ  
 September 5th  
 ~ ~ ~

Division Officers Retreat  
 September 8th--9th  
 ~ ~ ~

ALA 3rd Div Fall Forum  
 TBA @ 8:30 AM  
 September 8th  
 ~ ~ ~

ALA Forum @ 8:30 am  
 Collinsville, IL  
 September 9th  
 ~ ~ ~

Patriots Day  
 September 11th  
 # # #

**USAA is Proud to Serve  
 The American Legion**



We've joined forces with The American Legion to help support their mission and programs. When you join USAA, you become part of an extended, military-based family that can be passed down from generation to generation.

**GET A QUOTE**

You could save by bundling home and auto insurance



Discover what a FREE USAA membership can do for you [www.usaa.com/legion](http://www.usaa.com/legion) or call 877-699-2654 to learn more.

# SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS

Drawing July 14, 2018

1st PLACE	\$10,000	Merle L. Andreas
2nd PLACE	\$5,000	Daniel T Mahoney
3rd PLACE	\$2,500	Julia A Colwell
4th PLACE	\$1,500	Harry G erickson
5th PLACE	\$1,000	Irwin H Woker
6th PLACE	\$1,000	Ralph S Riester
7th PLACE	\$750	Richard E Hannon
8th PLACE	\$750	Anita J Winkles
9th PLACE	\$500	Charles L Smith
10th PLACE	\$500	Royce Fletcher
11th PLACE	\$250	Kevin C Rachford
12th PLACE	\$250	Thomas B Riley
13th PLACE	\$100	John Urh
14th PLACE	\$100	Karen L. Carman
15th PLACE	\$100	Jim D Dimitroff
16th PLACE	\$100	Richard A Kowalczyk
17th PLACE	\$100	Ronald W Jones
18th PLACE	\$100	Frank Bugos
19th PLACE	\$100	Lauri E. Bailey
20th PLACE	\$100	Charles F. VanSickle Sr.
21st PLACE	\$100	John A. Fink Jr.
22nd PLACE	\$100	Joseph T Costa

**\$25,000**

## House Approves Benefits for Blue Water Navy Veterans

WASHINGTON -- The House unanimously passed legislation Monday that would extend Department of Veterans affairs benefits to approximately 90,000 sailors who served off the coast during the Vietnam War, some of whom have been fighting for years to prove their illnesses were caused by exposure to Agent Orange.

Lawmakers voted 382-0 in favor of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, which must go to the Senate for final approval. It provides eligibility for disability compensation to "Blue Water" Navy veterans -- those sailors aboard aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers and other ships who contend they were exposed to Agent Orange through the ships' water systems. The dioxin-laden herbicide has been found to cause respiratory cancers, Parkinson's disease and heart disease, as well as other conditions.

"Every day, thousands of brave veterans who served in the Vietnam War fight the health effects of Agent Orange exposure," said Rep. David Valadao, R-Calif., the bill's lead sponsor. "It is far past time we pass this critical legislation and give them the comfort and care they deserve."

Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif., said the legislation would correct a "long-standing injustice."

A VA policy decision in 2002 stripped Blue Water Navy veterans of their eligibility for compensation, unless they could prove they set foot in Vietnam. Bills were introduced in 2011, 2013 and 2015 to address the problem, but progress stalled because of cost concerns.

Extending the benefits for 10 years would cost \$1.1 billion, according to estimates from the Congressional Budget Office. To make up the cost, the legislation raises fees for servicemembers and veterans who use the VA's home loan program. The increase amounts to between \$2.14 and \$2.95 each month.

"It has taken years of dedicated advocacy and bipartisanship to get us here today," Takano said. "Finding over \$1 billion in the federal budget is not an easy task. The solution in this bill is fair."

Susie Belanger and John Wells -- both Florida residents -- were in the House gallery on Monday when lawmakers cast their votes. The two formed the group Military-Veterans Advocacy nearly eight years ago to push Congress to work for Blue Water Navy veterans.

Belanger's husband, Ernest Belanger, was a sailor who served off the coast of Vietnam. He successfully received approval for VA benefits by proving he stepped foot in the country, but the couple knew other veterans were still being denied coverage. Susie Belanger recruited Wells,

*(Blue Water continued on page 14)*





# American Legion Department of Illinois 100th Convention



# 130,000 veterans may be eligible for refund for taxes paid on disability severance payment

The Department of Defense has identified more than 130,000 veterans who may be eligible for a refund for taxes paid on their disability severance payment.

Veterans who are eligible for a refund for taxes paid on their disability severance payment can submit a 1040X Amended U.S. Individual Tax Return for their reimbursement. The department began mailing notices to veterans July 9.

The deadline to file for the refund is one year from the date of the Defense Department notice, or three years after the due date for filing the original return for the year the disability severance payment was made, or two years after the tax was paid for the year the disability severance payment was made, according to the IRS.

Affected veterans can submit a claim based on their actual disability severance payment by submitting to the IRS a completed Form 1040X, the Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return.

The IRS also has approved a simplified method for obtaining the refund, in which veterans can claim the standard refund amount on Form 1040X based on when they received the disability severance payment. Those standard refund amounts are \$1,750 for tax years 1991 to 2005; \$2,400 for tax years 2006 to 2010; and \$3,200 for tax years 2011 to 2016.

The disability severance payment is not taxable or subject to federal income tax withholding for a veteran meeting either of these criteria:

- The veteran has a combat-related injury or illness as determined by his or her military service at separation that resulted directly from armed conflict; took place while the member was engaged in extra-hazardous service; took place under conditions simulating war, including training exercises such as maneuvers; or was caused by an instrumentality of war.
- The veteran is receiving disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs or has received notification from VA approving such compensation.

However, many of the veterans had taxes withheld, but the Combat-Injured Veterans Tax Fairness Act of 2016 remedies that. The act directed the secretary of defense to identify disability severance payments paid after Jan. 17, 1991, that were included as taxable income.

Even if a veteran did not receive a letter from the Defense Department, the individual may still be eligible for a refund. DoD recommends visiting the [IRS website](#) and searching “combat injured veterans” for further information.

Estates or surviving spouses can file a claim on behalf of a veteran who is now deceased, the IRS explains on its website.

Form 1040 Department of the Treasury—Internal Revenue Service (99) 2018 OMB No. 1545-0074 IRS Use Only—Do not write or staple in this space.

For the year Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2015, or other tax year beginning , 2015, ending , 20

Your first name and initial Last name Your social security number

If a joint return, spouse's first name and initial Last name Spouse's social security number

Home address (number and street). If you have a P.O. box, see instructions. Apt. no.

City, town or post office, state, and ZIP code. If you have a foreign address, also complete spaces below (see instructions).

Foreign country name Foreign province/state/county Foreign postal code

**Filing Status** 1  Single 4  Head of household (with qualifying person). (See instructions.) If the qualifying person is a child but not your dependent, enter this child's name here. 2  Married filing jointly (even if only one had income) 3  Married filing separately. Enter spouse's SSN above and full name here. 5  Qualifying widow(er) with dependent child

Check only one box.

**Exemptions** 6a  Yourself. If someone can claim you as a dependent, do not check box 6a. 6b  Spouse

c Dependents:		(2) Dependent's social security number	(3) Dependent's relationship to you	(4) <input type="checkbox"/> if child under age 17 qualifying for child tax credit (see instructions)
(1) First name	Last name			<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>

If more than four dependents, see instructions and check here

d Total number of exemptions claimed

Boxes checked on 6a and 6b No. of children on 6c who: • lived with you • did not live with you due to divorce or separation (see instructions) Dependents on 6c not entered above Add numbers on lines above



2018 Dept. Photo Contest Winners			2019 Calendar Winners			
<b>1ST DIVISION</b>			<b>MONTH</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>DIV.</b>	<b>AWARD</b>
1ST PLACE	COLINETTE MARSHALL	\$100				
2ND PLACE	AUGUST GREIDANUS	\$75	<b>COVER</b>	RICHARD YNDESTAD	2	\$75
3RD PLACE	AUGUST GREIDANUS	\$50				
4TH PLACE	H. KILIAN	\$25	<b>JANUARY</b>	CHARLES ZELINSKY	4	\$75
<b>2ND DIVISION</b>						
1ST PLACE	RICHARD YNDESTAD	\$100	<b>FEBRUARY</b>	PAUL GARRETT	4	\$75
2ND PLACE	RICHARD YNDESTAD	\$75				
3RD PLACE	RICHARD YNDESTAD	\$50	<b>MARCH</b>	PAUL GARRETT	4	\$75
4TH PLACE	RICHARD YNDESTAD	\$25				
<b>3RD DIVISION</b>			<b>APRIL</b>	RICHARD YNDESTAD	2	\$75
1ST PLACE	DAVID A. SCOTT, SR.	\$100				
2ND PLACE	DAVID A. SCOTT, SR.	\$75	<b>MAY</b>	JILL HENRY	4	\$75
3RD PLACE	DAVID A. SCOTT, SR.	\$50				
4TH PLACE	DAVID A. SCOTT, SR.	\$25	<b>JUNE</b>	DAVID A. SCOTT, SR.	3	\$75
<b>4TH DIVISION</b>						
1ST PLACE	RUEL NEAL POST 79	\$100	<b>JULY</b>	PAUL GARRETT	4	\$75
2ND PLACE	JILL HENRY	\$75				
3RD PLACE	CHARLES ZELINSKY	\$50	<b>AUGUST</b>	PHILIP H. METTE	5	\$75
4TH PLACE	CHARLES ZELINSKY	\$25				
<b>5TH DIVISION</b>			<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	DAVID A. SCOTT, SR.	3	\$75
1ST PLACE	PHILIP H. METTE	\$100				
2ND PLACE	KRISTA METTE	\$75	<b>OCTOBER</b>	COLINETTE MARSHALL	1	\$75
3RD PLACE	KRISTA METTE	\$50				
4TH PLACE	PHILIP H. METTE	\$25	<b>NOVEMBER</b>	AUGUST GEIDANUS	1	\$75
<b>5TH DIVISION</b>						
1ST PLACE	PHILIP H. METTE	\$100	<b>DECEMBER</b>	ROBERT FUGGITI	1	\$75
2ND PLACE	KRISTA METTE	\$75				
3RD PLACE	KRISTA METTE	\$50				
4TH PLACE	PHILIP H. METTE	\$25				

# Gov. Rauner signs Quincy Veterans' Home bills

*Continues administration's commitment to honoring heroes*

SPRINGFIELD — Gov. Bruce Rauner signed legislation on July 17, 2018 that expands the Illinois Veterans' Home at Quincy and cuts the red tape on future construction projects, allowing the administration to move quickly to build a new state-of-the-art facility at the campus.

"We're building a brand new facility and making sure our veterans have a safe place to call home," Rauner said. "Building this new facility should not be caught up in the bureaucratic process. Our veterans deserve the best. They have fought to secure our freedom and we're fighting to make sure they have the care they need for generations to come."

Rauner signed Senate Bill 3128, allowing the state to use the design-build delivery method to renovate, rehabilitate and rebuild the Illinois Veterans' Home at Quincy. This method will eliminate redundant steps in the traditional state construction process, shave months off the overall project time and save taxpayer dollars.

"More than 360 veterans call the Illinois Veterans' Home at Quincy home and we're excited about moving forward with this project," said Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs Acting Director Stephen Curda. "This home is a staple in the community and we hope that never changes. We are all proud of this home and just last week, we gave Quincy residents an opportunity to learn more about the new home development process and provide ideas on what it could look like."

Rauner also signed House Bill 5683, which makes the recently purchased Sycamore nursing facility an official part of the Illinois Veterans' Home at Quincy. Renovations are already underway on the Sycamore unit and are expected to be complete by the end of the year. Securing this unit will ensure continuity of care and temporary housing for veterans while construction on the new facility at the

existing campus is ongoing.

"We continue to move quickly on a number of initiatives to serve our veterans," said Mike Hoffman, senior adviser to the governor. "This includes the renovation of the Sycamore building, ongoing water management projects, and development of a new master plan for the Quincy campus."

State legislators applauded today's actions.

"Securing the design-build contract is one of the final steps to kick-start the Quincy Veterans' Home \$52 million capital development plan," said Sen. Jil Tracy, R-Quincy. "Over the next five years, the campus will undergo a major rehabilitation to update the care facilities and residence to ensure it is up to code and safe for all of our veteran residents and their families. I'm glad to see the governor taking such swift action to begin construction on one of Quincy's most important landmarks."

"The heroes who live at the Quincy Veterans' Home deserve the very best care that can be provided, and today we took a major step in ensuring that will happen," said Rep. Randy Frese, R-Quincy. "Our veterans and the entire Quincy community are thankful and are looking forward to a remodeled and revitalized Quincy Veterans' Home."

"The acquisition of the (Sycamore) transitional facility is an important step toward making sure our veterans receive the best care possible," said Sen. Paul Schimpf, R-Waterloo. "I commend not only Gov. Rauner, but the bipartisan working group that identified this as a solution to keeping our veterans in Quincy at a site they call home."

"This is part of a multi-pronged effort to provide top notch facilities for our state's veterans in Quincy," said Rep. Mike McAuliffe, R-Chicago. "It will guarantee that the veterans that are moved to Sycamore during ongoing renovations to Quincy are still seeing the same familiar, caring faces."

---

*(Blue Water continued from page 10)*

an attorney and retired Navy officer, and started an emailing campaign. Now, her emails are known on Capitol Hill as "Susiegrams."

"Little by little, they all listened," Belanger said. "That's how we got this as far as we have."

Lawmakers repeatedly thanked advocates Monday who helped make the issue a priority in Congress. Valadao called Belanger out by name.

"Passage of this bill today would not be possible without Ms. Susie Belanger, who worked tirelessly to raise awareness on this issue," Valadao said.

It's uncertain when the Senate might take up the issue. Rep. Phil Roe, R-Tenn., the chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, urged the Senate to pass it.

"When I got the chairmanship a year ago, I said one of the things I'll base my chairmanship on is if we can get this solved and do the right thing," Roe said. "Today we're going to do the right thing in this House and send it to the Senate, where they will do the right thing."



# 2018—2019 DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST. / DIV.	TIME	POST	CITY
08/19/2018	5TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	CARMI POST 224 (ORGANIZATIONAL)	CARMI
08/23/2018	8TH DISTRICT	8:00 PM	BLUE ISLAND POST 50	BLUE ISLAND
09/19/2018	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	LINCOLNWOOD POST 1226	LINCOLNWOOD
09/26/2018	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	BILLY CALDWELL POST 806	CHICAGO

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](mailto: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).

## 100 YEARS OF VETERANS STILL SERVING AMERICA

*American Legion Department of Illinois*

# Centennial Coin

**NOW AVAILABLE**

*Order one today!*



Coins are numbered 001 - 500



Coin number not Guaranteed

(309)663-0361

*Call Department Headquarters today to order this one of a kind collectable coin!*

# ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**PRESORTED  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
US POSTAGE PAID  
BLOOMINGTON, IL  
PERMIT No. 18**

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS  
P.O. BOX 2910  
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS 61702

**PUBLISHED MONTHLY \***

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

Department Commander MICHEAL M. CARDER  
Department Editor MARTY CONATSER

*Now Is The Time To Stand Together For Our Flag*

\* One year Subscription to the Department News \$10.00 for 11 issues  
Newletter articles must be at Department Headquarters by the 15th of each month for it to be in the next months issue.

Department of Illinois ~ Official Member of The National American Legion Press Association



Visit our website!  
Scan Here

## AUGUST TRIVIA?

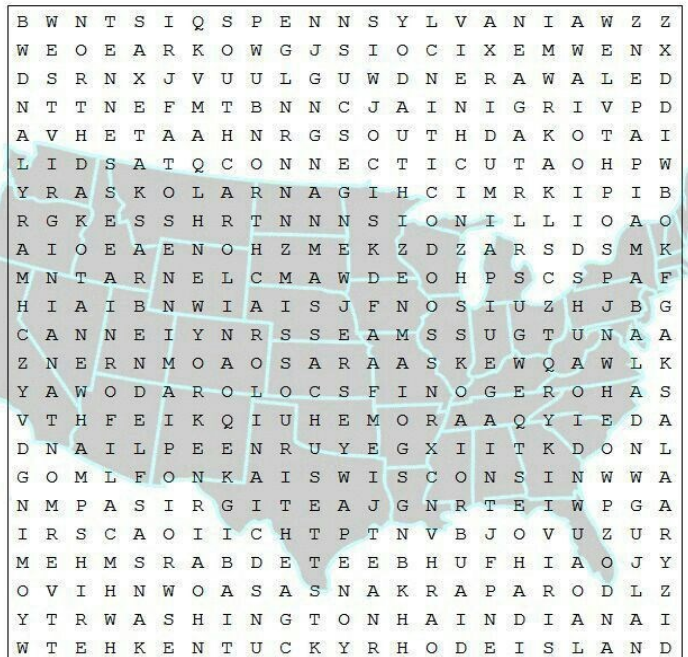
1. What was the name of the Japanese destroyer that sank PT-109, commanded by Lt. John F. Kennedy, on August 2, 1943?
2. When World War II ended in 1945, How many enlisted men and women were in the nation's armed services?
3. How did Napoleon Bonaparte finance his invasion of Russia in 1812?
4. Who was Emil R. Goldfus of Brooklyn, New York?
5. What president ordered the integration of America's armed forces?

### ANSWERS:

1. Amigiri.
2. Almost eleven million (10,795,775).
3. With counterfeit money. After printing it at a factory he set up in Paris, he used it to purchase military supplies.
4. Colonel Rudolf Abel, the Soviet intelligence agent convicted of spying in 1957, who was exchanged for downed American U-2 reconnaissance pilot "Francis Gary Powers" in 1962.
5. Harry S. Truman, in 1948.



## 50 State Word Search



- |             |               |                |                |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Alabama     | Indiana       | Nebraska       | South Carolina |
| Alaska      | Iowa          | Nevada         | South Dakota   |
| Arizona     | Kansas        | New Hampshire  | Tennessee      |
| Arkansas    | Kentucky      | New Jersey     | Texas          |
| California  | Louisiana     | New Mexico     | Utah           |
| Colorado    | Maine         | New York       | Vermont        |
| Connecticut | Maryland      | North Carolina | Virginia       |
| Delaware    | Massachusetts | North Dakota   | Washington     |
| Florida     | Michigan      | Ohio           | West Virginia  |
| Georgia     | Minnesota     | Oklahoma       | Wisconsin      |
| Hawaii      | Mississippi   | Oregon         | Wyoming        |
| Idaho       | Missouri      | Pennsylvania   |                |
| Illinois    | Montana       | Rhode Island   |                |