



The Insider

American Legion Department of Illinois News
OCTOBER 2022

**PFC John L Ferguson
has made it home.**

BE THE ONE



**National Commander
Urges Congress
to Pass National
Buddy Check Week**

Lomac Payton



Greetings American Legion Family—

We are in our 3rd month of the new American Legion Year and things seem to be going well. I have mentioned from time to time that we are making changes in the operations of Department Programs. Some of these changes are long overdue and we need to change with the times:

1. The newsletter; Shandi has done a professional job changing the newsletter.
2. Ron Hoffman has changed the Community Service Program and it looks great as well.
3. Jim Talaska has changed the way our workshops are being taught. Post Level Training for Post Officers, District Officers, and Division Officers as well. All training starts with the theme "Back to the Basics." That's what we need to do to get back to the basics.

Other changes are being made, but some study has to take place before they are implemented. If any of you have any ideas that will help, please email them to me, Shandi or Jim. We are open to ideas that will help improve our Legion Programs.

On Friday, September 2, we had leadership training for Division Officers, followed by our 3rd training for District Officers that Saturday. Both were held at Department Headquarters with a great turnout. On Saturday September 10, we held a workshop in Centralia, Il which had our largest turnout so far. Next will be Post Level Training for Post Commanders and Sr. Vice Commanders. I'm asking all

(Continued on page 5)

Delmar Buske



To Our American Legion Family—

Had a great time at Department with the Legion Riders stopping by for lunch on their way to Milwaukee during the Legacy Ride. The staff did a wonderful job as well as all the extra help.

Thanks for a job well done!!

From there we headed to Milwaukee for the National Convention. What a wonderful week. The Illinois Party was very nice

The training sessions have been very well attended and everyone I have talked to seem to be learning something. Our Membership Director has been doing a very good job along with the membership staff.

The District and Division Commanders met over the Labor Day Weekend at Department for training strategy. I would like to thank all of those that turned out on a holiday weekend.

Until next month.

Janet Bacon



Hello American Legion Family.
American Legion Family, welcome to Fall!

The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Illinois was very well represented at the National Convention held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Liberty Unit m#289 received a first place in the Central Division for their Education Report as well as another first place in the Central Division for their VA&R report. Strasburg was one of eleven Units that won the National President's Unit Award of Excellence. Many times, throughout the Convention we looked up on the big screen and saw many faces of our Illinois members. It was great to see that even some rainy weather could not dampen the spirit of our American Legion Family at the Oktoberfest. The Illinois Party was also a success.

Our Fall Forums have started. We are getting back to basics, and the Forums are stressing that. Without the Units that are our foundation, just like a building with a weakened foundation, we will crumble and fall, leaving nothing for our future members. So, we are trying to keep that foundation strong, and we are having a little fun doing it.

I will be attending National President Vickie's Homecoming in Indiana. Let's hope for good weather because there are many fun filled days planned.

(Continued on page 5)

Kevin O'Connell



To Our American Legion Family—

I am very proud to state that our early membership numbers look good nationally putting us in 6th place overall. This is attributed to our Detachments five-year card program. Our Sr. Vice Commander Mike Vozar is doing an excellent job getting after Divisions, Districts, and Squadrons to get the renewals in early. He also has been after the Division, Districts, and Squadrons that are not certified yet. Hopefully they will conform soon.

My special project for this year is promoting Veteran Suicide Prevention Programs. I have had a few prevention programs reach out for me and delivered brochures for me to pass out. Also promoting the V.A. suicide prevention hot line number.

In a recent briefing, The American Legion stated that the rate of suicide among Veterans may be more than double what federal officials report annually. This is a result of undercounting related to drug overdose deaths and service record errors. Officials from Americana's Warrior Partnership, in a joint study with University of Alabama and Duke University, reviewed census death data from 2014 to 2018 for eight states and found thousands of cases of suspected or confirmed suicides not included in federal calculations.

The National American Legion Suicide Prevention Program is called "Be The One". As explained it asks that you....Be the one to ask Veterans in your life how they are doing. To be the one to listen when a Veteran needs to talk. To be the one to reach out when a Veteran is struggling. We simply

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Commander Payton's homecoming and the Fall D.E.C. were held on September 24 at The Columbian Club at The Knights of Columbus in Galesburg, Illinois. There was a 50/50 raffle (once we got the drum to stay closed!) with the proceeds benefiting the Illinois Disaster Relief Fund and The Haven. Everyone enjoyed dinner and cake and watching Lomac receive his gifts. A great time was had by all!



2022-2023

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER Lomac A. Payton



(Department Commander, Continued from page 1)

manders and Sr. Vice Commanders. I'm asking all to please attend these training workshops and learn what you may not already know about The American Legion. In the meantime, let's get busy and get our members signed up to date in membership. Also, keep up your Buddy Checks. Take care, let's get busy and be safe. May GOD bless.

Your Department Commander, Lomac A. Payton

(ALA President, Continued from page 2)

Please do not forget Make A Difference Day on Saturday, October 22nd. What community activity do you have planned? Please do not forget Education Week the first part of November!

(SAL Commander, Continued from page 2)

cannot stand by while those who gave so much for our National security fight the demons of P.T.S.D. alone. We owe it to them to help them in anyway we can. For God and Country

OCTOBER

Mark
YOUR CALENDAR

OCTOBER 1: 1st Division Fall Forum

@ Chicago Ridge

SAL D.E.C. @ Columbia

FALL MEETINGS @ Dept. HQ

OCTOBER 8: FALL MEETINGS @ Dept. HQ

OCTOBER 10-13: NATIONAL FALL MEETINGS
(INDY)

OCTOBER 22: 2nd Division Fall Forum

@ Fairfield

OCTOBER 29: 2nd Division Fall Forum (#2)

@ Rockford

OCTOBER 8: HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Top 10 District & Division Rankings

District	Commander
----------	-----------

8	Petersen
13	Gibbs
17	Abdelnour
22	Swaim
19	Smith
10	Castella
3	Fitch
16	Burnett Jr
18	Morris
9	Fiorentino

Division	Commander
----------	-----------

4	Garrett
2	Kraut
5	Maden
1	Thompson III
3	Seward Jr

Greetings from the Membership Desk,

You can see from the Picture our Membership Goal Thermometer. Our Goal for the year is 68,073. I will post this every newsletter so you can see where we are at.

We have had our first post level training events already and they have been well received. I look forward to seeing you all on the date scheduled for your District. I cannot stress enough how important this training is as it will save you time and will save my staff time in dealing with issues that could have been addressed by attending these training sessions.

I can tell you in no uncertain terms that mylegion.org is not going to go away. National at some point will make the posts utilize the program they have and not provide Departments with things that can be found on mylegion.org. Help is available for getting onto mylegion.org if you wish and many resources are available for you to make your job easier. Legion.org has 5 different videos available to walk you through the process of signing up all the way through to becoming a mylegion.org expert.

Both Dee and Terry are very familiar with mylegion.org and they can help if you are having issues. This is the number at National to also get help in the event they cannot answer your questions. 1-833-253-9995.

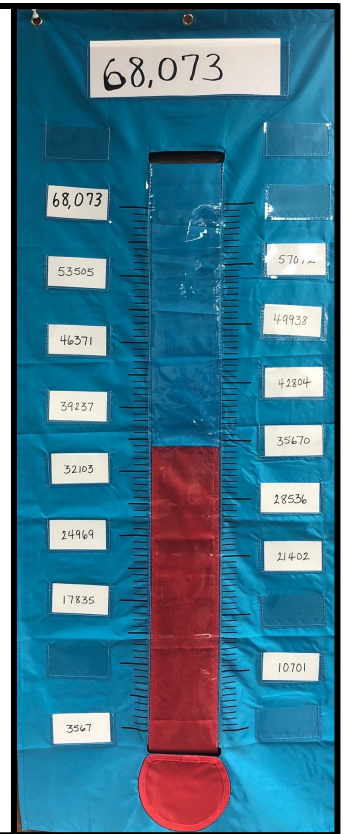
As always, if there is anything we can do to help you with membership please let us know.

Thanks for all you do,

Jim Talaska Membership Director

Dee Dalton Administrative Membership Assistant

Terry Abdelnour Membership Assistant and S.A.L. Clerk



Tell Congress to pass national Buddy Check Week

Dear American Legion Family members and friends,

Following closely on the heels of the successful PACT Act passage, another piece of legislation The American Legion strongly endorses is the STRONG Veterans Act, which would make The American Legion-born Buddy Check initiative a national VA requirement.

The STRONG Veterans Act) calls on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to designate a “National Buddy Check Week.” It is modeled after The American Legion’s successful Buddy Check program, which nearly 4,000 local posts a year have used to help veterans in need since 2019. It also includes dozens of provisions that come from standalone pieces of legislation The American Legion supports.

A Buddy Check Week designation is vital because it will be a concentrated effort, with the support of VA, to improve mental health outreach. That, of course, also ties in to the Legion’s “Be the One” campaign to reduce the rate of veteran suicide.

The legislation promises to bring additional improvements to the mental health care of our nation’s veterans. Those include:

- Funding research on veterans mental health and treatment.
- Making the Peer Specialist Support program permanent.
- Increasing full-time staffing at VA Vet Centers and expanding eligibility for treatment.
- Expanding existing scholarship and loan programs for students and mental health providers.

In June, the U.S. House of Representatives approved the measure in a bipartisan voice vote. It now awaits action in the Senate. The legislation has sat in the Senate for several months already. We cannot afford to let this opportunity to improve mental health care for veterans lapse.

Add your voice to help get this important legislation passed.

Thank you for your support and your contributions toward making The American Legion the leader in ... Veterans Strengthening America.

Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola
National Commander





The 13th District is teaming up with Great American Popcorn Company

13th District Sr. Vice Commander and American Legion Post 193 Commander Jerry Howard has been spearheading this amazing collaboration with a local business in order to find other ways to grow their Legion funds. He is hoping that getting the word out about their success will help inspire other Posts/Districts/Divisions. He says:

"I can do it. And if 'I' can do it, you can do it too!"

Pictured: 13th District Commander Lee Gibbs and Sr. Vice Commander Jerry Howard with the 6 featured flavors for their fundraiser



ATTN: SAL Leadership Training held Saturday November 5th 10 am to 2pm lunch provided at Post 435 in Glen Carbon. Any questions please contact Wayne Madson at 618-806-1408

The new PACT Act

- » Expands toxic-exposed Veterans access to VA care
- » Extends health care eligibility for Vietnam, Gulf War, and Post-9/11 era combat Veterans
- » Adds new presumptive conditions for radiation, Agent Orange, Gulf War toxins, and burn pit exposures

EXPANDED VA CARE & BENEFITS

Learn more at VA.gov
1-800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411)



NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS:

We are happy to include your District/Division Meeting Dates, Happenings at your local post/community, announcements, etc.

Email sgreen@illegion.org OR send by mail to:
American Legion, Dept. of IL P.O. Box 2910 Bloomington, IL 61702
ATTN: SHANDI GREEN

If any changes or updates need to be made to the schedule or other submissions, please submit them as soon as possible to Shandi Green in by email (or in writing).

NOTE: WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO INCLUDE YOUR SUBMISSIONS BUT CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT THEY WILL BE. IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE, PLEASE SUBMIT BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR



POW Remains Brought Home to Illinois After 82 Years

Private First Class John L. Ferguson left for military service in 1940. 82 years later, his remains have finally made it home.

The remains of PFC John L. Ferguson arrived at Duffy-Baier-Snedecor Funeral Home in Pontiac on September 27, 2022. Ferguson's remains had been buried with other soldiers at a prisoner of war camp in the Philippines since his passing in December 1942.

PFC Ferguson was stationed at Nichols Air Base (also known as Nichols Field) on the island of Luzon in the Philippines. He was at Nichols when the Japanese attacked the Philippines as part of its attack on US and British bases in the Pacific on Dec. 7-8, 1941.

The Japanese had taken control of Nichols Field by the end of December, forcing Ferguson and his comrades to withdraw to defensive positions in Cabanatuan Province. They would later surrender there that following April.

It is believed that PFC Ferguson took part in the Bataan Death March to Camp O'Donnell, with some prisoners then going to Cabanatuan Prison Camp. His obituary states that he died there on December 10, 1942.

As more efforts have been made to identify soldiers buried in groups at POW sites, PFC Ferguson was positively identified from a DNA match with a living relative; his younger brother, Merle Ferguson.

His funeral services were held on Saturday, October 1 at Gridley Cemetery.

Photos from the service (featured on this issue's cover and below) were submitted by Rantoul American Legion Post 559 Commander George Love.





https://orders.minervapromotions.com/gifts_to_the_yanks/shop/home



S-3XL

Gifts To The Yanks Jogging Suit

Crewneck Sweatshirt

- 8.0 oz., 50/50 cotton/polyester
- Seamless body with set-in sleeves
- 1x1 rib collar, cuffs and waistband with spandex
- Double-needle stitched at stress points
- Screen printed with the Gifts to the Yanks Who Gave logo on the left chest

Sweatpant

- 8.0 oz., 50/50 cotton/polyester
- No side seams
- Two-needle covered waistband with inside drawcord
- Elastic bottom leg openings
- Screen printed with the Gifts to the Yanks Who Gave logo on the left hip

The above product attributes may vary based on availability.



S-3XL

Gifts to the Yanks Robe

Heavy weight, ultra soft and comfortable, micro fiber bathrobe - Navyo



Gifts to the Yanks Fleece Blanket

- 365 GRAM WHIPSTITCHED 60" X 80"
- Heavyweight nylon stadium carrying strap Whipstitched edges

Embroidered with the Gifts to the Yanks Who Gave logo



Gift to the Yanks Veterans Gift Bag

The perfect gift for a veteran where size may be a problem. Gift bags include:

- hat
- socks
- puzzle book
- deck of cards
- hankies etc.



Men's



Women's

Gifts to Gift to The Yanks Christmas Gifts Worksheet

Please complete this form and go to
https://orders.minervapromotions.com/gifts_to_the_yanks/shop/home
to order. All orders must be sent before November 1st, 2022

V.A Hospital or Nursing Home Name _____

Address _____ City/Zip _____

Activity Director or Person in charge _____

Facility Telephone number (include area code) _____

American Legion Representative responsible for delivering gifts _____

Post # _____ Phone # (include area code) _____

Address _____ City/Zip _____

Facility is located in ____ District of the ____ Division of the Department of Illinois American Legion.

Total number of VETERAN patients in you facility? Male ____ Female ____

I certify these figures are accurate as of today's date _____

Superintendent or Administrator _____

GIFT LIST (ONE GIFT PER VETERAN)
(Please note, these are the only sizes available).

ITEMS	Quantity Each Size					
	<i>Small</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Large</i>	<i>X-Large</i>	<i>XX-Large</i>	<i>XXX-Large</i>
<i>Robe</i>						
<i>Jogging Suit</i>						
<i>Blanket</i>						
<i>Males Gift Bag</i>						
<i>Female Gift Bag</i>						

A Gift Bag Gift, for a veteran where size may be a problem: Male ____ Female ____

One Gift Per Veteran

A Gift Bag Gift, for a veteran where size may be a problem: Total Gifts Needed _____



On Sunday September 25th, the 2nd Division ALR held it's first meeting, open to all ALR members from the Division. The meeting was hosted by Boone Post/Chapter 77 in Belvidere. This was the first time this has been done within the Division. 23 Riders from 13 Chapters attended the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting organized by Division Chairman John Reece, was to create an avenue for communication, cooperation, participation and growth for the ALR throughout the Division. Also, establish a committee of sorts to assist in communications and information exchange as well as establish a website and other social media platforms to further enhance the spread of information important to The American Legion Riders.

Topics discussed included Resolution 5, which governs the ALR from the NEC, Proposed State By-laws, Chapter/District/Division rides and liability. Also discussed the importance of working together with other Chapters as well as other American Legion Family organizations.

Contact info was exchanged and the group decided to meet quarterly to further the program within the 2nd Division. The next meeting will be after the first of the year and will be posted on the new website once complete as well as other social media platforms.

Chapters attending: Stillman Valley 1072, Durand 676, Genoa 337, Wood Dale 1205, Sandwich 181, Plainfield 13, Boone 77, Sycamore 99, Elburn 630, St. Charles 342, Fox Lake 703, Lockport 18, and Naperville 43.

Thank you to all that attended. Looking forward to seeing more at our next meeting in January.

John Reece

2022—2023 DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST. / DIV.	TIME	POST	CITY
10/02/2022	15TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	GALVA POST 45	GALVA
10/02/2022	21ST DISTRICT	1:00 PM	POST 905	KINCAID
10/09/2022	16TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	TOULON	TOULON
10/09/2022	18TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	CISSNA PARK POST 527	CISSNA PARK
10/09/2022	23RD DISTRICT	1:00 PM	ST. MARIE POST 932	SAINTE MARIE
10/16/2022	3RD DIVISION	1:00 PM	ALEDO POST 121	ALEDO
10/16/2022	19TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	NEWMAN POST 201	NEWMAN
10/16/2022	5TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	LOUISVILLE POST 914	LOUISVILLE
10/19/2022	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	GEORGE W. BENJAMIN POST 791	NORTHBROOK
10/22/2022	14TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	MACOMB POST 6	MACOMB
10/23/2022	22ND DISTRICT	1:00 PM	MASCOUTAH POST 292	MASCOUTAH
10/23/2022	25TH DISTRICT	TBD	EVANSVILLE POST 1172	EVANSVILLE
11/02/2022	1ST DIVISION	7:30 PM	FRANKLIN PARK POST 974 (DEC @ 7:00)	FRANKLIN PARK
11/05/2022	19TH DISTRICT	7:30 AM	CARAVAN STOP—CHAMPAIGN POST 24	CHAMPAIGN
11/06/2022	19TH DISTRICT	7:30 AM	CARAVAN STOP—DELAND POST 102	DELAND
11/18/2022	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	GURNEE POST 771	GURNEE
11/19/2022	13TH DISTRICT	TBD	STERLING POST 296	STERLING
12/02/2022	19TH DISTRICT	10:00 AM	REVITALIZATION @ NEOGA POST 458	NEOGA
12/03/2022	1ST DIVISION	TBD	OPERATION CANES-OPSEC @ POST 626	HILLSIDE
12/03/2022	19TH DISTRICT	10:00 AM	REVITALIZATION @ NEOGA POST 458	NEOGA



85th HAVEN JAMBOREE

Sponsored by the:

EGYPTIAN PAST COMMANDERS AND PAST PRESIDENTS CLUBS

November 18-20, 2022

The E.P.C.C. has as its main responsibility, the support and maintenance of THE HAVEN, located on beautiful Crab Orchard Lake, Route #13, Carbondale, Illinois. This is an important phase of the rehabilitation work in the 5th Division. Our main sources of income are: Donations, Annual Dues, Annual Post Per Capita Assessment, Annual Jamboree Raffle, Special Projects, and Poppy Money.

JAMBOREE RAFFLE AND DONATIONS

The operation of THE HAVEN is no small undertaking. With your help, the E.P.C.C. has been able to maintain THE HAVEN since 1950. Participation in the Annual Jamboree Raffle will help support THE HAVEN for another year. Please assist by purchasing or selling the enclosed raffle tickets. We will gladly mail extra tickets! Please mail stubs and money to:

William J. Flanagan, Secretary/Treasurer, 409 East Oak Street, New Baden, IL 62265.

If not mailed by 11/11/2022, please bring them with you.

JAMBOREE HOUSING FOR 2022

We will again enjoy the accommodations at the Country Inn and Suites, 1306 Halfway Road, Marion, IL, 62959. Please make your own reservations by calling 1-618-997-2444. Be sure to mention The American Legion block of rooms coded HAVEN JAMBOREE for the weekend of **11/18 through 11/20/2022**. Your reservations must be received by **October 31, 2022**. The rate for the rooms will be \$95.00 plus tax for queen/king; \$105 plus tax for king studio or suite.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18

1:00 P.M. Tour of the Marion Veterans Administration Medical Center. (possible limit in attendees)

5:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. Steak Fry at the Haven. COST \$20.00 per person. Due to large turnout for the steak fry, we appreciate your patience and consideration in seating and serving.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19

11:00 A. M. - Sons of The American Legion 5th Division meeting at The Haven

1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. Open House at The Haven

5:00 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. Cocktail Hour (Courtesy 5th Div. Am. Leg.) Country Inn & Suites

7:00 P.M. **Buffet Style Banquet at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 1601 W. White St., Marion.** The Menu will be: Pork Loin, Roasted Chicken, Mashed Potatoes, Caesar Salad, Vegetable Medley, rolls w/butter, dessert (cheesecake), coffee, tea, water. Directions to the Knights of Columbus Hall will be available at hotel. Cost: \$30.00 a person. Cash bar available.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20

9:00 A.M. Egyptian Past Presidents Club, Meeting, Country Inn and Suites
 10:00 A.M. Annual Meeting of the Egyptian Past Commanders Club at The Haven

MAKE ONE CHECK FOR PAST COMMANDERS DUES, STEAK FRY, BANQUET AND RAFFLE TICKETS PAYABLE TO: THE EGYPTIAN PAST COMMANDERS CLUB

CHECKS FOR PAST PRESIDENTS DUES PAYBLE TO: EGYPTIAN PAST PRESIDENTS CLUB

PAST PRESIDENTS INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Dues are \$5.00 per year.
 Detach and mail to: Judy Zimmerman
 5531 Oak Street, Highland, IL

Name _____

Dist. _____ Unit _____

Address: _____

PAST COMMANDERS INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Dues are \$5.00 per year.
 Detach & mail to William Flanagan 409 E. Oak,
 New Baden, IL 62265

Name _____

Dist _____ Post _____ Squadron _____

Address: _____

STEAK FRY RESERVATIONS Friday evening, November 18, 5-8 P.M. Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ (\$20 per person). Reservations due 11/11/2022

Detach and mail to: William Flanagan
 409 E. Oak, New Baden, IL 62265

Steak _____
 Name _____

BANQUET RESERVATION FORM – Knights of Columbus Hall, Marion

Reservations due 11/11/2022 for Buffet Banquet. Detach and mail to William Flanagan
 409 E. Oak, New Baden, IL 62265

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ (\$30 per person) for E.P.C.C. Banquet, **Saturday, 11/19/2022.**
 Tickets may be picked up at door. Please include all names for reservations.

_Name(s)_____

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SHANDI GREEN

Now Is The Time To Stand Together For Our Flag

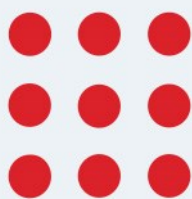
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\$20.00 for 11 issues

Newsletter articles must be at Department Headquarters by the
15th of each month for it to be in the next month's issue.

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Crisis Line**

DIAL 988 then PRESS 1