

Michael E. Pohl
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Manchester, Connecticut 06040
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RECEIVED
FEDERAL ELECTION
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF GENERAL
COUNSEL
OCT 12 10 23 AM '00

October 9, 2000

Federal Election Commission
999 E. Street NW
Washington, DC 20463

MUR 5113

Dear Federal Election Commission,

I hereby file an Official Complaint with the Federal Election Commission for violation of Federal Election Law by the American Legion Department of Connecticut and the Robert Simmons for Congress, 2nd District Connecticut Campaign Committee.

The violations in particular are:

1. The Connecticut Legionaire Newspaper, the Official Newspaper of The American Legion Department of Connecticut, Volume 6, Number 3, Fall 2000 issue, ran a full page advertisement for Robert Simmons for Congress without the required disclaimer stating who paid for this advertisement.
2. The American Legion is an organization chartered by the United States Congress and as a part of of the American Legion Constitution it stipulates that the American Legion is a non-political organization. Listing the caption "One of our own," without the legal disclaimer constitutes endorsement by this non-political organization and violates not only United States Election Law but the very charter issued to this organization by the United States Congress.

As a Citizen of the United States of America, I hereby request an investigation by the Federal Election Commission. As an outraged Past Commander and current member of the American Legion, who believes in fairness and the American Legion abiding by our non-political mandate, I hereby request that you issue the harshest penalties under the law against the American Legion Department of Connecticut its Chairman, Publisher and Editor of the Connecticut Legionaire and the Robert Simmons for Congress Committee.

It is one thing when an organization like the American Legion encourages its members and the community to exercise their constitutional duty and right, but it is a totally different thing when an organization like the American Legion engages in partisan politics. The later is not to be tolerated if the American Legion is to survive.

Respectfully,

Michael E. Pohl

Michael E. Pohl

Subscribed & sworn to before me, a Notary Public, in and for County of Hartford and State of Connecticut this 9th day of October, 2000. My commission expires 6/30/03. Lois F. Guinan

2540 "504" 40 "12

Connecticut

Legionnaire

www.connecticutlegionnaire.org

The Official Newspaper of The American Legion, Department of Connecticut



Vol. 6 No. 3 FALL 2000

Legion Elects Ray Smith National Commander

The American Legion National Convention took place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, September 1st through 7th. The convention concluded Thursday with Ray G. Smith of North Carolina being elected to serve as National Commander until the 2001 Convention in San Antonio, Texas.

The Connecticut delegation, led by Immediate Past Department Commander Everett Shepard, was comprised of 29 active Legionnaires. Serving on National Convention Committees were the following:

Don Beckwith (Americanism), Dean Thompson (Children & Youth), PDC Charlie Haas (Constitutional Amendments), Robert DeCarlo (Credentials & Other Internal Matters), Senior Vice Commander Edward Barry (Membership), Cheryl DeCarlo (Employment & Veterans' Preference), Charles Berry (Other Economic Matters), Treasurer Gerald Dierman (Finance), PDC Frank DeAngelo (Foreign Relations), and Edward Carney (Legislation & Rules). On the various National Security Sub-Committees were: Leo Moran (Aerospace), PDC Gus Williams (Defense Civil Preparedness), Historian Boyd Saxton (Law & Order), Wayne Morgan (Merchant Marine), Charles Schempp (Military), and Tim Perrotti (Naval). Serving on Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation were: Fred Stockman (Claims & Rating); and PDC Joe Mardu (Hospitals & Medical Services).

Other delegates were Department Commander W. Frazier Brinley, NEC Richard Anderson, Alternate NEC K. Robert Lewis, Adjutant Hugh Graham, PDC Bill Lucas, PDC Joe Tarrant, J.D. Powell, Andrew Barylski, Marty Reardon, and Phil Haddad. Immediate past Department Sgt.-at-Arms Jean C. LaFontaine served as Parade Chairman and also served as a National Convention Sgt.-at-Arms.

The new National Commander served on active duty in the United States Air Force from September 1951 to September 1955. The day after his discharge from active duty, Ray joined Banner American Legion Post 109 of Benson, NC, where he is a life member and served four terms as Commander. Ray served as NC Department Commander in 1979-1980 and as National Vice Commander in 1988-1989. He has also been Chairman of his Department's Internal Affairs Commission, Americanism Commission and Children & Youth Commission. Ray has also served at the National level as a member of the National Contest & Supervisory Committee, the Americanism Commission, the Veterans' Planning and Coordination Committee, the Policy Coordination and Action Group and as Chairman of the Americanism Commission and the Economic Commission.



AWARD WINNERS during State Police Week are pictured above, left to right: Timothy Roy, William Shemansky, and Trevor Riley. Shown with the youths are Department Treasurer Gerald Dierman, far left, and Department Commander Everett Shepard, III.

American Legion & Connecticut State Police Inaugurate State Police Youth Week

Twenty-nine young men and women from across the State of Connecticut recently experienced first hand what it is like to be a recruit at the State Police Training Academy, located in Storrs. The program was designed to create a real sense of what it is like to be a State Police Trooper, for those interested in pursuing a law enforcement career.

This was the inaugural week of the program which Past Commander Everett Shepard hopes will be an on-going program which will give opportunity to eleventh year

high school students to law enforcement as a career.

The week was anything but a walk in the park or summer camp. Their week started with a burly State Trooper in a rather loud voice encouraging the new State Police Cadets to get their gear and fall in.

To all of them he was to be Mom and Dad for the next week. For the parents that were present at the start of their week it was reminiscent of that first day of boot camp. The cadets got their first taste of what an inspection was like. The results were apparent when a Trooper returned to the briefing area with cell phones and beepers.

Host of "Reality Checks"

The first day was filled with a host of reality checks. There was "Yes, Sir" and "No, Ma'am". Morning came early with 5:15 a.m. reveille followed by room inspection.

Teamwork was the word of the week. Simple chores as making ones bunk up in a prescribed manner as well as getting the room ready for inspection requires the cooperation of roommates. Push ups and PT were a daily routine.

Week's end proved to all how far they had progressed in respect to their own physical development, which was quite noticeable.

There were hours spent in practicing drill and ceremonies. This was the first chance that the cadets had to see how well they performed as a team. Trooper James Scott of the Bethany Barracks displayed the patience of a saint. At the end of the week the cadets looked good and felt good as they presented themselves for graduation.

(Continued on page 5)

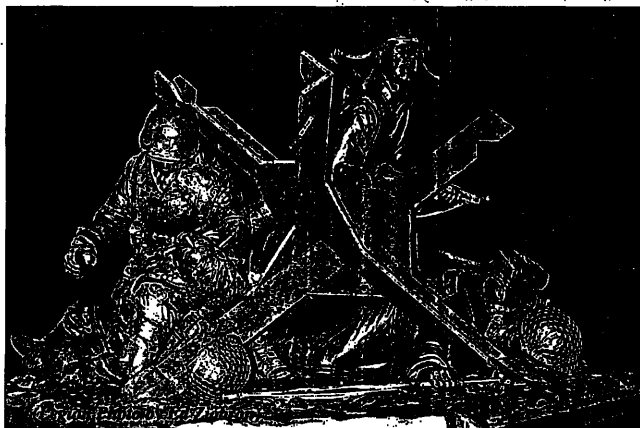
New London Wins Baseball Crown

New London was crowned champion of the 73rd Annual Connecticut Department American Legion Baseball Tournament by defeating Rockville, 12-1, August 7 at Fuessenich Park in Torrington.

It was the fourth state title for New London which last copped top laurels in 1987. New London won it the hard way dropping its opening tourney game to Rockville, 6-0, and then having to win six straight in the double-elimination tournament. New London moved on to the Northeast Regional in West Warwick, R.I. where they won three of four games before losing to Hamilton (N.J.), 8-0, in the finals.

Jay Metzger, Rockville, was the State Tournament MVP. Other major award winners were Bobby Ashton, Waterford, Outstanding Pitcher; and Alex Aimetti, Waterford, highest batting average, .545. Named to the All-Tournament team were Mike Evans,

(Continued on page 5)



Sculpture Honors 'Longest Day' Invasion

by Ed Ziobron

As a stormy dawn broke over the Normandy beaches on June 6, 1944, thousands of Allied soldiers fought their way on shore against German

defenders in history's largest invasion, while others dropped by parachute into German-held French villages, and na-

(Continued on page 7)

Comments from Commander Frazier Brinley



W. FRAZIER BRINLEY
DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

At our Convention in July, as your commander, I envisioned a remade American Legion with a shining armor. I talked of dreams and reality, asking all Legionnaires to join me in taking the leadership challenge and serve The American Legion to help strengthen our foundation.

Comrade, I commend you for your commitment!

Currently, positive commitments and responses have come from Americanism, Baseball, Children and Youth, VA and R, Mid Winter Conference, Convention, Finance, Internal Affairs, Publications, Personnel, our Web Site and Membership.

During the past year, Team 2000 traveled thousands of miles, visiting as many posts and Legionnaires as possible.

We learned that personal contact was the key to knowledge. Personal contact brought more members to post meetings. Personal contact assisted in member renewals and new sign ups.

Last year, you found that knowledge and communication was key to the \$500.00 Reward or Dinner at the Painted Pony, the Red Lobster or the Hale and Hearty. You found that daily membership updates could be found at: www.geocities.com/frazier.brinley/. In 2001, this will continue as the Commander's Site.

Information Super Highway

The American Legion information super highway will continue to grow and our Department Web site: www.ct.legion.org will not be left behind. Changes will be made until we get it right! Going forward, you'll find everything you can imagine, such as the Americanism Application and instructions... even as you read this newspaper, changes are being made. Today, you can download our Officers Guide and Manual of Ceremonies and even this newspaper.

Special initiatives to Reserve and National Guard Centers will be continued... We will remind all our servicemen that they are "Veterans," too! We will roll out the red carpet! We will use the "Welcome Wagon" approach and work with and along side Armed Forces Recruiters.

Do you have a recruiter in your town? Is the recruiter a member of The American Legion? If not, why not?

Our ultimate challenge in 2001 is to plan for the future, to have fun, to be positive and to increase MEMBER-SHIP!!

As Commander, my dreams and goals for 2000 - 2001, are having:

A candidate for the National Police Officer of the Year.

A Boys' State Program with 400 boys and 40 counselors.

An American Legion State Police Youth Week with 40 Juniors.

100 % Consolidate Report Form...reporting

A 2001 Americanism Award and 100 applications for post awards

Raising \$30,000 for the Child Welfare Foundation. (Raising \$1.00 for every Connecticut Legionnaire).

The 28th Constitutional Amendment to protect our Flag

An American Legion Family Day at a Connecticut Resort

And a successful American Legion Family Walkathon weekend!

I have A Dream! All District Testimonials and Installations will be held on Thursday and Friday nights of our 2001 Convention Weekend.

Congratulations to New London Post 9, State Baseball Champion and Northeast Regional Runner-up.

Sept. 22 Stand Down 2000, Rocky Hill Veterans Home and Hospital

Oct. 12 - 15 the Wall that Heals will be at Norwalk's Veterans Park.

Oct. 13 - 15 National Commander's Homecoming.

Oct. 15 - 19 Fall Meetings, Indianapolis.

Oct. 20 - 22 National President's Homecoming.

Oct. 23 Anniversary of the Bombing of Berlin

Nov. 4 Department Testimonial

Nov. 5 Red, White and Blue Mass

Norwich, 10:00 am

Nov. 7 Election Day Please Vote

Nov. 12 - 18 American Education Week founded by the Legion

As this is the first of four issues during my term as commander, again I thank you for your confidence and commitment. The strength of our great organization is in its members, its volunteers like you. The auxiliary has dubbed you and me as knights in shining armor. During the next three months, consider what's ahead. October, at the Big E, there will be a New England POW/MIA Vigil.

Our leaders will continue to install posts and districts until the end of October. The election process will bend your ear this way and that way. Will it be Gore or Bush for President? Do we

want more of the same or a change. The important process is to exercise your right under our Constitution. VOTE! I would hope as you make those tough decisions on the local level, that you might consider voting for a veteran. It will be a veteran, who will protect your interests here and in Washington, DC.

It will be a veteran, who will understand the need to protect the American Flag. At the beginning of November, we will remember all our Veterans and, especially the World War II veteran with the ground breaking ceremonies of the WW II Monument in Washington, DC. After Veteran's Day, there will be American Education Week, Thanksgiving, Ringing the Bells for the Salvation Army and helping the American Legion Auxiliary with their Christmas Shop program.

Thank You for your commitment to excellence.

Membership On The Internet - If you want to see how Connecticut fares with other Detachments in 2000 membership, go to www.legion.org and press the "Membership" button on the left side of The American Legion's home page. Listed there will be "SAL Membership Statistics". Enter "salmb" for the password. The information is updated every Friday. While at the Legion web site you can review other information about our organization and even download emblems and other items for use with your computer to enhance documents or flyers.

Membership Goal: 'One Plus One in 2001' While Having Fun,

by Ed Barry, Dept. Senior Vice Commander
Edward D. Barry, Department Senior Vice Commander announced the membership goals for the Department of Connecticut for the year 2001. Objectives for the individual posts are 1 + 1 for 2001, that is, two members over last year's attained membership. The key target dates are as follows:

Net Kickoff	September 11th	45%
Fall Meetings	October 9th	55%
Veterans Day	November 13th	65%
Pearl Harbor Day	December 11th	75%
Mid Winter	January 8th	85%
Big Twelve Competition	February 13th	90%
Children & Youth	April 9th	95%
Armed Forces Day	May 7th	100%
Flag Day Salute	June 11th	101%
Delegate Strength	30 Days Prior To Beginning of Department Convention	

The Vice Commander's motto this year is: "Service To The American Legion Should Be Fun"

All of you who have known me for any length of time know, that I am serious only when I have to be and the rest of the time I enjoy what I do. Meeting new people and making them new members of this great organization is not a chore. It is a privilege and a pleasure. Last year in response to the challenge of the Sr. Vice Commander to become the first member of the Silver Brigade, I let myself look at everyone I met in a new light.

I pictured them in uniform and tried to guess what branch of the military they might have served in and then asking them. Some, of course, were taken aback by my somewhat abrupt approach. However, after a minute or two of conversation and my explanation of what the American Legion was and what we did most of my newly found acquaintances agreed to join. In what seemed like no time at all I had recruited 27 new members and it was fun.

Of course the \$500 prize had absolutely nothing to do with it. I also don't want it to affect you either because I believe recruiting new members should be done for the FUN of it. However, the top recruiter this year will receive \$500.

Top recruiters for the other six districts will receive \$300 and must have 25 minimum (ties split). 1+1 recruiters will receive my personal pin as thanks. I sincerely hope you have enjoyed the summer, if you read this and you have not yet paid your 2001 dues you will be cutting down on my fun because there are also National prizes for Sr. Department Vice Commanders and it would be fun to win one. You can help by paying your dues. I'll see you after returning from National Convention in Milwaukee and we will get down to having serious fun IN 2001 by signing up 1+1.

Connecticut Legionnaire

www.connecticutlegionnaire.org

The Official Newspaper of
The American Legion
Department of Connecticut

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Everett Shepard, III

Erwin Williams

Commander: W. Frazier Brinley

Adjutant: Hugh C. Graham

Website by Stan Reichlin

Mailing Address:

C/O Bill Pomfret

55 Gleason Road

Middletown, CT 06457

Authorization No. 0532351-RBS

Published Quarterly

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PIONEER AWARD: The American Legion Department of Connecticut has a new, vibrant Post thanks to the foresight and commitment of several veterans such as Tony La Rocca who saw the need for a Post among a very veteran heavy population in their community. National Vice Commander Robert Neville and Department Commander Everett G. Shepard III present the "Pioneer Award" to Tony La Rocca on behalf of National Commander Alan Lance in recognition of the outstanding effort and dedication exhibited in providing comradeship to the residents of his community.

High and Ennobling Ideals

By K. Robert Lewis, Alternate NEC.

I had the privilege recently to bring the greetings of the National Organization to those attending a District installation. In my remarks I noted that Legionnaires have met the requirements to be eligible to belong to this great community of veterans by the very fact that they, you and I, have all stood the test of military service and proved our mettle.

In short I stated that the "*Quality goes in before the name goes on*", taking the phrase from a Motorola advertisement - which I attributed mistakenly to Ford. The quality of performing one of the greatest callings any free citizen can - protecting and enhancing the freedoms of the nation and the world - affords veterans a perspective toward citizenship that is probably unique. That may be why veterans are among the highest demographic group when it comes to answering a different call of citizenship - voting.

At the Installation program, which encompassed charging both Post and District officers, a friend of mine had just been charged with his duties as Post Judge Advocate. Included in that charge were words that struck a cord within me - "keeping alight the torch of truth and fidelity that symbolizes the High and Ennobling Ideals under which our great American Legion was founded. Protect wisely that Heritage." These are powerful and poignant words. One of the greatest of these ideals is to practice an active citizenship. Participating in our democratic process and recognizing that there is a distinct difference between politics and citizenship, and in those all too common instances where the two collide and Legionnaires must make a choice, citizenship must prevail. We must uphold the high and ennobling ideals that not only created The American Legion, but first and foremost created the foundation of America.

We seem to be at the crossroads of our National Identity; in the opinion of many what we as Americans believe and what we as a Nation espouse is at stake. Again, citizenship must prevail over politics. Blessed with the strong and tested mettle of veterans, we must press all eligible Americans to register and to vote, being ever mindful that it is existence of a ballot cast that counts, not how it is cast. Again, we must educate Americans and ourselves on the issues that Legionnaires find important, such as honoring our national commitment to our veterans, National Defense and Americanism.

We as veterans have met the requirements to be a Legionnaire proving that the quality does indeed go in before the name goes on.

We have stood tall for America in her time of need, to defend our democracy; is any election any different, can we do any less than our utmost as Americans? Let us all remember to practice the High and Ennobling Ideals under which our great American Legion was founded. Vote.

American Legion Group Exemption Number (GEN)

The American Legion has been given an exemption from payment of federal income tax for those Departments and Posts designated annually in a listing submitted to the IRS. The annual list covers all current and new Posts and Departments.

All Posts and Departments use the same Group Exemption Number (GEN) authorized under section 501(c) 19 of the Federal Tax Code. That number is 0925.



ACHIEVEMENT: James Lacoursier, Commander John Colman Prince Post 9 in New London is presented the John Spain Plaque by Past Department Commander John Spain in recognition of Post 9 achieving five consecutive years of quota-plus membership.

PDC St. John Receives National Recognition

Past Department Commander Arthur G. St. John, who has received accolades for production of Veterans Voice, the outstanding Newsletter of Post 44 Bantam, has been recognized individually for his editorial prowess by the National American Legion Press Association (NALPA). St. John's editorial "Meaning of our Holidays Lost to Fun and \$\$\$" was judged as the Second Place winner in category 6-A, Original Editorial, in the 2000 NALPA "Best Papers Contest."

The Award will be presented at the annual awards banquet held during the 2000 National Convention in Milwaukee Wisconsin. St John will receive the William E. Rominger Plaque.

St John was notified of his recognition by George W. Hooten, Executive Director NALPA.

*The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary
King and Queen of the Mythological Kingdom in Connecticut
Request your Presence at the*

Department Testimonial

*Honoring Frazier Brinley, "King Frazier"
and Karen Thompson, "Queen Karen"*

November 4th, 2000

at the USS Chowder Pot, Branard Road, Hartford, CT.

Social: 6:00 pm. Dinner: 7:00 pm.

**Prime Rib, Chicken-Marsala, Appetizers, Desserts
Tickets: \$30.00**

**Please make checks payable to:
The American Legion, Department of Connecticut.**

Deadline for reservations is October 25, 2000.

NO TICKETS SOLD AT THE DOOR.

Not responsible for late mail service.

Reserved tables of 10 must be purchased at one time.

List names and dinner choices.

Total of \$30.00 must accompany reservations.

Send Reservations to:

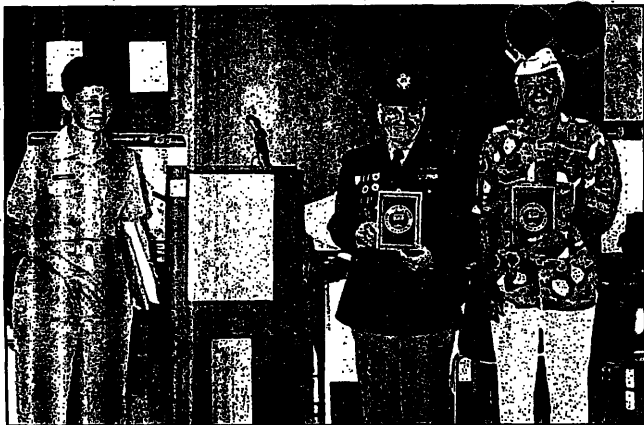
Gerald Dierman, Reservation Chairman

C/O S.S.M. Fund

101 South Street, Second Floor

West Hartford, CT 06110

**Please include: Post #, Unit #, District #,
Name, Address, Town/City and Zip**



HONORED: Barbara Morgan, Dr. John Gambardella and Thomas Nerkowski who was recently honored by the Connecticut Chapter of the Destroyers-Escort Sailors Association.

CONN-DESA Honors Thomas Nerkowski

Thomas Nerkowski, a Pearl Harbor survivor and a member of the Harry R. Bartlett Post #89 East Haven American Legion, was honored at a recent meeting of CONN-DESA, the Connecticut Chapter Destroyers-Escort Sailors Association.

The program was held at the United States Naval and Marine Corp reserve center, Woodward Avenue, New Haven.

Invocation was given by CONN-DESA Chaplain Harry Wheeler. The master of ceremonies introduced the honored guests; Thomas Nerkowski, Captain Barbara Morgan and keynote speaker Dr. John Gambardella; first Lieutenant 14th Air Force, General Chenault Flying Tigers. Greetings were given by DESA Auxiliary president Annette Palermo. Presentations of the proclamations were presented by Captain Barbara Morgan to the recipients.

The DESA committee consisted of Albert Pearce; Chairman, John Gust, Edward Sikora, Whitman Winot, Earl Gillette, Nick Palermo, Elliot Glassman and Everett Flooden.



MANY MEMBERS will not recognize the smiling face of John Monahan, Department Assistant Treasurer and Deputy Administrator for the Soldier's Sailor's and Marines Fund. Any Service Officer who has worked with John to benefit Connecticut's veterans can attest to the professionalism and care exhibited by this fine Legionnaire. John was relaxing at the dinner hosted by Department Commander Shepard prior to the opening of the 2000 Annual Department Convention.

For the latest info. about veterans' issues, check our web site: <http://www.davct.org>

www.davct.org



We Help Veterans & Their Families!

DAV Connecticut's Disabled American Veterans State Headquarters - (800) 525-1755



DEPARTMENT COMMANDER W. Frazier Brinley accepts a plaque on behalf of The American presented by Rose McGurken-Fuhr, Co-chair of the Connecticut Youth Leadership Forum. The Award recognizes The American Legion for continuing support and sponsorship.



Department Staff Vice Commander Ed Barry, aided by Assistant Sgt.-a Arms Wayne Cookson conducted the Department Membership Committee planning seminar following Barry's return from National Headquarters in early August. The interactive program was judged to be a success by all who attended.

From Detachment Headquarters

2001 Membership Cards - The Detachment Adjutant distributed the 2001 S.A.L. membership cards to all Squadrons on Saturday morning, July 8, 2000, prior to the opening of the Detachment Convention in Stamford. If any Squadron is now not in possession of their 2001 membership cards, please contact the Detachment Adjutant immediately.

National Convention - Attending the 2000 National S.A.L. Convention, September 1-3, 2000, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as elected Connecticut delegates will be Martin J. Reardon Sr., Arthur E. Corey Jr., Andrew Barylski Jr., Willie H. Jackson, Frederick C. Stockman, Edward D. Barry, Michael R. Barylski and Will Thurston.

The American Legion Baron-Smith-Golec Post 156

Cordially Invites all Legionnaires to attend The Annual Veteran's Day Breakfast on Sunday November 12, 2000 from 8:30 - 11 AM

Cost: Legionnaires (with paid up 2001 membership card): Free
Guests: \$3.00 Children Under 12: Free

American Legion Post 156, 35 Neptune Ave., Moodus, CT.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

RSVP To Ed Barry (860-873-8702) No Later Than Nov. 1, 2000

The American Legion Darrow-Rebuzzini Post #48, Guilford

The Officers and Members invite Post #200 members and Veterans to visit a meeting and see what the Post and Legion has to offer.

Meetings held the first Tuesday of the Month at the Knights of Columbus Hall, South Union St., Guilford, at 7:30 PM.

Comdr. Tony Fragola 203-457-9148

Adjutant C. J. Pete Terreri 203-453-4272



East Haven Town Mayor Joe Maturo and East Haven American Legion Post Commander Mark Call mark the presentation of a ten thousand dollar check from East Haven for the World War II Memorial Fund. The check was presented the Department WWII Memorial Chairman Frank D'Angelo who will carry it to the national Convention in Milwaukee on East Haven's behalf. D'Angelo will present the check along with other funds raised by Legionnaires to national Commander Alan Lance and WWII Memorial Fund Chairman, former Senator Robert Dole. Pictured above are Mayor Maturo, Councilman Tony Proto, Councilman Fred Paluto, Post Commander Mark Call and Department Commander Everett Shepard. (Photo Bonnie Lamb)

Winstead Post 43 Preparing for 'Bike Week' in October

The CT Bike Week Flag display at Post 43, Winstead, is underway with help from members and non-members. SAL Squadron 43 (newly chartered) member Trent Murphy Schieb, with assistance from Post 44's Jim Ostrander, Post 122 member Dan Cochran, unaffiliated Korean War Veteran John Cochran and Post 43 members Rich Kimberly and Mike Schieb are among those preparing the display.

The CT Bike Week Rally is not just for bikers. Anyone can find something to enjoy during the event which is scheduled October 6th to 8th. Included will be "Thrill Ride Shows", "Trail Rider Shows", and a vast array of product displays and many veteran oriented booths. Included will be a "Taste of The Hills Food Court" and "leather and lace" fashion show. As always, there are plenty of great bikes to see and live bands.

In expressing their gratitude for our Flag display, resident understand the many contributions made by the American Legion locally, state wide and nationally.

Legionnaires, SAL and American Legion Auxiliary members will receive a 50% discount at the gate with a current dues card.

2002 Dues Increased - Delegates at the recent Detachment S.A.L. Convention voted unanimously to increase the current Detachment per capita dues beginning in 2002 from its current \$2.00 to \$3.00. The funds received from the one dollar increase will be forwarded to the Child Welfare Foundation as the Detachment's commitment of annual giving. This means that combined with the National assessment of \$2.00, Squadrons will be required to submit upline in 2002 and beyond \$5.00 per member to Detachment Headquarters.

Post 72 Announces New Officers for 2000-2001

American Legion, Kiltonic Post 72 Southington, has elected new officers for 2000-2001. The new officers are: Commander Mr. Charles J. Tufts, Senior Vice Commander Mr. Philip C. Waché, Junior Vice-Commander Mr. Jack Osakowicz, Post Adjutant Mr. Charles F. Roehl, Post Chaplain Mr. Alton Howard, Post Finance Officer Mr. William Lepper, Post Sargent-At-Arms Mr. Chester A. Strachel and out going Commander Mr. Charles J. Dix has been elected as Post Historian.

The above newly elected officers have assumed their posts as of July 1, 2000.



PAST NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER Erwin L. "Gus" Williams (R) escorts Department Commander-elect W. Frazier Brinley to the podium for his charge during the 2000 Installation ceremony. (Photo courtesy Bonnie Anderson)

Four Chaplains Chapel Presents Legion Award to J.D. Powell

J.D. Powell from James J. Shea Post 19, Willimantic was inducted into The Chapel of Four Chaplains, Legion of Honor. The award was presented at Marymount University, Arlington, Virginia in conjunction with Boy's Nation.

Shortly after President Harry S. Truman dedicated the Chapel in 1951, its founders established the Legion of Honor Program. The Legion recognizes those persons who have rendered selfless service to humanity without regard to race, religion or creed. As a member of the Legion of Honor Powell's name has become a permanent part of the Chapel's rolls.

Notable recipients include Presidents, Truman, Eisenhower, Carter and Reagan. Other luminaries such as Bob Hope, John Glenn, Martha Raye, James Michener, Marian Anderson, C. Everett Koop, Tommy Lasorda and Shirley Chisholm, as well as military personnel, veterans, and civilians from all walks of life nationwide have been recognized.

The Chapel of Four Chaplains seeks to encourage observation of the unity which binds together Americans of all faiths. Patriotic in its nature, the Chapel celebrates the characteristic generosity, devotion to God and country, and love of fellow man, which we share in common. Powell is one of those who strives to achieve those ideals.

Father Gary P. Gummershimer, Chaplain of Boys Nation, nominated Powell for this prestigious award.

Powell is active in the Junior Shooting Program both at the Department and National level. Currently he is the Executive Committeeman from the 4th District. He is also vice chairman of the Americanism Council at National Headquarters. Powell is also past commander of Post 19 and currently is a member of the Executive Board.

Powell and his wife June reside in Canterbury.

Branford Post 83 Awarded Recognition

United States of America 50th Anniversary of the Korean War commemoration Committee has designated Branford Post 83 as a Commemorative Community during the period of 2000-2003, and having agreed to develop three or more educational programs, commemorative activities or events annually to honor Korean War veterans; their families, especially those who lost loved ones, and those who served on the home front.

At a recent post meeting, Nicholas Palermo, Post 83 committee chairman for the 50th Korean War Anniversary held an opening ceremony and presented to the Post with a certificate of designation signed by the Secretary of Defense and the official Korean War Commemorative Flag. He also presented to each member of the anniversary committee the 50th Anniversary Korean War Logo lapel button and a pin back badge.

Program events performed to date are as follows; Childrens Kite Fly contest to honor the Korean 50th, Veterans Appreciation Day at the Branford High School to discuss and educate the students of the conflict, participation in the Memorial Day Parade with remembrance of the 50th anniversary of the Korean War, participation in the Festival On The Green with a display, fireworks aerial and ground display dedicated to the 50th, a carnival with a Korean 50th anniversary theme, an opening ceremony for certificate and 50th Flag presentation, and participation in a Connecticut Chapter of Destroyer Escort Day honoring this type of ship that was recommissioned from the mothball fleet for the Korean War and the sailors that manned them as proclaimed by the Governor of the State of Connecticut with a Proclamation.

That makes a total of seven to date. More are being planned for the near future. For more information on the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War, contact Nick Palermo at (203) 488-8233

Post 24 Elects Officers

Congratulations to Post 24's newly elected officers and chairmen. The American Legion, John H. Collins Post 24 recently elected their new officers for the year 2000-2001.

The officers are Commander Erwin "Gus" Williams, Sr. Vice Commander George J. Roman, Jr., Jr. Vice Commander Michael F. Angelini, Adjutant Bernard Williamson, Finance Lawrence Easter, Chaplain Nickolas Teodosio, and Sgt-at-Arms Thomas Condon.

The following were appointed chairmen, Americanism Joseph L. Vic Domino Jr., Oratorical Michael F. Angelini, Boys State Gus Williams, Membership George Roman, Jr., and Sons of The American Legion Edwin Sturges.

The Post meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Post Home, 230 Caroline Street Derby, at 11 a.m. Commander Williams' home phone is (203) 735-3840.



DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN Boyd Saxton (L), representing Commander Brinley, is joined by Department Baseball Committee co-chairman Gene Spaziani in presenting the trophy for the 2000 American Legion Baseball Department Champion to Coach Tom Viveritto of the New London American Legion baseball team following New London's victory over Post 14 Rockville in the championship game held in Torrington.

New London Wins Baseball Crown

(Continued from page 1)

New London, 1B; Alex Aimetti, Waterford, 2b; Jamie Verab, Naugatuck, 3b; Chuck Lelek, New London, ss; Jay Lapointe, Rockville, of; Mike Buswell, Trumbull, of; Bob Broesler, Meriden, of; Mike Leonard, Rockville, c and pitchers Tommie Major, New London; Bob Ashton, Waterford; and Jay Metzger, Rockville.

South Windsor won the second annual Junior Division Baseball Tournament downing Orange, 6-3, August 8 at Middletown's Palmer Field. The Junior Division began play with four teams in 1999. This summer the program grew to 14 squads with all teams participating in the single-elimination format.

Brian Gambardella of Orange Post 127 has been chosen as the Connecticut Department's 2000 recipient to receive a \$1000 American Legion Baseball Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded to an American Legion player in each department who best demonstrates leadership, citizenship, character, scholarship and financial need.

Brian graduated from Amity Regional Senior High School with a 3.84 grade point average. In September, he joined the freshman class at Fairfield University where he is majoring in computer science. Brian was presented the scholarship prior to the Junior Legion title game in Middletown.

The Baseball Committee announced that its first "Hot Stove" Baseball Banquet will be held Friday evening, January 19, 2001 at the Radisson Hotel and Convention Center in Cromwell. More details will be forthcoming.

State Department Chairman George Pawlusch notes that the deadline date for accepting new team applications is Dec. 1, 2000. The target date for returning teams from 2000 is Jan. 1, 2001. "This date is approximately two months earlier than in previous years," Pawlusch pointed out. "The major reason is possible zone realignment. We need to know what teams will be back in the fold before we can begin discussing new zone arrangements."

Last year there was inequity throughout the state in zone size with Zone IV (Fairfield County), the largest, having 11 teams while Zone VII (New London Area), the smallest, having six teams. Last year Connecticut American Legion Baseball had its largest turnout event fielding 71 senior teams.

The State Baseball web site continues to grow in popularity. Catch the latest state baseball news by clicking in at www.ctalbb.com.



Members of the New London American Legion baseball team hoist the 2000 American Legion Department Championship banner following their victory in the championship game.



DONATING BLOOD: K: Robert Lewis relaxes after donating blood during the Red Cross blood drive held in memory of PDC Richard Wm. Anderson. Lewis shares a moment with Mrs. Christine Anderson as other volunteers undergo the donation process. The Blood Drive was held at Post 2 in Bristol.

Post 2 Sponsors Blood Drive in Memory of Past Commander Richard Anderson

A man who was active in the Bristol community is still making a difference in the lives of people, even after losing his battle with cancer. On Saturday, July 22, the American Legion Post 2 held a blood medical drive in memory of past commander Richard Anderson, who died in April. The drive yielded 66 usable units of blood and drew over 80 donors. Among those were city councilmen Tom Ragaini, Art Ward, and Joseph Wilson. "I think the people are coming for Richard," said Roland Lamothe, commander of the Bristol post. Members of the Legion donated blood and their time to help out with the drive, he said. Anderson was state commander of the American Legion in 1998 and received Post 2 Commander of the Year award twice. He was a frequent blood donor himself and when his medical care required that he receive several units of blood, it was his wish to hold a blood drive.

"It was one of the most unselfish things I'd ever heard of," Lamothe said. Anderson had hoped to be on hand when the blood drive was conducted, but fate had other plans.

Lamothe said he was very pleased at the success of the blood drive.

"For the Legion, I want to thank everyone who came," he said.

State Police Youth Week

(Continued from page 1)

Days ended at 10:00 P.M. During the long days they had classes on various aspects of law enforcement. They were able to put their new knowledge to use during field exercises. Several Legionaries acted as traffic violators (thank you to: Dept. Treasurer Gerry Diernan of Post 19 & his wife Debbie, George Brown III of Post 199, and Dave Gregoire of Post 56). Cadets under the supervision of a Trooper were able to demonstrate the correct way to pull over a traffic violator. Later in the week they were able to perform building searches as well. Legionaries also helped to provide realism to the exercise by acting as robbery suspects (thank you to: Assistant Treasurer Jack Monahan of post 18, Post 111 CDR Everett Cowley, PDC Ray Bigelow of Post 19, and Dave Gregoire of Post 56).

Cadets were exposed to various firearms at the State Police firing range. In addition they had instruction in the safe operation of a cruiser at the driving facility in Colchester.

Sgt. Stevens, training officer for the Academy, tried to cram in as much as he could which paralleled the training the Troopers go through for a 30-week period.

While the program is run much like a modified boot camp the cadets came away with the knowledge that they need to decide if this is a career for them.

At graduation ceremonies which was attended by over 100 people four scholarships were awarded. The first scholarship awarded was in the amount of \$500, which was named for Trooper Russell Bagshaw; Trooper Bagshaw was killed in the line of duty in 1991.

Cadet Timothy Roy was this years receipt. Post 72 Southington sponsored Cadet Roy. Cadets' William Shemansky and Trevor Reilly each received the Commandants award in the of \$250. Shemansky was sponsored by Post 26 Stafford Springs and Post 19 Willimantic sponsored Reilly. Cadet Shemansky also received the Commanders award in the amount of \$250.

Invitation To Join Glastonbury Post 56

Any member wishing to transfer to Post 56 in Glastonbury is welcome. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month from 7:30 to 8:30 P.M. Post 56 does not meet during July and August. Post dues are \$20.00 per year. Post 56 is located on Route 17, heading south from Glastonbury Center.

Commander Richard Domier



Artist Marc-Anthony Massaro displays his work entitled "The Spirits of Omaha". He is hopeful that, with governmental support, his creation will be enlarged and turned into a bronze monument displayed somewhere in Connecticut or the United States.

(Legion Photo by Ed Ziobron)

Sculpture (Continued from page 1)

val guns pounded Nazi strong points. By nightfall, with great courage and great losses, the invasion beaches — Omaha, Utah, Gold, Sword and Juno were secure, and the days of Nazi rule were truly numbered at last.

Sculptor Marc-Anthony Massaro of Branford, moved by the bravery of the invading soldiers, sailors and airmen, has created a life-like sculpture titled "The Spirits of Omaha" to honor that struggle. "For the survivors of June 6, and for the many who lost their lives," says Massaro, "I created this sculpture as a humble 'Thank You'." Massaro, 45, is too young to remember D-Day, but he was greatly moved by viewing the movie, "Saving Private Ryan." Speaking of those who fought to save the free world in World War II, Massaro simply says, "They succeeded. This was a generation of substance, spirit and sacrifice."

"The Spirits of Omaha" depicts American soldiers, under heavy enemy fire, fighting their way past one of the many obstacles on the beaches. This 1/6th scale model took over five months

to complete, and stands 14 high. With help from veterans' groups, state and local governments, and interested citizens, Massaro hopes to enlarge the work into a life-size bronze monument. Until then, the model is expected to be displayed at the Military Museum of Southern New England, 125 Park Avenue, Danbury.

Massaro, who teaches at the Guilford Handicraft Center, is a well-known freelance illustrator, artist and sculptor, whose work has been shown at galleries up and down the East Coast. Some of his other sculptures, cast in urethane resin and hand-painted, depict soldiers from various U. S. Army divisions in the Normandy assault forces, and figures for other military branches and units are planned. These limited-edition sculptures sell for \$600.00 each, and the artist will donate 10% of each sale to the Disabled American Veterans.

Please contact the artist, Marc-Anthony Massaro, at 483 East Main Street, Branford, CT 06405, or call 203-481-9154



MASSARO'S WORKS include individual military sculptures, two of which are pictured in the above photo. (Legion photo by Ed Ziobron)



LEGIONNAIRES from Turner-Tinker Post 128, Niantic, continued the tradition of retiring unserviceable American flags and disposing of them in a proper manner. Flag Disposal Team members Steve Carter (l) and K. Robert Lewis commit retired flags to the flames following the ceremony, attended by Troop 66 Boy Scouts and highlighted by a bagpiper.

Granby Post 182 Supports Projects for Historical Society

Story by Ed Phillips

Carol Laun, Salmon Brook Historical Society Curator, in a letter to the Granby Drummer thanked the Shannon-Shattuck Post for their recent donation. She said, "This gift came at a particularly appropriate time because the society is involved in several costly maintenance projects."

The First District post gave the society \$750.00. Members of the post earned the money with their traditional pancake breakfast held on opening day of the fishing season.

The post regularly sells out their other locally famous meals, the annual game supper and the spaghetti dinner. Proceeds from these events benefit area youth organizations and Boys and Girls State. WIC (a women and infants program), and the Marquis of Granby fife and drum corps.

For Memorial Day members marshalled the parade, put flags on veterans' graves in all the Granby cemeteries including some ancient family burial grounds in outlying woods and fields, and raised flags on poles all

around the town green. The post also erected a large open tent on the green and sold hot dogs and hamburgers after the parade until the food ran out.

Shannon-Shattuck members have a history of involvement in town and school activities.



VJ DAY PARADE MARSHALL was Retired Navy CPO George Kesaris, 88, of Killingly, a life member of Leo J. L'Homme Post 21 of Danielson.

(Photo by Andy Baryliski Jr.)

Message from Old Glory

I wave proudly from tall flag poles and tiny car antennas.
I flutter gently in the breeze from porches and windows.
I decorate your lapels. T-shirts, sweaters, and caps.
I am everywhere anyone could look: country, town and city.
But it was not always so.

Not too long ago, bare flag poles stood like silent sentinels
with empty halyards; testimony to indifference.
Now, suddenly I have become my country's symbol again.
A symbol brave men and women have fought and died for.
Americans are once again proud of the red, white, and blue
Star Spangled Banner.

How sad to realize that it took another war for me to
blossom forth in glory and abundance throughout the land.
But still the laws of this land do not protect me from
the desecration and disrespect of a few.

How long, my friends, must I wait for the protection and
respect that is my due as the symbol of this great
United States of America!

Written by Marilyn Favreau, American Legion Auxiliary
Dept. of Conn., Branford #83, September 28, 1991

Page 8

Robert Kopetz Wins Flag Essay Contest

Sponsored by Bozrah Post 138

The American Flag
 "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the public for which it stands one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." This is the pledge that I know by heart. It is the pledge of the Flag, the Flag that was made byetsy Ross to symbolize our country. I will tell you what everything symbolizes, and how that reflects onto me.

The first thing that I would like to talk about is the stripes. These stripes represent strength to me because the 13 colonies wouldn't give up without their freedom. The stripes represent the 13 colonies that fought the British, the biggest nation at that time. This was a great achievement for us; without that I know we would not be in this state of freedom. This makes me feel extremely proud of my country.

Next I will tell you about the 50 stars. They represent the 50 connected states. At first there were 13 stars in a circle, but as the U.S.A. advanced and got bigger with more states, the Flag's stars grew too. This to me says that the U.S.A. is constantly growing whether in population or land area. I am proud of this.

Most people don't know this, but the colors of the stripes mean something. People think that these colors are just for decoration. They are in some ways, but most of all they proclaim something to the other countries. It says we are free, with Liberty, and Justice



Fields Memorial School student, Robert Kopetz was the winner of the recent Essay Contest sponsored by Bozrah Post 138.

for all. The Pledge of Allegiance even states that. This to me is great, it shows that there isn't a thread of the Flag that doesn't stand for something. This is why we take great pride in saluting the Flag.

As you can see, the Flag is a very meaningful object, not just sentimental, but it actually states something. This Flag means to me that we would not give up and surrender.

We went from the weakest country right up to the strongest, and we will never give up. This is what the Flag means to me.

Editor's note: The Fields Memorial School Annual Flag Essay Contest was sponsored by Post 138, Bozrah.

10th Annual Junior Air Rifle Match

USA Shooting and the United States Olympic Center in Colorado Springs hosted the 10th annual Junior Air rifle match in August. The match brought the best shooters in the Sporter and Precision Categories from across the United States. Thirty Shooters participated.

This is the first year that no Connecticut shooter qualified for the national match. However, Rhode Island sent their first shooter in the Sporter category. Vermont also had three shooters.

To say competition was intense would be an understatement. The winner in Precision was Daniel Crews of Georgia scored 2449 points. In second place was Kate Benjamin from Vermont. Her score was 2448.5 points Crews and Benjamin earned their place as the 4th and 5th all-time high scorers in competition respectively.

Josh Peters from Virginia garnered the top position in the Sporter category with 2272.9 points. That was also enough to earn him a shared fourth spot in the all-time high scorers.

Each of the first place winners also received \$1,000 scholarships.

Roya Kempfy of Nevada shined in the prone position with a perfect score of 400. She now shares the record with Mike Beyerle of Pennsylvania and our own Sebastian Paquette of Connecticut.

The competitors, their parents, coaches and the staff received a very welcome surprise. USA Shooting announced that the winner in the Precision category would automatically earn a spot on the National Development Team. The program is a feeder program for the Olympics. Needless to say Daniel Crews was excited.

The shooters got to hear from Gary Anderson Gold Medallist in the 1964 and 1968 Olympic Games. Terry Bradley 1995 winner in the Precision Category who will represent us in the Sydney Olympics was also there to offer encouragement to all.

J.D. Powell Junior Shooting Program Chairman acted as a range safety officer during the competition. Department Treasurer Jerry Dierman, Debbie Dierman and June Powell acted as Deputy Statistical Officers.

From Detachment Headquarters

Detachment Constitution & By-Laws - The rules that govern how each Squadron and the Detachment operate have now become a page of this website.

What's Going On - To find out how more about our National SAL organization, to learn about what types of programs we are involved with or to discover what Squadrons in other Detachments (states) are doing within their communities go to www.sal.legion.org to view the on line National Update.



Members of Boy Scout Troop 66 present flags for inspection during Post 128's Flag Day ceremony and disposal ceremony conducted at the Post Home.



ANNUAL PUBLIC SAFETY - Firefighter of the Year Award is presented to Kevin T. Larsen, from the West Hartford Fire Department. Larsen was nominated for the award by Post 96, West Hartford. Melvin Hanson (L) Post 96 member, presents Larsen to Department Commander Everett G. Shepard III during the annual Department Awards ceremony held during the convention in Stamford.



BOYS 7 GIRLS STATE: Pictured from left: front row, are Brian Iacone, Brenna Kelleher and Kayla Märkey; middle, Kelly Johnson and Dana Medilla; and back, Derek Della Monica, Keith Pereiros, Thomas Orziotti and Anthony Smith.

Post 24 and Unit 24 Sponsors

Derby Students to Take Part in Boys and Girls

The John H. Collins Post 24 and Unit 24, sponsored nine Derby students to The American Legion Boys State and The American Legion Auxiliary Laurel Girls State program.

The students, Post and Auxiliary extend a special thank you to the following contributing organizations: Friend of Russ Fund, Sons of Italy, St. Michael's Catholic War Veterans, Derby Democratic Town Committee Derby Republican Town Committee and the Derby Historical Society.

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American Government

By John White

The Declaration of Independence states the basic principles upon which the United States of America is founded. Quite simply, our Founders said that God is the source of our freedom, our rights, our justice, and our dignity as human beings. As Alexander Hamilton explained, "The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among parchments and musty records. They are written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the Hand of Divinity itself, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power." That is the most basic fact of our existence as individuals and as a nation. If we are to live successfully as a society dedicated to liberty and justice for all, that fact must be recognized and honored by every American.

References to "God"

There are four distinct references to God in the Declaration. They are "nature's God," "Creator," "Supreme Judge of the world" and "Divine Providence." One signer, John Adams, also described God in his writings as "the Spirit of Liberty." These terms make clear that the Founders believed the fundamental basis on which our nation stands is acknowledgment of God as the supreme authority for the conduct of our national life and our personal life. That is the moral underpinning of the American nation.

Therefore, to be American inherently means to live in accordance with the will of the Source of all creation, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence. Freedom, rightly understood, carries a responsibility to honor the Source of freedom. Respect for everyone's unalienable rights to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness was expected of all Americans. That conduct is, quite simply, respect for law as a reflection of the Source of life, liberty and law. That conduct distinguishes freedom from license and licentiousness, and is the hallmark of good citizenship. That is the moral identity of the American people.

God in the Constitution

Clearly, the Founders did not intend for citizens to be bound to any denominational understanding of God. They themselves had differing conceptions of God, ranging from Roman Catholicism and several forms of Protestantism to the more philosophic views of Theism and Deism. This respect for freedom of thought and worship was reinforced in the Bill of Rights, which assured in the First Amendment that Congress would make no law "respecting an establishment of religion" i.e., no law giving special status to one denomination above all others, which had been the case in Britain with the Church of England and the monarch as its head.

However, a simple acknowledgment of God by government was not regarded as an "establishment of religion." Since the beginning of our nation, it has been customary for presidents and other public officials, from the federal to the local, to call upon God for guidance, support, and deliverance from difficulties for the American people, and to express gratitude for good fortune (as in Thanksgiving Day proclamations).

In 1783, when the Treaty of Paris signed, marking the official termination of our War for Independence, this was by George Washington was sent governors of all the states.

Almighty God, we make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection; that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, and for their fellow-citizens of the United States at large; and, finally, that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religious and, without a humble imitation of Whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Washington's reference to Jesus Christ may not have been well received by freethinkers and atheists - there was no public comment about it either way - but no one, including them, questioned his or anyone else's right to pray publicly on behalf of the nation. Likewise, when Washington was sworn in as President in 1788, he added the words "so help me God" to the oath of office prescribed by the Constitution, and every president since then has done likewise.

"In God We Trust."

For the same reason, our coins and currency proclaim "In God We Trust." In 1998, the U.S. District Court of Ohio affirmed the practice of civic piety in rejecting a suit by the American Civil Liberties Union to declare unconstitutional the Ohio state motto, "With God All Things Are Possible." The Court remarked that "this nation was founded on transcendent values which flow from a belief in a Supreme Being." (In Spring 2000, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned that decision, but the governor of Ohio pledged to go to the Supreme Court about it.)

Although God is not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution, it nevertheless was assumed by its Framers that the principles expressed in the Declaration provided the basis on which our laws and policies would be articulated. Equally important, it assumed that government officials would conduct themselves in accordance with that moral view of life. In fact, the American theory of government also has a clear demand for moral behavior by those holding governmental office. Elected officials are required to take an oath or to affirm that they will support the Constitution. Obviously, supporting the Constitution means upholding and honoring the fundamental principles, which it embodies. An official who egregiously violates that understanding is subject to impeachment, whether his or her misconduct involves high crimes (violations of law) or misdemeanors (grossly immoral misbehavior).

The "wall of separation between church and state" noted by Thomas Jefferson (in a personal letter he wrote in 1802 to the Baptist Association in Danbury, Connecticut) was most emphatically not intended to keep religious thought and behavior out of government. The men who gave us the Constitution believed there should be a jurisdictional separation of church and state, but it was primarily to keep the state out of the affairs of the church. Religion and morality were regarded as fundamental to the education of the



POST 24, RECEIVES NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP AWARD: The American Legion's National 50 Year Continuous Membership Award was recently presented to William H. Scarpa, a 50 year member of the John H. Collins Post 24, by Post Commander Erwin "Gus" Williams. Mr. Scarpa, a former resident and businessman of Derby, served in the U.S. Army Infantry in Italy during World War II. He now resides in Haddam.



Second District Commander Leroy Brockett asks a question during the Department Membership Committee's planning seminar held at Post 156 recently. Listening to comrade Brockett are Department Historian Boyd Saxton (left foreground), Seventh District membership chairman Jim Beardsley of the Deep River Post, and membership recruitment team chairman Art Melycher.

youth who would become the electors of our republic. The Northwest Ordinance passed by Congress in 1787 said, "Religion, morality and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

The Theory of American Government Thus, the American theory of government has a hierarchical structure and a religio-moral, or spiritual, foundation. At the top is God; the Spirit of Liberty. From the Spirit of Liberty descend the basic principles of liberty, expressed in the Declaration of Independence. Next comes the architecture of "liberty," expressed in the Constitution of the United States, which describes how our federal government is constructed, and the Bill of Rights, which enumerates the unalienable rights of each individual citizen; no matter what any government body or group of people may want to do otherwise. (Majority rule, executive order and judicial decree can never override those individual rights.) Last, at the level of daily living, come the specific policies and of liberty, or the laws and legislation governing the behavior of citizens at the local, state and federal levels.

All laws and government actions must conform to the Constitution, which is the supreme law of the United States of America. Nothing can supersede or replace the Constitution, so long as America exists as America. This theoretic structure of American government is reflected in the reverse side of Great Seal of the United States, which is an unfinished pyramid watched over by (as the seal's artist described it) the "Eye of the Deity." God is the Founding Spirit of America, operating through the Founders.

Finally, and perhaps most important, the American theory of government has a clear expectation that we, the citizens of America, will conduct ourselves in a moral manner and will vigilantly require the same of our elected representatives and appointed officials.

Since American government is essentially self-government, we citizens have an obligation to understand the principles which govern our lives, privately and publicly. Those principles are spiritual. They are the religio-moral compasses which keeps us on course to provide the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity. That course points directly to the Spirit of Liberty.

Editor's note: The Connecticut Legionnaire asked legislators to answer various questions to give readers an insight of their views. The questions included the following:

1. What would you like to say to the Legion members in your Congressional District to tell them why you are the best person for the job in Congress?
- 1a. (Asked 2nd District candidate Rob Simmons about his military service during Vietnam, and 1b; how being a veteran impacted view if national security)
2. "Considering national security issues, what area of concern, or issue do you see as the most pressing, one that we need to be concerned with four or five years into the future?"
3. "One of the selling points that recruiters had for young people, especially those young people just out of High School, used to be the promise of a college education - funded by the GI Bill. The Montgomery GI Bill address that marginally today - would something on the line of the GI Bill encourage more people to join the military even in this time of high deployments?"
4. One of the issues that working families face is that of family members serving in the Reserves or the National Guard. With some 270,000 forces in more than 130 nations around the world, deployments and rotations are increasing at over three-hundred percent. How can that be addressed to not only deal with our National and International security issues, but to make the veteran and the citizen - soldiers feel more comfortable knowing that they are doing the right thing by serving America in the Armed Forces?"
5. Let's go outside the purview of National Security issues for a moment to an issue that The American Legion is involved in, and that is the proposed Flag protection-constitutional amendment. Would you address your position on the proposed amendment for our members?
6. If you are (re)-elected how will your committee appointments benefit Connecticut veterans and impact National Security? (asked Simmons: "will you seek appointment to the Veterans Affairs Committee?")
7. There are many issues along the line of the Department of Defense Authorization Bill that was just passed and signed - such as this years omnibus bill for the VA in which it was touted as a \$1.3 billion increase over last year. Veterans organizations point out that the \$1.3 billion only brought the VA funding levels to where it should have been three years ago, which has resulted in staff reductions and reduced care during that time. If a young person joins the military today, what are his or her prospects of receiving care from the VA following their service, and how would you address this?"
8. As you know, President Clinton recently signed the D.O.D. Authorization Bill which, among other things, gave a 3.7 percent pay raise to military personnel. This legislation partially addressed an issue that was highlighted by news articles pointing out that there were many military families on Food Stamps, which did not sit well with the majority of Americans. What is your perspective on how we compensate our military, and does this have an affect on our ability to recruit qualified people into the Armed Forces and encourage them to re-enlist?"
9. John Larsen, Rosa DeLauro, Samuel Gejdensen: Congressional records indicate that you voted against passage of the recent VA/HUD omnibus bill. This legislation would provide funding for the VA Medical system and the entire VA. As the authorization bill directly and indirectly provides medical and prescription benefits for many Connecticut veterans, our members are directly affected by this legislation. (Connecticut Legionnaires would appreciate your reasons for casting a vote that would, in the eyes of veterans, deny the needed medical coverage to "those who have born the battle") (Maloney, Johnson, Shays: Please inform the Legionnaires of Connecticut your thoughts on providing such important care to America's veterans.)

James Maloney — Fifth District —

Answer: I am a strong advocate for Veterans. I am fully committed doing all I can in Congress, as I have over the past three and one-half years, to ensure that our veterans receive our nation's full appreciation. As a Member of the House Armed Services Committee, I am also a vigorous supporter of a strong national defense. I am particularly proud of my success at bringing the Veteran's Primary Care Center to Waterbury, at St. Mary's Hospital. I am now working to open a similar clinic in Danbury.

I voted in favor of the House passed Veterans Administration Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2001 on June 21 of this year, because it contains an increase of \$2.6 billion from last year funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. I am encouraged that the House, with my support provided \$20.3 billion in funding for veterans medical care in Fiscal Year 2001. This is an increase of \$1.3 billion over last year's funding.

I have also joined my colleagues to pass legislation that will improve and expand certain veteran's education, survivor, disability, and funeral benefits as well as protect our most hallowed military memorial, Arlington National Cemetery. I am also a cosponsor of other legislation that will expand, extend or reinstate other important veteran's benefits.

2) Answer: The U.S. Armed Forces are facing recruitment and retention problems that are seriously affecting the readiness of our military. These are two areas of concern to me. For example, our Air Force has a significant shortage of experienced

(Continued on page 12)

Nancy L. Johnson — 6th District —

6th District Representative, Hon. Nancy Johnson responded, via fax, to the request of the Connecticut Legionnaire as follows.

1) As a former member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have worked throughout my years in Congress to promote a strong national defense and to protect the benefits our nation's veterans have earned. Those who have served in the United States Military have made unique and valued contributions to our great country and I have consistently supported increases in federal funding for veterans to improve the benefits and services that are available to them. I have also supported improved health care for gulf war veterans, providing the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) with the necessary resources to care for Medicare-eligible veterans, protecting the American flag, and ensuring the integrity of our national cemetery.

2) The threat of a ballistic missile attack is perhaps the most pressing national security concern in the future. Most of the American people are shocked when they learn that we do not have the ability to protect ourselves from a ballistic missile attack. This threat is not decades away as some may claim. North Korea, Iran and other rogue nations are acquiring missile technology more quickly than we anticipated and will pose a clear and present danger to our nation in the very near future. It is likely that any attack would come with little or no warning. That is why I strongly support a national missile defense system to ensure we can defend our nation from a nuclear or chemical missile attack.

3) The promise of an education can be an incentive for young people to join the military. However, we need to modernize the Montgomery 61 Bill (MGIB) to ensure that it reflects the cost of higher education today. The fact that only about half

(Continued on page 13)

Sam Gejdensen — Second District —

1: On being the best candidate that veterans can send to Congress

I have long advocated the interests of veterans across eastern Connecticut and the nation. While all Americans owe this nation's veterans their freedom, I owe the U.S. military a very personal debt. When Americans led the world in defeating the Nazi armies in World War II, they made it possible for my parents to escape the Holocaust. I was born in a resettlement camp in Germany in 1948. If the U.S. and the Allies hadn't defeated the Nazis, if those brave soldiers and sailors hadn't sacrificed their lives for people they never knew, none of this would have been possible.

Remembering those who are owed such solemn respect and thanks, I am committed to upholding this nation's promises to veterans across eastern Connecticut and around the country by continuing to push for increases in the VA budget, for equitable health care funding for Connecticut and for more community-based outreach clinics. I have advocated legislation to allow concurrent receipt of disability and military retired pay and have also co-sponsored a measure that provides an equitable Survivor Benefit Plan. Last year, I worked with the VA, Windham Hospital, and the Town of Windham to open a new walk-in clinic in Willimantic. Also, when district veterans came to me about the Postal Service's refusal to issue a stamp honoring the 100th anniversary of the U.S. Submarine Force, I introduced legislation that called on the Service to issue this stamp. With the help of veterans and the Navy, our efforts paid off with the issuance of a series of stamps marking this milestone.

2: The United States moves into the 21st Century as the preeminent military and

(Continued on page 13)

Rob Simmons — Candidate for 2nd District —

1: On being the best candidate that veterans can send to Congress

I'm a life member of The American Legion and have been a member for fifteen years. Legionnaires have served their country many times over, they've served in uniform and they continue to serve as Legionnaires. They support Boys States, Patriotism, and Americanism programs, they provide aide and assistance to various groups within the community. This is all part of the altruism and the service, which characterize members of The American Legion, and I am proud to be associated with them. I've been an Adjutant and continue to serve as Adjutant for Post 58 in Stonington.

"As a veteran, I understand what our problems are, and I understand better what the solutions are. I can serve more effectively for veterans in Washington because I am a Vietnam veteran. I have served overseas. I have worn the uniform; from the stripes of a PFC to the Bird of a Colonel. I've been enlisted, I've gone to OCS, and I've been an officer. I've served on active duty and I've served in the Reserves. I've been a member of a unit; and I have commanded a unit. I have served at home and abroad in many different capacities."

"The Pentagon is not a strange place to me, nor is Capitol Hill. I feel that I can walk the halls of the Pentagon and the corridors of the VA far more effectively than the incumbent, and I can bring home the bacon to Eastern Connecticut and to veterans across the country because of my experience and my knowledge of the bureaucracies in Washington D.C. Let's get real - send a vet to help the vets!"

1a. On being a veteran

"I am a Vietnam Veteran, I served in Vietnam with the US Army as a Second and

(Continued on page 12)

With a focus on educating Legionnaires about the national security positions of candidates seeking office in Connecticut all candidates and incumbents were asked questions addressing national security concerns of The American Legion. Only one candidate participated in an interview. 2nd District Congressional candidate and Connecticut State Representative Rob Simmons was interviewed by the "Connecticut Legionnaire", on August 15, 2000 in Mystic. Rep. Simmons was the only candidate or incumbent able to meet with The Legionnaire and it should be noted that his responses are given during a Q&A format without the luxury of sitting down and preparing a draft answer to our questions. All other responses were received by Fax or e-mail some 24-48 hours after being sent by the Legionnaire. Responses have been edited for brevity, but in no way effect the intent of the respondent. It is the intention of The Connecticut Legionnaire to post the entire questionnaire and full text of responses on the web-site, www.connecticutlegionnaire.com.

Democratic Platform Reflects American Legion Positions

WASHINGTON - The Democratic Party's call for investments in young people and families was praised recently by the leader of the 2.8-million member American Legion, the nation's largest veterans organization.

Nonpartisan since its founding in 1919, The American Legion, creator of the original GI Bill, has worked with both major political parties, and with elected officials throughout the political spectrum, to enact policies supporting Americanism, national security, veterans affairs and America's young people. National Commander Al Lance expressed appreciation to the party for including several American Legion positions in its platform.

"The American Legion invests nearly \$30 million a year in programs benefiting young people," Lance said. "Providing America's youth with a healthy start, a quality education, and a sound moral foundation is essential to the maintenance of our democracy. Members of The American Legion worked to include those principles - in addition to planks supporting a strong national defense, law and order and, of course, a square deal for America's veterans - in both the Republican and Democratic platforms."

"Democrats understand as well as Republicans that The American Legion's service to our nation's youth transcends its founding commitment to Scouting and the publishing of 'Need A Lift?', a financial-aid guide for students. Vice President Al Gore is a Legionnaire. His running mate, Sen. Joe Lieberman, is a member of The American Legion Boys' Nation Class of 1959."

American Legion representatives testified in July before GOP and Democratic Party platform committees. The Democratic Party included several facets of the American Legion's agenda in its platform:

- Fully fund border, state, federal and military drug-trafficking prevention efforts, above all, to protect youth;
- Reduce violence, vulgarity and other depravity in film, television and the Internet through appropriate laws;
- Make licensed child care readily available to all children by adopting safe, consistent child-care standards;
- Preserve democracy by offering quality, modern public education, via well-paid teachers, to children and adults;
- Teach "values" through the cooperative efforts of family, church, schools and community;
- Reduce school violence through the development of balanced, effective community-based programs;
- Diagnose and treat mentally challenged children early and broaden available educational opportunities;
- Offer incentives to encourage military veterans to seek certification and careers in education;
- Maintain tough, appropriate prohibitions on the production, sale and distribution of obscene materials;
- Offer government financial assistance to families faced by the catastrophic illness of one of their children;
- Re-evaluate current child sexual-abuse statutes to ensure protection of child victims;
- Establish an annual National Family Week during Thanksgiving week to promote the family's cornerstone role;
- Enhance the leadership skills of youth with disabilities through state-level Disabled Youth Leadership Forums;
- Eternally remember America's veterans, honored dead and the men and women in uniform today;
- Make all annual funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs guaranteed, rather than partly discretionary;
- Improve the delivery of benefits and health care services to America's veterans and dependents; and
- Expand national cemetery space to accommodate an increase in veterans' burials.

National Security: The Ultimate Election 2000 issue

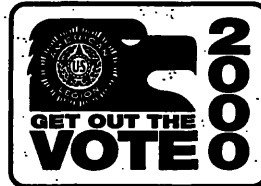
by Al Lance, National Commander

Polls, pundits and prognostications. The casual observer of televised campaign coverage might mistakenly believe those are the issues of the presidential and congressional races, particularly during the party conventions.

Today, public opinion is treated like a college-football survey. Every pundit is a self-appointed expert. Changes in the candidates' clothing and supporting cast are discussed as "analysis." Issues? As every voter knows, "It's the economy, stupid." Right? Not necessarily.

Trust The American Legion on this tip: The most important issue in Election 2000 is the federal constitutional requirement to provide a strong national defense. Remember three facts before you exercise the right to vote - a right pur-

(Continued on page 13)



Republican Platform Includes Legion Priorities

PHILADELPHIA - The Republican Party's call for investments in America's military and moral infrastructures was praised today by the leader of the 2.8-million member American Legion, the nation's largest veterans organization.

Nonpartisan since its founding in 1919, The American Legion, creator of the original GI Bill, has worked with both major political parties and with elected officials throughout the political spectrum, to enact policies supporting Americanism, national security, veterans affairs, and America's young people. National Commander Al Lance, who has led an American Legion delegation to the GOP Convention here, praised the party for including American Legion positions in its platform.

"Modernizing our defense capability and improving the quality-of-life of our troops is as essential to preserving our republic as providing advancement opportunities to our youth, upholding law and order, protecting our values, and letting the people decide whether to protect the flag that represents our values," Lance said. "Members of The American Legion worked to include such principles in both GOP and Democratic platforms. Bedrock values are American, not partisan, ideals. The American Legion will send a delegation to the Democratic Party Convention and will assess its platform as well."

American Legion representatives testified in July before GOP and Democratic Party platform committees. The GOP included numerous facets of the American Legion's agenda in its platform:

- Renew the bond of trust between the American people, their military and the commander in chief;
- Improve quality of life for the Total Force: active-duty, Guard and Reserve;
- Improve the subsistence allowance, housing, and health care for military families;
- Rebuild and modernize the military to restore a "peace-through-strength" foreign policy;
- Use U.S. military forces more responsibly - with clear missions;
- Deploy a national missile defense and reduce nuclear, biological and chemical threats;
- Reaffirm the traditional military culture, with a focus on "fighting and winning in combat";
- Honor a solemn commitment to a full accounting of U.S. POW/MIAs;
- Preserve a Department of Veterans Affairs medical system that serves as a back-up system for both the Defense Department in wartime and the federal government when natural disaster strikes;
- Support VA's computer modernization to expedite the VA claims process;
- Provide federal assistance to veterans pursuing entrepreneurship;
- Enforce laws to protect veterans' employment, advancement and entrepreneurship opportunities;
- Broaden home-buying opportunities for veterans;
- Return to the American people the right to protect the U.S. flag from acts of physical desecration, a right exercised both traditionally and legally for 100 years;
- Support the Boy Scouts of America in its attempts to maintain and practice traditional family values in regard to their membership and leadership standards;
- Support the right to bear arms, consistent with the Second Amendment;
- Support voluntary prayer in public buildings, public schools and public gatherings;
- Allocate more resources to enforce immigration laws;
- Recognize English as our nation's common language;
- Allow the posting of references to God, such as the Ten Commandments, in public life; and
- Fight a war on drugs on criminal justice, international, education, research and treatment fronts.

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Rob Simmons (Continued from page 10)

First Lieutenant: from April 1967 to December 1968. During my first year in Vietnam, which included the Tet Offensive, I was stationed with 2nd Field Force Headquarters in Ben Hoi, north of Saigon, serving as a Military Intelligence Officer. I extended my tour six months and was assigned to Team 96 in the Mekong Delta with the Military Assistance Advisory Command - Vietnam, or MAAC-V, also as Intelligence Officer. I received the Bronze Star Medal from 2nd Field Force, and a second Bronze Star from Team 96.

1b. Has military service impacted understanding of National Security Issues?

"As a Vietnam veteran, I understand that American Policy abroad can have dramatic impact on our people and on our country. My experience in Vietnam convinced me that a life of public service was worthwhile; if for no other reason than to avoid any future Vietnams. It also reaffirmed in my mind the idea that America always must be strong because we have enemies out there - oftentimes enemies that we do not anticipate would be our enemy. Surely, during WW II, we never anticipated that twenty years later we would be fighting in Vietnam. I'm sure nobody anticipated that we would be in Bosnia or Somalia, or Kuwait."

"It underlines the fact that America must always maintain its military defenses and must always be alert to the threats - often unknown threats - that may be just around the corner."

2. I think that the issue that is of concern to National Security planners is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the fact that some of these weapons can arguably fall into the hands of mini-powers and non-governmental entities which are very hard to target. Terrorist groups, religious fundamentalist groups, global activists of one form or another, who, through dollars or some other means are able to access these weapons of mass destruction and attack the United States in a surprising and unconventional fashion. This does argue for some sort of missile - defense system for the United States of America.

I think that the future threats are going to be much more difficult to define and target than in the environment we had in the past. That calls for continued investment in R&D, continued support for the intelligence collection and analysis capabilities of the United States and developing a military that is light, fast, and capable."

3. I think it would encourage them to get in, whether it keeps them in is another matter. I certainly support the GI Bill; I benefited from the GI Bill when I came back from Vietnam. I did have some education where I was able to use those dollars.

Clearly, it is a win-win for the military and for the country. On the one hand it's an incentive to get people into service and into uniform with all the benefits that can come from that, and secondly you are investing in the education of these people when they get out of the service a that they become a higher quality worker and a higher quality citizen. There is no down-side to the program.

One problem we have is how do we use that education incentive to keep people in, and that a little more difficult. One way that is done in the Guard is to allow members to pursue their education and their Guard duty simultaneously. Often, the problem that you get into is that when the member completes both the education and the service obligation; they may get out at some future date. I certainly support educational programs that are designed as recruiting tools for the military."

4. "After the Vietnam War I joined the Reserves and have been active for thirty years. Most recently, I commanded a unit in New Haven that deployed soldiers abroad for two hundred-seventy days, and I know the stress and strain of these deployments. I know of the stress on employers and families. Of the people that my unit deployed, 50% got out of the service after they returned from their overseas deployment. That was because of the fact that they no longer felt that they could stay in the Active Reserves or the Guard with this high operations tempo and with the problems that it creates for their families and their jobs."

The problem we have is that when we downsized the Active component, we also downsized the Reserve component, and that's a mistake. When you downsize the Active component, you should grow the Reserves. The costs are marginal. The mistake that the Clinton administration made was to downsize the Active and Reserve components simultaneously which has dramatically increased the operations tempo for the Reserves and the Guard, and has resulted in moral problems and a tremendous reduction in re-enlistment's.

5. Burning a flag is not speech. Burning the flag is desecration. To say that burning a flag is speech and needs to be protected in this country is ludicrous. The opportunities for speech in America today are virtually unlimited. And so, in my opinion, you don't need to desecrate the flag in order to make a point, you have many, many, many other opportunities for that.

I support the flag protection amendment; I've supported it in the past, I supported it when it came to a vote in Hartford in the Connecticut General Assembly, and I will support it in Washington. An officer's word is his bond, and when I as an officer say 'I will support it', I don't intend to say it in the same fashion as Senator Byrd of West Virginia - to wit 'I'm with you today, but I'm not with you tomorrow.' I'm with you today, and I'll be with you in the future on this issue."

6. On seeking appointment to Veterans Affairs Committee if elected.

"Absolutely. Let's get real - if you want a real answer to real problems, elect somebody who really understands."

7. It's not surprising that the Clinton administration would submit an increase in an election year to provide cover for those congressmen who have shortchanged our veterans in years past, but I don't think I'm fooled by that, and I don't think that veterans and members of veterans organizations are fooled by this political game."

"Let's get real here, veterans and the VA have been under-funded for years. The country has not kept the promise with veterans on health care and on other benefits. The Veterans Affairs Committee in the House of Representatives has only twelve members out of forty-one who are veterans. No wonder the Congress does not feel obliged to keep the promise. Let's get real here, we need more people in Washington fighting for veterans the way these veterans fought for their country. I am a veteran; I am one of those people who can make a difference."

8. On compensation for our military and reports of military families receiving food stamps

"It's an outrage that any military personnel in the uniformed services would be eligible for food stamps. It's unacceptable that any Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine Corps or Coast Guard personnel would have to make ends meet by food stamps. It's absolutely unacceptable. One of the reasons I want to go to Washington is to eliminate that disgrace. I can assure you that when I am elected and go to Washington, that issue will be addressed."

James H. Maloney (Continued from page 10)

pilots that is even affecting its ability to train new pilots, and the Navy is deploying aircraft carriers with crew levels hundreds of sailors below where they should be.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I was heavily involved in drafting this year's House National Defense Authorization Act that will implement a number of initiatives that should address these recruitment and retention problems.

This bill was passed by the full House on a 353 to 63 vote on May 18, with my full support. I also supported this measure when the Committee voted on it on May 10. For the fifth year in the previous six, the Congress has added to the Administration's defense budget request. The bill increases the President's defense budget by \$4.5 billion.

The additional funds provided in this bill will cover a large percentage of the critical unfunded requirements that the Joint Chiefs identified in the Administration's defense budget. For the sixth consecutive year, the Committee authorized increasing funding for critical readiness accounts by more than \$1.4 billion. The committee also authorized and the House passed with my support a 3.7 percent military pay raise.

The operational tempo of our armed forces is also an important factor in the difficulties of recruiting new troops and retaining the ones we have. I will continue to work with my colleagues in the House and Senate to ensure that the Administration realizes that constant deployments are impacting recruitment and retention, and that action is taken to reduce the operational tempo of our armed forces.

3) Answer: Legislation that could encourage more people to join the military is the "The Veterans and Dependents Millennium Education Act." This bill passed in the House on May 23 of this year with my full support. The bill contains many of the recommendations of the Commission on Servicemembers and Veterans Transition Assistance. It increases the rates of veterans' basic educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill. The bill also increases the rates for survivors' and dependents' educational assistance.

4) Answer: The Federal role of the National Guard has been expanded in order to meet military manpower requirements as proved by the Total Force Concept. In recognition of this expanded and important role, Congress has expanded substantially the resources available to the National Guard to insure its readiness, for example by increasing the number of National Guard training deployments overseas.

5) Answer: I am a cosponsor of the Constitutional amendment that will allow Congress to make law protecting our Nation's flag from physical desecration. Our flag is unique among our Nation's symbols and deserves special protections.

6) Answer: As a member of the House Armed Services Committee over the past three and one-half years, I have worked hard to ensure that this Nation's Armed Forces and those who have served it and continue to do so receive the fullest support and benefits from the United States Government. I look forward in the next two years to continuing to serve on the Armed Services Committee so that through my support the American military and its veterans will be given the backing they deserve.

7) Answer: I voted in favor of the House passed Veterans Administration Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2001. I supported this bill because it increased by \$2.6 billion from last year funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. This legislation provided \$20.3 billion in funding for veterans medical care in Fiscal Year 2001, an increase of \$1.3 billion over last year's funding.

However, we need to do more for our veterans. There are a number of underfunded areas that require our attention. These include resources for veterans' extended care facilities. I will continue to work in favor of funding levels acceptable to veterans as the appropriations process moves forward this year, and in the future.

8) Answer: Military pay affects recruitment and retention. I have been a strong supporter of pay increases and pay-table reform. Maintaining our commitment to veterans will also help us to retain a quality force in the future. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 was passed by the full House on May 18, with my full support, including a 3.7 percent military pay raise. The House bill also includes a provision entitled "Supplemental subsistence allowance for low-income members with dependents" is designed to rectify the food stamp situation. I will continue to work with my Congressional counterparts to ensure that this matter is addressed fully.

9) Answer: Funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs and the VA medical system, including for medical and prescription benefits for veterans, is of great importance to me. It is for this reason that I voted in favor of the Veterans Administration Appropriations bill earlier this year. I will continue to work with my colleagues in Congress in 2000 and beyond to ensure that veterans receive the benefits they need and deserve.

Reminder

Vote on Election Day

Sam Gejdensen (Continued from page 10)

economic power in the world. We are now in the unique position of being able to plan for the future rather than simply responding to crises. I am concerned about those asymmetric threats that could undermine our national and economic position. In particular, I am concerned about the proliferation of missile technology, the spread of nuclear, chemical and biological weapon technology, and of materials to build these weapons — such as enriched plutonium and uranium. It is critical to stop terrorists and terrorist states from acquiring these capabilities. Given our disproportionate military strength, it is much more likely that our adversaries will seek less direct methods to undermine our position and it is critical that we anticipate and block these attempts.

We must also maintain our military strength to prevent direct challenges to our position. We must ensure that readiness is high and that our equipment is modernized. While we modernize, however, we need to keep an eye to emerging capabilities elsewhere. For example, the increasing availability of cruise missiles make it critical that our modernization plans emphasize stealth by producing next generation tactical fighter aircraft and silent submarines.

3. I strongly endorse an expanded Montgomery GI Bill, and have co-sponsored legislation to accomplish this. I believe that given the sacrifices they make, our military personnel deserve to be compensated in a manner that recognizes those sacrifices and their service. Providing expanded educational benefits is an exceptional way to accomplish this.

4. In 1989, the U.S. had nearly 510,000 military personnel stationed overseas. Today, that figure has been reduced to 270,000 — a 240,000 person difference from a decade ago. It is important to keep this in perspective and recognize that our forward presence has decreased with the end of the Cold War. At the same time, the overall size of the military has been reduced, and today's presence requirements still put a strain on our personnel. I believe we must begin to address the mismatch between the deployment schedule and the size and composition of our military.

The services are beginning to meet this management challenge head-on. The Air Force, for example, has divided itself up into 10 Expeditionary Aerospace Forces, each of which will be on-call for deployment to crises on a rational and predictable schedule. The hope is that this will ease the strain on military personnel and their families.

We all recognize the value of the service and sacrifice of those who devote themselves to protecting the United States. While these men and women may have valid concerns about their ability to balance a civilian life with this service role, I do not believe that they question whether or not they are doing the right thing by serving their country.

5. I believe that flag burning is both upsetting and offensive. I strongly believe that there should be a presumption in the law that the flag is public property. This designation would give the American flag the same protection afforded the U.S. Capitol, the Statue of Liberty, and other national monuments.

As distasteful as I personally find flag burning, I believe our primary responsibility is to guard the freedom those stars and stripes represent. As a result, I do not believe we can afford to weaken the guarantee of free speech embodied in the Constitution by approving this amendment.

6. I am the senior Democrat on the House International Relations Committee, a critical role as the world shrinks and the dividing line between domestic and foreign policy blurs. I deal not only with national security issues, but with matters ranging

from helping American exporters to pushing for a higher global oil supply to reduce prices, from making it easier for our citizens to adopt children from other nations to examining ways to reduce the spread of disease across borders. These are the types of topics that not only affect the lives of Connecticut's veterans, but all citizens of Connecticut.

Through my committee position, I have an oversight role directly related to national security matters — in particular where our military forces are employed. Let me use the Kosovo conflict as an example. When we were considering our response to the massive civilian displacement and nascent genocide in Kosovo, I introduced the resolution in the House of Representatives that mirrored Senator John McCain's Senate resolution approving the air strikes against Yugoslavia. I also offered an amendment to a Kosovo peacekeeping authorization bill that capped the percentage of U.S. peacekeeping troops in Kosovo to 15 percent of the total force. I believe that because the U.S. bore most of the burden during the conflict, our European allies should bear the bulk of the peacekeeping burden. As a result, the U.S. currently comprises only 14.5 percent of the peacekeeping force in Kosovo.

7. I wholeheartedly agree with the point that Veterans Service Organizations have made with regard to the veterans budget. As a matter of fact, I voted against an initial VA spending bill last year that added \$1.7 billion to the VA budget because even with this increase, the overall funding level fell well short of the amount recommended by veterans organizations.

However, veterans who live in eastern Connecticut came to me and urged me to support this compromise amount and I later did so. I view this as only a first step, and was pleased to see the Administration request \$1.3 billion in additional funding in its FY2001 budget request. As you note in your question, this just brings funding in line with what it should have been last year. This isn't good enough. You can be sure that I will continue to work with veterans in our area and across the country, to boost funding for health care and other important veterans programs.

8. I think of it this way — CEOs that run \$2 billion corporations get enormous salaries, while the crew of a \$2 billion submarine is paid comparatively little. Across the entire military, men and women are given tremendous responsibility and their compensation often fails to mirror this responsibility.

Over the past two years I have voted for defense funding bills that have provided pay raises of 4.8% and 3.7%. The 4.8% pay raise in 2000 was the largest single increase in nearly 20 years. And as your readers understand, providing high quality compensation to our service personnel means more than just providing a pay check. In addition, I support expanding the educational opportunities in the GI Bill. We can also improve compensation by modernizing military health care and providing top-quality child care for military families.

9. Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have pushed to increase benefits for America's veterans. You mention the VA/HUD funding bill. As I am sure you know, the VA/HUD appropriations bill provides funding for several programs, including veterans health care, housing aid for poor families and many science programs. While the bill did include an increase to last year's VA budget, it was still lower than the level prescribed in the Independent Budget. In addition, other programs that are funded through this appropriations bill were seriously underfunded. When I considered the overall content of the bill, I could not support it.

Nancy L. Johnson (Continued from page 10)

of veterans' use even part of their MGIB benefits proves it doesn't meet their needs. This nation cannot keep a promise it made to veterans unless the MGIB is brought into line with today's cost of education.

4. Peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, and other overseas deployments have put great strain on military families. I am very concerned that our military is stretched too thin in deployments throughout the world and that the cost of a sustained commitment of military forces abroad has resulted in neglected modernization programs and deteriorating force readiness. While the United States must continue to be a global leader, we must ensure that other nations, particularly the countries of the European Union, share in the burden of reducing conflict and ensuring stability throughout the world. We can only ensure quality of life for our troops, modernization, and readiness if we carefully limit overseas deployments and require greater contributions from our allies.

5. I have consistently voted for a constitutional amendment to prohibit the physical desecration of the Flag. I strongly support protecting the flag and the values for which it stands.

6. If re-elected I will continue to serve on the Ways and Means Committee where I will work to ensure the long-term solvency of Social Security, modernize our Medicare program, and reduce the tax burden on all Americans. These are all issues of interest to the veterans' community. As a senior Member of Congress, from a defense production state, you can be sure that I will also continue to work with my colleagues on the Armed Services and Veterans' Affairs Committees to ensure a ready and strong national defense and quality health care and benefits for our nation's veterans. In addition, as the mother-in-law of a Marine who saw extensive combat duty in Vietnam, a 20-year retired naval officer, and a Coast Guard Commander, I am keenly aware of the impact of national policies on military families.

7. I am proud that Congress has increased funding for veterans programs every year since 1995, when Republicans came into the majority. This year's increase is another step in the right direction. You can be sure that I will continue to support the funding necessary to give veterans today, and tomorrow, the quality of health care they expect and deserve.

8. While I was proud to support the largest military pay increase in 20 years, we need to do more to ensure retention and morale. It is absolutely unacceptable that some military families are living on food stamps. Too many of our capable military personnel are leaving military service and using their valuable skills in the private

sector where they can earn higher pay. If we are going to recruit and retain the best, we must make military pay competitive with the private sector. I will work to ensure that this latest increase in military pay is just a first-step in bringing parity in pay for our service members.

9. Despite paltry requests for funding from the president for veterans' programs in recent years, the Republican led Congress has ensured an increase each year in veterans' spending. This year's veterans' spending bill provides \$1.3 billion more in health care funding than last year. The bill also supports medical research and facility construction. I will continue to support legislation that ensures veterans get proper health care in return for their service to our country.

Election 2000 issue (Continued from page 11)

chased by the blood of American citizen-soldiers; there is no prosperity without peace; there is no peace without military strength; there is no military strength without strong leadership.

Election Day is about those who will provide the national security leadership in Congress and in the Oval Office during this critical time. The American Legion clearly made this point in its "Platform Statement" to Republican and Democratic platform committees. Legionnaires will reinforce the message on Election Day — all voters should.

Here is the big picture: U.S. troops are deployed to 132 foreign countries and on the world's oceans and in its air space; these men and women miss anniversaries, funerals, holidays and, in some cases, the births of their children so that we can live in peace and freedom.

Our nation has the best troops in the world. There are not enough of them on active duty to fulfill all of the missions in which this administration has involved our armed forces. While spending too much time away from their families on peacekeeping missions and, frankly, at the expense of battle preparation, many service members vote with their feet and bitterly leave the military. They leave not as the military's goodwill ambassadors or as "recruiters" but as anti-recruiters.

Simply put, America could not send the same level of forces to the Persian

(Continued from page 16)



Elected by their peers to lead the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary Department of Connecticut are W. Frazier Brinley and Mrs. Karen Thompson, pictured following formal Installation proceedings.

W. Frazier Brinley Elected Department Commander; Karen Thompson, Department President

During the election for the coming year, W. Frazier Brinley was elected Dept. Commander, with Edward Barry receiving the nod as Dept. Vice Commander. The Auxiliary voted Karen Thompson as their President for the coming year, while Sheila Smart received the Senior Vice Presidents position.

At both conventions, the Governors, Senators and Other State Officials from Boys and Girls State, as elected, and those selected to attend Boys/Girls Nation, were introduced or mentioned to the delegates present. The Junior Shooter program had it's top shooter, and the top cadet from the American Legion Connecticut State Police Youth Program were introduced to the Legionnaires. The Auxiliary presented eighteen Connecticut Youths with \$500.00 Scholarships each.

All Legionnaires and Auxiliary Members enjoyed the hospitality of the Stamford Sheraton Hotel and the surrounding area. Both Kathy Riordan and I wish to thank all of the Legion Family members for their help and cooperation in helping to make this Convention 2000 an enjoyable and productive one.



"STOP...IN THE NAME OF LOVE" was the song offered by these members of the USO Misses of Windham during the 39th Annual VJ Day Parade on August 13th sponsored by Moosup American Legion Post 91. (Photo courtesy Andy Barylski Jr.)



The two people who volunteered so much of their time to lead The American Legion and Auxiliary for the 1999-2000 term pause in front of a replica of the Liberty Bell, located adjacent to the Hall of Flags in the State Capitol building on July 4th. Commander Everett Shepard and President Debra Knickerbocker represented The American Legion Family for the Department of Connecticut in the finest tradition of the organization. (Photo K. Robert Lewis)

Post 76; Unit 76 Elects New Officers

The newly elected officers of the Murray-Reynolds Post 76 American Legion and it's American Legion Auxiliary Unit 76 will be installed on Sunday, September 10 at 2 P.M. in Post home, 20 Church Street, North Haven.

The new officers to serve for the year 2000-2001 are: Charles Morrissey, Commander; Joseph Marsiglio, Senior vice commander; Louis Coppa, Junior vice commander, Robert Kenniston, finance officer; Charles Swartzwelder, Adjutant and Judge Advocate; Wallace R. Bassett, Chaplain; Charles Morrissey, service officer; Dominic Falcone, assistant service officer; Steven Wronski, Historian; George Breuler, Sargent-at-arms and Charles DePonte, assistant Sargent-at-arms.

The Murray-Reynolds American Legion Auxiliary Unit 76 will be led by Debbie Kenniston, President; Francis Feijo, vice president; Shirley Theilgard, secretary; Mary Kenniston, treasurer; Mary Nerkowski, Historian; Mary Camarota, Chaplain; Violet Olson, Sargent-at-arms and Helen Zamlowski, asst. Sargent-at-arms.

Conduct Buffet Dinner

A buffet dinner, served by the mothers of the Post 76 American Legion baseball team, was held recently in the Murray-Reynolds Post 76 American Legion home, 20 Church Street, North Haven.

The baseball manager, George Breuler of the Murray-Reynolds Post 76 baseball team, was the dinner chairman.

After the dinner, coach Flannagan presented all the players with their awards. Chairman Breuler introduced all the officers of the Post 76. He thanked all the boys forgoing up their summer to represent Post 76 during the baseball season. He also thanked the mothers of the boys on the team for preparing the annual baseball dinner.



AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT-ELECT Karen Thompson is sworn in by her mother, Past Department President Althea Lewis (1995-96) during the Installation of Officers ceremony held at the close of the 2000 Department Convention. (Photos courtesy Donnie Anderson)



2000 CONNECTICUT BOYS STATE OFFICERS: Boys Nation Senators, Roophy Roy Bridgeport; Don Sheehy, Shelton; Governor, Roophy Roy, Bridgeport, Fairfield Prep; Lt. Governor, Mike Graboski, Simsbury, Simsbury High School; S Sec. Of the State, Matt Bredefeld, Harwinton Lewis S. Mills High School; Treasurer, Roberto Lopez, Bridgeport, Fairfield Prep; Comptroller, Oris Winchester, Southington, Southington High School and Atty. General, Dan Santovesi, Old Saybrook, Old Saybrook High School

Boystate Objectives

The American Legion believes there is no better way to assure the survival of our republic than to train our young people in the ideal and objectives of American government.

By teaching youth to understand and appreciate the basic principles involved in the successful management of a democratic society, we can keep America strong and ensure freedom for future generations.

These are the distinguished and long-standing objectives of American Legion Boys States. They are accomplished through a unique summertime program, one that emphasizes not classroom lectures or textbook learning, but participation and personal experience in a model state, complete with its governing bodies and elected public officials.

Boys State was founded, and its courses of instruction designed, to supplement the information taught in high school civics classes. Boys State teaches that our form of government is good, but that its preservation depends on intelligent, informed, and loyal citizens in combination with an honest and impartial administration of

government activities. Young men chosen to be Boys State citizens can look forward to a wonderful and challenging experience.

Attendees can acquire a better understanding and deeper regard for our nation's legacy of freedom and democracy.

American Legion Boys State

As a program of The American Legion, Boys State developed from the concept that youth should be offered a better perspective of the practical operation of government; that the individual is an integral part and commensurately responsible for the character and success of his government.

As such, it is an activity of high educational value, born out of a need for youth training in practical citizenship.

Boys State is easily classified as a leadership action program where qualified male high school juniors take part in a practical government course designed to develop in the young citizens a working knowledge of the structure of government and to impress upon them the fact that government is just what they make it.

Spotlight on The American Legion Juniors



Allison and Brittany Hecht

Junior Members Allison and Brittany Hecht

Allison and Brittany Hecht, granddaughters of Mary Tercyak, American Legion Post 162, both are members.

Sixteen-year-old Allison Hecht recently completed her junior year of high school. Earlier this year she competed on the swim team where she broke the school record in the 100 yard backstroke. Allison was part of a record setting relay team as well. Her swim training is year round on the YMCA/USA Swimming Team, which she has been a part of since she was 9 years old. Allison is also a member of the varsity tennis team at her high school. Maintaining an honor roll status, Allison balances the demands of schoolwork and sports. She was selected to participate at the town Leadership Conference for the past three years.

Brittany, 13 years old, recently completed seventh grade. Brittany has been swimming competitively since she was five years old. She has been very successful at both local and regional swim meets. This Spring Brittany qualified and competed at the New England Regional YMCA swim meet at Brown University in Providence, RI. Brittany finished first in the 100-yard backstroke event at the State of Connecticut Regional Swim Championship at Yale University this year.

Brittany is also a member of her school track team and received awards for Outstanding Physical Fitness and Athletic Performance. Brittany also balances a busy schedule of schoolwork and sports to achieve honor roll status.

Jennifer Grabowski

Junior Legion Member, Jennifer Grabowski has recently completed the 4th grade at Forbes Elementary School in Torrington. She is a member of the nationally recognized Forbes Flyers jump rope team, a cheerleader for the Torrington midget football team and is very active in the Girl Scout Council Troop 393.

Jennifer along with her troop have performed several service projects. This year, she participated in a food drive to assist our local FISH Chapter, the "Walk Around the World", sang Christmas carols at our annual carol sing at the Adams House Healthcare Center, and potted flower bulbs for the residents of Litchfield Woods Convalescent Home to help enjoy this Easter.

Jennifer also plays violin with the school orchestra and is a member of the school chorus.

Jennifer stays active during the summer months attending Camp Delaware in Winsted.



Jennifer Grabowski



LEGIONNAIRE INCREASES MEMBERSHIP attendance at Post meetings: Joseph VicDomino, a 36 year member of the John H. Collins Post 24 is shown congratulating William Scarpa on his 50 years of continuous membership with The American Legion. Joe, is a member who goes the extra mile by reminding members of the post's regular monthly meetings. He makes over 100 phone calls each month with a positive result. Membership attendance at post's meetings have increased from four members to over twenty five at each meeting during the past year.

**The East Haddam R.T.C.
Presents An Evening with
Congressional Candidate Rob Simmons
Thursday September 21, 2000 at 6:30 P.M.**

Buffet Dinner
American Legion Post 156, 35 Neptune Ave., Moodus, CT 06469
Donation \$20.00 per person
For Information contact Ed Barry at (860) 873-8702
(Paid for by the East Haddam Republican Town Committee)



ROB SIMMONS, a Vietnam veteran and United States Congressional candidate, met with fellow veterans at a fundraiser sponsored by the Vietnam Veterans of America recently in Hebron Connecticut. Vietnam veteran Hiland B. Doolittle, author of "The Last Parade" spoke with Simmons concerning the plight of POW/MIA's and presented him with a copy of his work.

Election 2000 issue (Continued from page 13)

Gulf today that were deployed in the Gulf War. In 1987, there were 2.1 million military service members on active duty. Today, with a 300 percent increase in commitments around the world, that number is 1.36 million; fewer troops are carrying a heavier operational load. The Navy had 583,000 uniformed service members and 435 battle-force ships in 1987. Today, those numbers are 385,000 sailors and 313 ships, one-third of which will be deployed on any given day; the decline in naval surface fire support in battle could put the lives of U.S. ground troops at a considerably higher risk. Air Force active-duty strength has declined from 609,000 to 372,000 since 1987. The Army has been downsized from 14 to 10 divisions since 1993.

Downsizing the military is just the tip of the iceberg. In another potentially serious blow to readiness, the administration is poised to end 60 years of Navy-Marine Corps training at the Navy's Vieques base, the only base in the Atlantic where such vital preparation for battle can take place.

The pay is not good enough to retain many of the best and brightest service members. The Pentagon estimates about 6,300 troops receive "food stamps." Recruitment has become more of a challenge as young people hear horror stories from the media, veterans, service members and former disgruntled service members. As high school and college graduates weigh higher-paying civilian options - particularly as military retirees await the free health care they were promised and Korean War veterans who fought at No Gun Ri are raked over the media's coals - the military struggles to meet its recruitment goals.

A growing number of high school principals (more than 600 now) refuse to grant military recruiters equal access to students, which makes a bad situation unbearable for the armed forces. Both the Army and the Navy will fail to meet their officer recruitment goals for a fifth consecutive year. The Reserve Officer Training Corps, through which more than half the military's line officers are commissioned, is projected to fall short of its year 2000 goal. Numerous college ROTC programs were closed during the downsizing of the 1990s. Even the service academies are a hard sell today, despite the prestigious, top-notch and virtually free education they offer. These dangerous developments accompany the attempted arms buildups by Iraq and North Korea as well as China's bid to become the dominant force in Asia.

Prior to the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War in Seoul, I stood in the Demilitarized Zone and joint security area alongside U.S. troops. Staring North Korean soldiers right in the eyes reminded me that the United States must not be lulled into complacency by North Korea's possibly short-lived and currency-driven diplomacy. Further, Permanent Normalized Trade Relations with China can only foster that communist country's military buildup and bolster its antagonism against Taiwan.

Despite all the careless moves in defense policy, some candidates will tell you that a strong national defense is too costly. However, history teaches us that failed defense policy, in terms of bloodshed, is far more costly than adequate defense spending. As Sir John Cotesworth Slessor, Marshal of the British Royal Air Force, said in 1954, "... the most important social service that a government can do for its people is to keep them alive and free."

Some candidates will say the Cold War is over and it is time for defense to take a back seat. It is up to ordinary working Americans to challenge those myopic Pollyannas to remember the bloody lesson learned at Pearl Harbor in 1941, when our defense had been weakened and our national conscience was distracted from inevitable war: the simple-minded idea that there is no threat is the greatest threat of all.

We all understand our nation's most pressing problem. On Nov. 7, we should be a part of the solution. Set aside the polls, pundits and prognostications. Vote for the candidates who take seriously the constitutional imperative to "provide for the common defense." There is no free speech, no free elections and no free-market economy without those who serve in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard to preserve and protect our rights and liberties. There is no free lunch - even in an election year.

National Commander Al Lance is the elected leader of the 2.8-million member American Legion, the nation's largest veterans organization.

Convention 2000 Highlights

Convention 2000 was opened on the 6th of July at the Stamford Sheraton Hotel in Stamford.

Commander Everett Shepard, III opened the 82nd American Legion Department Annual Convention, on Thursday afternoon, while President Debra Knickerbocker called the 80th American Legion Auxiliary Department Convention to order on Thursday morning.

Awards, special presentations, along with the business of the annual conventions took place. Special awards to the families of PDC's Elliott "Hank" Morris; Elliot "Mitch" Meccico; Richard Wm. Anderson, were presented by NEC Richard W. Anderson, from the American Legion. The Auxiliary dedicated their convention to Ruth Sousa, Department President, 1968-69.

Special Guests at this years convention was Robert F. Neville, National Vice Commander for the American Legion, Eastern Region; and Richard J. Santos, a candidate for National Commander. Both Legionnaires spoke to the convention; and later were presented to the Auxiliary Convention.

The Local veterans administration office provided timely updated information pertaining to veterans benefits for both veterans and their spouses. Several local officials from the Southwest Connecticut towns were introduced to either or both of the conventions.

Activities outside the convention halls included events for both the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary. A youth luncheon with forty-six people in attendance enjoyed an All American Hamburger Plate Lunch. The PDC Luncheon, where sixteen past commanders enjoyed a hot plate lunch and comradeship. A Soldiers, Sailors and Marine Fund Dinner was held on Friday Evening.

The American Legion Auxiliary held their Annual Banquet with one hundred people at a sit down dinner on Thursday evening. The Past Presidents Breakfast was a fund raiser for youth scholarships, and a distinguished guest luncheon was held on Friday.



The Department of Connecticut was honored to have two very prominent Legionnaires attend our Convention in July, and who were the guests of Commander Shepard at dinner. Pictured on the left is National Vice Commander Robert Neville who hails from Long Island. NYC Neville's region covers the northeast part of the United States and duties call him away from home often. Visiting Connecticut was one of the shorter trips he has made this year in service to America's veterans. Seated next to Neville is Legionnaire Ric Santos from the Department of Maryland, officially recognized as a candidate for National Commander.



Second District Commander Leroy Brockett, from Post 89 East Haven is accompanied by District president Mrs. Mary Lisieski, Unit 17 Naugatuck during the annual Installation ceremony for Department Officers conducted following the close of the 2000 Department Convention.



FLAG DAY: Pictured above during Flag day activities conducted by Post 76 are, first row, left to right, George Breuler, Anthony Rescigno and Anthony Mancini. In front are Andrew Gargano and James Hexter.

Annual Flag Day Program at Montwese School

American Legion Veteran George Breuler, First Selectman Anthony Rescigno, and Principal Anthony Mancini spoke to children about the importance of the American Flag in history and reminded children to think about what it has meant to us as Americans. Two children, Andrew Gargano and James Hexter read their essays on the topic "What it means to be American," which was sponsored by North Haven's own American Legion - Murray Reynolds Post 76.



Department officers march behind Color Guard in the Annual VJ Day parade in Moosup on August 13th. Front rank from left are Alternate NEC K. Robert Lewis, 1999-2000 Department Commander Everett G. Shepard, 2000 - 2001 Department Commander W. Frazier Brinley. Second rank, Adjutant for Stonnington Post 58 Army Colonel Rob Simmons; Department Assistant Sgt at Arms Ed Carney, and Department Sr. Vice Commander Ed Barry. Pictured to the rear are Assistant Sgt at Arms Jean LaFontaine and 4th District Commander Earl Meyer.

Post 76 Memorial Day Parade Success

Parade Chairman George H. Breuler waves to the crowd on Church Street in the center of North Haven.

This year's parade, 2000, is the 11th consecutive parade that Breule has been chairman of. It has turned out to be the largest Memorial Day Parade in Connecticut and is held on the Saturday of the Holiday weekend. There are approximately 60 units and 15-16 bands in this memorial to our Veterans.

Parade units have included various area veterans organizations, such as members of host Post 76 and its' aux., Amvets Post 9 and its' Aux., Veterans of Foreign Wars, Korean and Vietnam Veterans, the Gulf War Veterans and also Veterans from Canada and England.

In addition to all the marches, there is the 2nd Co. Governor's Foot Guard and the Governor's Horse Guard, this year with 16 horses. A fly over was provided by the Air National Guard.

The Selectmen of North Haven lead the delegation of local, state, invited officials and clergy.



George H. Breuler at this year's Memorial Day Parade, Post 76, North Haven.



NORTH HAVEN MEMORIAL DAY PARADE: Pictured above during parade activities are, from left to right, Dominic Falcone, Steven Wronski, Wallace Bassett and George Breuler.

'Thanks' to Participants of Memorial Day Parade

May I say "Thank you" to all who participated in the Post 76 American Legion annual Memorial Day parade. If I try to mention all who participated, I am sure I would miss someone.

As color guard sergeant of Post 76 American Legion, we were proud to pay homage to our fallen comrades from all wars.

It was very heart warming to see all the spectators along the line of march saluting our American Flag as it passed by, and knowing the people were there to pay their respects, to those who paid the supreme sacrifice to keep America free.

May we say "Thank you" to George Breuler and his committee of the Memorial Day parade who did a splendid job of organizing, planning and making sure every unit was in their proper place.

We hope everyone saw the fly over. It was the Air Force's maneuver of the missing man formation, paying respect to those in the Air Force who lost their lives.

Previous to the start of the Memorial Day parade, a ceremony was conducted at the World War II monument on the North Haven Town Green, and a wreath was placed there to honor all Veterans who sacrificed their lives to keep America free. It honored all Veterans who served on the lands, on the seas and in the air. We also offered prayers for those prisoners of war and all those missing in action who are still unaccounted for.

As members of the TV crew were picking up their equipment, a gentleman found a French Croix de Guerre. This citation was presented to the American Forces who liberated Paris. If it belongs to someone you know, please call me at 239-7672. I prize my citation and I am sure whoever lost theirs would like it returned.

May God Keep You Well,
Wallace R. Bassett, North Haven



DEPARTMENT AUXILIARY MEMBERS participated in the VJ Day parade as well. Pictured are (l-r) 3rd District President Alice Saxton, 1st District President Janet Jeffords, and Department Secretary/Treasurer Rita Barylski. Behind them are 5th District President Peggy Jackson and 1999-2000 Auxiliary Department President Debbie Knickerbocker.



Robert Jenkins, holding a folded American flag, is pictured during a recent "Flag Folding" program. Looking on are Bill Pidlipchak and Peggy Jenkins. All three are members of the flag history team.

North Haven Post 76 Meeting Dates

Second District, meeting: The Second District, department of Connecticut, American Legion, will meet on Wed., June 14, in the Harry R. Bartlett Post 89 American Legion home, 576 Thompson Ave., East Haven. June 14 is Flag Day, please fly your American flag.

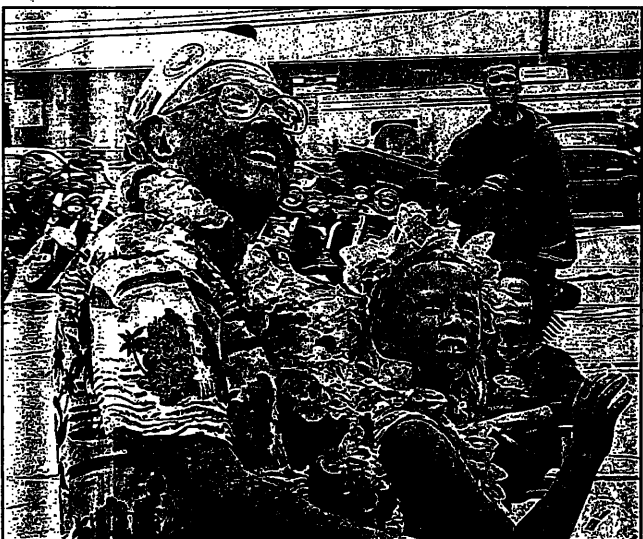
Second District commander Tim Perrotti announced that the annual election of officers to serve the Second District for the year 2000-2001 will be conducted at this meeting.

Post 76 meeting: The Murray-Reynolds Post 76 North Haven American Legion will meet on Thurs., June 15, at 7:30pm, in the Murray-Reynolds Post 76 home, 20 Church St., North Haven.

Commander Anthony Saccavino announced the election of officers to serve Post 76 American Legion will take place at this meeting.

Flag Day is June 14 and a flag cremation ceremony may be held, weather permitting.

American Legion Post 76 Commander Anthony Saccavino invites all Veterans to attend all American Legion meetings and functions. Any Veteran needing assistance may contact the Soldiers, Sailors and Marine fund chairman, Charles Morissey.



PEARL HARBOR SURVIVOR Andrew Barylski Sr., 84, a life member of Mayotte-Viens Post 13 in Putnam, reacts to second story spectators with great granddaughter Katie during August 13 VJ Day Parade held in Moosup. (Photo courtesy Andy Barylski Jr.)



(July 4, 2000) Color Bearer Peter Loux, with Old Glory, is flanked by Color Guard member Jim D'Amato (l) and Boyd Saxton (r) during ceremonies marking Independence Day at the State Capitol in Hartford. (Photo K. Robert Lewis)

North Haven Post Announces Veterans Memorial Day Service

Post 76 North Haven American Legion are planning to hold a Veterans Memorial Day service Sunday, November 12 at the World War II Memorial on the North Haven Green. If we have inclement weather, the services will be held in the Murray-Reynolds Post 76 American Legion home, 20 Church Street, North Haven.



4th District Commander Earl Meyer and Sr. Vice Commander Alfred Dryher examine veterans demographic data at membership team seminar at Post 156.

Veterans Day Programs Scheduled

November 11, 2000

- 11:00 on the Glastonbury Town Green-Post 56 honors Americas veterans.
- 11:00 inside the "Green Room" at Clinton Town Hall. Post 66
- 11:00 at the War Memorial in downtown, Newtown Post 202.
- 1:00, Woodstock honors veterans at the Town Common. Post 111.
- 10:30, at the Liberty Green downtown Niantic, Open House at Post 128.
- 12:30 at Post 9 New London, Veterans Day Luncheon (free) open house
- 2 PM, at the State Veterans cemetery on Bow Lane Middletown, 7th District
- 10:00, Cheshire Town Green, Post 92 and VFW Post 10052 joint program
- 8:00 - 11:30 AM, Post 156 East Haddam, Veterans Breakfast.



ALTERNATE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN K. Robert Lewis, a member of Post 128 Niantic, congratulates Post 128 School Awards Program Chairman Guy Gliamas as he receives the Joseph Mardu Plaque for maintaining the Outstanding School Awards program in the Department for 1999-2000. This marks the fourth time that Gliamas, and Post 128 have been recognized for the post program which reaches into every public school in East Lyme, and awards an outstanding male and female student, chosen by their peers in the 5th, 9th and 12th grade. Fifth Graders from three schools are honored. Gliamas (l) received the award from Department Commander Everett Shepard.

21-04-405-0470

Letters

'Thanks' for Police Youth Week

Dear American Legion,

I would like to thank the American Legion for giving me the opportunity to attend the American Legion State Police Youth Week.

It was an honor to have received one of the Commandants awards that was given. I'm sorry I was not able to attend the Youth Luncheon.

My immediate goal is to finish high school and join the Marine Corps, take college courses while I'm in the Marine Corps.

My future goal is to further my college education, and try to get accepted to the Connecticut State Police Academy.

I know the scholarship money is being put to good use but I may not be able to use the funds due to the Marine Corps. I hope that the American Legion continues State Police Youth Week in the future because it was the best thing I have ever done for myself. Thank you again for making this happen for me.

Sincerely,
Trevor Reilly, Wallingford.

Elect Patriots

The first prerequisite to become an elected official should be that the man or woman is a proven patriot. Requisite to demonstration of patriotism is the protection and safeguarding of our flag, the historic symbol of who and what we are as a country. Throughout our country's history brave men and women have offered and given their lives to protect our flag from capture or desecration by any individual, country, or group.

Recall the vivid imagery of your own flag experience, and the memory of the "Flag Raising at Iwo Jima", the marching colonials, Washington crossing the Delaware, and the flag flying through all of our wars. The flag has been held high and up front by the blood of patriots.

In recent years surveys have shown that citizens overwhelmingly support legislation to protect our flag from willful and purposeful desecration. The constitutional amendment to do that was voted against by Messrs. Dodd, Lieberman, and Shays. These men had the opportunity to serve their country and those who elected them but they turned their backs.

They are unfit for further public office. Regardless of our party affiliation we should all spend all the time and money it takes to remove these persons from the public payroll. There are patriots who are willing to serve. How would you like to serve in battle next to someone who would not protect our Flag? Let us show them their shame.

Edgar D. Gates
Greenwich



Flag History Program

As the magical fingers of Vera Ferson played "You're a Grand Old Flag" on the piano, 380 children came into the gym at Bungay School in Seymour. As they were seated on the floor from Kindergarten to 5th grade, they picked up the tune and before long all the young voices were happily singing, making an introduction to the 206th Flag History Program.

In front of all these children and their teachers, ten members of the American Legion and ten members of the American Legion Auxiliary held in their hands a piece of American History.

Each American Legion member carried a flag that at one time flew in America, including the Flag Americans salute today. In the formal flag presentation, members of the American Legion Auxiliary gave a concise description of the symbolism and history for each of the ten flags that played major roles in the development of the United States.

Natalie Yasensky, Past Department President and Past National Chaplain of Unit 187 in Wallingford, originated the Flag Team along with her late husband Frank. She has continued to conduct the Team, in Frank's memory and in memory of her three brothers who were in World War II. One brother, Alexander, a Marine in the 4th Infantry Division, lost his life on Iwo Jima. Her three brothers and Frank were her inspiration.

As each Legionnaire carried a flag, an Auxiliary member gave the narration. The tribute started with the Viking flag, dating back to the year 1003, when Leif Erickson landed in North America. The flag was a black raven on a field of white. The Vikings believed the raven was their hope and guide in times of doubt or perplexity at sea.

Next came the Grand Union flag, used by General Washington during the Revolution. This was followed by the Bedford flag, used by the Minutemen at Lexington and Concord. On it, in Latin, were the words "Conquer or Die". The earliest known flag bearing the stars and stripes was the Bennington flag, which flew over the Battle of Bennington.

The earliest known flag authorized by the Continental Congress in 1777 was the Betsy Ross flag, which featured 13 stars in a ring.

The First Navy Jack, or the "Rattlesnake flag" is the most popular one with the children. This flag had the motto "Don't Tread on Me", stretched across the bottom of the 13 red and white stripes. It was said the rattlesnake was a warning, meaning it was as dangerous to tread on the Colonists as it would be to tread on an American rattlesnake.

The Stars and Stripes, was our Nation's flag from 1794 to 1818, authorized by the Continental Congress. As each state came into the Union, a new star was added to the flag.

The Confederate flag, used by the 13 Southern States during the Civil War, lasted only a few years, as the south joined the north, and once more all the states were together.

The Connecticut State flag revealed the tradition and pride we have in our state. Having been adopted as our official flag in 1897, it features three grapevines, supported and bearing fruit, said to be symbolic of religion, liberty and knowledge. The words in Latin, at the bottom of the flag, are still the motto of our state; "He who transplanted, still sustains."

The last flag carried in the program, was the present flag of 50 stars and 13 stripes. Known as the "Star Spangled Banner", it has reflected the story of the American Union, which has prospered and grown from a small beginning of 13 colonies along the Atlantic seaboard to its present wealth and power, comprising 50 states.

During this past year, 12 programs were put on, from the Grange in Washington, to the V.F.W. in Avon and Convalescent Homes, Senior Centers, Chatfield, Bungay and Lo Presti Schools in Seymour, and Nursing Homes. Under the leadership of Bill Pidlipchak, Past Commander of the Emil Senger Post #10 of Seymour, the following members were on hand: Mike Kearney, Ed Nally, George Wityak, Walter Hoffert, Joe Santisto, Joe Stanek, Ray Pudis, Peter Duke, William Richter, and from the David S. Miles Post 174 were Bill Keckler, Herb Wheeler and Fred McGuire. Members of the American Legion Auxiliary included Bette Tapley, Beverly Dean, Dolsie Root, Ethel Curtis, Peggy Jenkins, Patricia Keckler, Bertha Miles, Elaine Kubiczka, Mary LeDuc, Laura Freeman, and Harriet Allison. Others who assisted in the past included Gus Williams, Jerome Kennedy, Wally Bassett, George Lane, Joe Mardu, Helene Mardu, Barbara Williams, Tess Cavanaugh, Raglene Miller, and Bob Jenkins.

Vera Ferson, from Naugatuck 17, was on hand to play the appropriate marches as each flag was advanced. She also entertained the patients and children before the programs.

President Wilson established June 14th as "National Flag Day" back in 1915. It was on the anniversary of the day upon which the flag of the United States of America was adopted by the Congress as the emblem of the Union. He suggested and requested that special patriotic exercises shall be had to give significant expression for our love of America. We, the members of the Flag History Team are doing our share.

Submitted by, Natalie Yasensky
Organizer and Director, Flag History Team

Letters

Flag Amendment

In the Connecticut Legionnaire newspaper, summer 2000, there was an excellent article on the rejection by the Senate of Flag Amendment. I would like to comment.

When the issue of the Flag Amendment first came to my attention, I wrote to Senators Dodd and Lieberman requesting that they vote "Yes". I received no answers. After the "No" vote, I wrote to Sen. Lieberman of my dismay at his vote. He answered my letter and stated that he voted "No" as he felt that First Amendment freedom of speech was more important than an amendment making it a crime to desecrate the flag, as this action doesn't happen very often. I was shocked at this justification of his vote. Am I to assume then that burning the flag, or stuffing the flag down the toilet by demonstrators (such as I have seen on TV) is ok? What about the service people who participated in wars, defending the flag and gave their lives? Are all these deaths in vain?

To the best of my knowledge, neither of the Senators appeared at any Memorial Day events. If they did, I'm sure they would have been booed by veterans.

Both Senators are up for re-election in November. I am hoping that all veterans will remember their "no" vote, and give them a "no" vote.

Irene Sunday
Post 187, Wallingford

The Aszio Beachhead Veterans Association

The Aszio Beachhead Veterans Association is an organization made up of Veterans who served with any Army Units, Naval groups, Airborne Tank Groups, medical personnel, etc.

The Aszio Beachhead Veterans Association is conducting a nationwide search for all World War II Veterans who served with an Allied Forces organization on the Aszio Beachhead (also supported by air, Naval support or nurses) during the period of January 22, 1944 through May 25, 1944.

For more information, please contact: David Oglesby, public relations, 11208 Villas on the Green Drive, Riverview, FL 33569-7109.

Yes, I am a member of the Aszio Beachhead Veterans Association and I understand Mystic was considered a site for our national convention.

Thank you,
Wallace R. Bassett
85 Bassett Rd, North Haven

Post 29 Entertains Boys/Girls State Candidates

Members of Greenwich Post 29 recently entertained the 12 candidates which the Post is sending to the Boys State and Girls State Conventions this year. Six boys and six girls will attend.

The students were an eager audience and questioned the moderator at length on correct procedure, knowing it would be of value to them at the Conventions.

ROE SIMMONS

Vietnam Veteran, 1967-1968

Two Bronze Star Medals

Colonel, USAR

Adjutant of American Legion Post #58

Received the Knowlton Award for "Integrity, Moral Character, Professional Competence and Selflessness" in recognition of his contributions to the MI Corps

Central Intelligence Agency, 1969

Commended by the 99th Congress with Senate Resolution 57 for "Distinguished Service to the United States of America"

Received the CIA Seal Medallion, the highest civilian award

Past Commander of the 434th Military Intelligence Detachment in New Haven

State Representative for Stonington and North Stonington, 1991-present.

Ranking Member of the Transportation Committee and serves on the Commerce and Appropriations Committees

Teaching Assistant, University of Connecticut, 1988-1991

Staff to Senators John Chafee and Barry Goldwater, 1979-1985

Haverford College, BA, 1965

Harvard University, MPA, 1979

Married to Heidi, 26 years; father to Jane (23) and Robert (17)

"Rob puts principle over politics..."

The New London Day

As Our Congressman, I will:

Ensure that America's military has the resources to defend our interests

Ensure that our men and women in uniform get off food stamps and receive a livable wage

Take the issue of national defense as seriously as those who stand ready to go into combat on our behalf

Understand and work to protect our national interests and the men and women in uniform

Fight to refurbish our military and start rebuilding our submarine fleet

Make Congress honor its lifetime health care commitment to retired service members and their families.

Push to increase the VA budget and increase our community-based outreach clinics

Reduce taxes and simplify government regulations.

Be a fiscal conservative and social moderate

Real Answers. Real Results.

Rob Simmons
for
Congress

Vote November 7th

One of Our Own!



SIMMONS FOR CONGRESS

www.simmonsforcongress.com

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