



STETSER-LAMARTINE POST 281 CHEW'S LANDING, N.J.

**POST 281
EST. 1939**

MEMBER OF NALPA & THE AMERICAN LEGION PRESS CLUB OF N.J. www.njlegionpost281.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>500 Club / Oratorical</i>	2
<i>Post 281 Honor Guard</i>	3
<i>Service Officer's Report</i>	4, 5
<i>Legion Family</i>	6
<i>American Legion History</i>	7, 8, 9
<i>Schedule of Events</i>	10

New Editor:

Tom Lowe who served as Editor of our Newsletter for the past ten years has decided to move on and he declared that the Fall Newsletter was his last one for Post 281. Tom did an outstanding job as attested by last year's 2nd place in the National Newsletter competition.

Tom was a History buff and an exceptional writer. I am nether, but I believe I have the ability to organize and compile a Newsletter that will be both enjoyable and informative in matters relating to Post 281. Time will tell!

Al O'Neil

*When war's declared and dangers nigh
"God and the soldier" is the people's cry,
When peace is once more made
and all things righted
God is forgotten and the soldier slighted.*

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

It has been a busy five months since I became your Commander. The Post's building, which had been patched-up over the years, required major refurbishing. Through the dedicated efforts of Dick Mayland, Rich Nigro, Tom Wister, Glenn Pickell and several helpers, we took on the replacement of the roof, including an extension of the rear roof (an overhang). Structural changes, with today's lumber costs, are expensive, and the roof project cost us \$34,000. Two other major projects still need our attention; the replacement of our canteen ceiling with new lighting, and the remodeling of our bar. In January 2008 we expect to begin work on the canteen ceiling and lighting. In August 2008, if we have the financial resources we will remodel our bar.

We are projecting that all three projects; the roof, replacing the ceiling and installing new lights and remodeling the bar, will cost an estimated \$70,000. We have already paid \$34,000 for the roof replacement and extension, and we can absorb the cost of the ceiling and lighting in the canteen without incurring any debt. However the bar renovation will be a financial challenge. We have an equity line of

credit set up at the bank, but we do not want to use that unless it is absolutely necessary. Incomes from fundraisers and bar receipts have significantly decreased over the last four years, while at the same time our operating expenses have gone up. We need support from our entire membership. We ask you all to support our fundraisers by purchasing tickets, attending our social affairs and stopping by the canteen to enjoy our Food & Drink Specials. Ron Spriggs, our bar chairman is being innovative in promoting our canteen by sending out weekly email informing our members of special events (especially Friday evenings with Crabs and Shrimp). If you would like to get on our weekly email list, send an email to aloneil@comcast.net or drop off your name and email address at the Post. If for some reason you can't come out to the Post to support our activities, please feel free to send a donation to our building fund. All donations are tax deductible.

The roof project took most of our time during the summer; yet we found time to enjoy several social events. We sold out a bus trip to the Philadelphia-Atlanta baseball game and came home happy after the Phillies won the game. In July, Jerry McAllister and Lisa Hatcher co-chaired a "Beef & Beer" fundraiser for the fight against Breast Cancer



and the Auxiliary had a profitable Hoagie Sale.

Looking forward to the cooler days of autumn, but not to the start of winter, I see a busy schedule at the Post. The Auxiliary will host a Comedy Night on October 20th and on October 28th we have our annual Tailgate Party (in the rear parking lot) while the Eagles travel to Minnesota, and on November 4th, the Auxiliary will sponsor a Turkey Shoot. An annual and significant event at the Post is the honoring of our Veterans on November 11, 2007. We will start the day with a breakfast prepared by the auxiliary for all veterans and their families starting at 8 AM. The traditional Veterans Day services will begin on Sunday, the 11th day of the 11th Month, at the 11th hour (the actual time of the signing of the Armistice signifying the end of WW I.), where we will present Memorial Stars

See Commander Page 2

Commander—Continued from Page 1

their families starting at 8 AM. The traditional Veterans Day services will begin on Sunday, the 11th day of the 11th Month, at the 11th hour (the actual time of the signing of the Armistice signifying the end of WW 1.), where we will present Memorial Stars to families of deceased Post 281 Veterans who passed away between May 2006 and May of 2007. On Sunday, November 18th the Auxiliary is planning a bus trip to Lancaster where they will enjoy shopping, dinner and a Christmas Show. Please consult the Calendar on the back of the newsletter for a comprehensive listing of events.

The Christmas Holiday season follows all of our November activities. We will host our annual St. John of God Christmas Party on Friday, December 7th. This is a tremendous affair chaired by Jerry McAllister with extensive help from Legion Family members, and you need to stop by to see the excitement and happiness exhibited in the face of those from St. John enjoying the festivities. Two days later we will have our Children's Christmas Party on December 9th starting at 1 PM. This party is a real test of crowd control but Don Mitchell and his helpers do a tremendous job. The last event for the Holiday season will be our Legion Family Christmas Party on December 22nd. This is the event in which we can sit back and relax, enjoy great food and music and converse with our fellow legionnaires, reminiscing about how we made everything work despite what seemed insurmountable at the time.

For God and Country

Bill Holmes

High School Oratorical Contest

It is once again time for the National High School Oratorical Contest. This contest is an opportunity for the American Legion to promote speaking skills, the responsibility of citizenship and knowledge of the constitution among high school students. Students can also win scholarship money towards their college educations.

In the 1930's, a Post Department Commander from Missouri, named William Kitchen, started the first oratorical contest. By 1938 the contest became a national program sponsored by the American Legion. Since that time over \$2,000,000.00 in scholarship money has been awarded to high school students throughout America.

Post 281 has been involved with this competition for many years on the post, district and state levels. This year is no different. Walt Carey is chairman of the post contest, Jim Barrett is chairman of the district contest and Cliff Griffiths is chairman of the state contest.

If you know a student who would like to participate or you would like to get involved as a volunteer, please notify one of the chairmen for further information. The post level contest will take place on Sunday, January 20, 2008, at 10:00 AM, in our banquet room. This competition is limited to one student each from Triton, Highland and Timber Creek high schools. Everyone is welcome to come and watch the contest and support the speakers. We look forward to seeing you there.

Contact Information:

**Walt Carey 609-617-5553; Jim Barrett 856-228-7075;
Cliff Griffiths 856-939-1531**

Email: post281serviceofficer@comcast.net

500 CLUB

The Post 500 Club has been in operation for 16 years; it is one of our main fund raisers for Post improvement. There always seems to be something in need of repair or needs to be replaced. Our original roof was in dire need of repair and we have just recently replaced it. That undertaking was extremely expensive. But over the years it appears that support is on the down swing. We have been stuck holding many unsold tickets which is greatly hurting our overall profit. Our Legion family has nearly 1,000 members and we need everyone to buy or sell a ticket or two. Quite a few tickets are sold by members to family, friends and co-workers. You need not be present at the Post to win. We would welcome your help.

Some of the newer members might not be familiar with how the 500 Club works, so let me explain: We try to sell 500 tickets at \$20 each. For ten consecutive weeks we have drawings with two \$75, \$25, \$15, and \$10 prizes. In addition, the first week there will be a bonus drawing of ten \$10 prizes for all ticket holders who have paid in full. On the fifth week there is a special one \$500 and ten \$50 prizes. On the tenth and final week along with the regular weekly drawings, one ticket is picked for the \$1,000 grand prize, plus ten \$100 winners.

On top of this, at the last drawing there is a "Grand Prize Drawing Party" and all ticket holders plus their invited guest are invited. You do not need to be present to win at any of the drawings. So how can you beat that for just *Twenty Bucks*? We draw 112 tickets over the ten weeks and your number goes back in every week!

If you can't get out but would like a ticket for the next drawing, just call the Post and we'll mail a ticket to you.

**Chief Mayland
Chairman**

POST 281 HONOR GUARD

The Post 281 Honor Guard is composed of dedicated Post, Auxiliary and S.A.L members, who give freely of their time to belong to the most professional Honor Guard in South Jersey. We are constantly being asked to provide Color Guards and Firing Squads for Legion County and Department ceremonies, as well as community and civic functions. At one time (back in our prime) we even sang (yes, you heard me right) in several musical plays.

Our primary function, that which supersedes all the others, is to stand casket guard and perform the final salute at the funerals of our departed comrades. It is this duty which we hold most sacred, and are honored to perform.

The honor guard meets for practice each third Wednesday of the month, 7:30, at the Post. Our meetings usually last about an hour, and include practice in drill and ceremonies, firing squad practice and rifle maintenance. We have 10 M1 Garand rifles which all fire blanks when the trigger is pulled. We like to practice so that we all pull the trigger at the same time.

We are facing a bit of a crisis, however. While we have members as young as their late 20's and as old as their mid 80's, our average age is somewhere around 65 -70. While this is certainly not the problem, we do find ourselves running short of retired members who can participate during the week-days for firing squads at funerals. We need new members, especially retired members who can be available during the day. Funerals take a minimum of marching, and usually not a lot of standing. If you are retired, ambulatory, and willing to come out and practice, we have a job for you. Fancy uniforms (the ladies can't resist) and state of the art rifles (from about 1942), plus the camaraderie and warm feeling of continuing to serve veterans can all be yours.

See any member of the Honor Guard at the Post Canteen, or at a meeting. If you just want to stop by and see what all is involved with being a member, come see us at the Post the third Wednesday of any month at 7:30PM.

For God and Country,

Chip Roach
Major, Commanding



Dart League Commissioner Skip Lowe's Remark's on the 2007 Season

The '07 Dart League season ended in dramatic fashion. In unprecedented style the Phillies defeated all three opponents in successive weeks to win the Championship. They bested the Yankees two games to one; the Cubs three games to one and in the Championship they knocked off the Pinks (I mean the Royals) three games to one. All the series were very competitive, especially against the Royals who had a bevy of supporters, not to mention that they were playing for the memory of Charlie Donohue Sr. who passed away during the 2nd week of the season. He will be sorely missed by all.

I'd like to thank Ron Marra for collecting and handling our finances, to Al O'Neil for compiling our statistics, to Cindy and Peg for scorekeeping, to Wendy for understanding and putting up with a bunch of rowdies, and to all the patrons of the Post who supported our 50-50 throughout the year.

Skip Lowe, Commissioner

(See Team Roster's on Page 9)

The Breast Cancer 3 Day

On the morning of Oct 5th Lisa Hatcher, one of our own Post members will take the first step on a life-changing journey...In fact it's more than life-changing and more like life-time changing. Because the 3 day is not just 3 days and 60 miles of walking—It's a collection of moments, big and small and memories that will last forever.

It has been said that the *Breast Cancer 3 Day* is a bold state of mind that unfolds before you like a 60 mile long pink carpet of hope and Lisa is participating in the memory of a close friend and neighbor who was also a long time member of our Auxiliary who succumbed to cancer less than a year ago. Lisa stated "That on December 10th of last year I lost my dear friend Linda to cancer and I knew I had to do something to remember her life. When I heard about the walk I just knew that that is what I wanted and had to do. I want to take an active role in ending breast cancer forever. I also know that every step I take in that walk, that Linda will be right at my side." Back in July of this year Lisa also participated in the *American Cancer Society's Bike-a-Thon* which was a 70 mile run also in Linda's memory.

Walks are being held in 12 major cities throughout the US. Opening ceremonies for the Philadelphia walk will start at 7 AM at Willow Grove Park Mall on Oct 5th.

Lisa had to raise a minimum of \$2,200 to be allowed to participate. With the help of local businesses, family and friends and especially our **Legion Family** she has met and surpassed her personnel goal of \$5,000.

85% of the net proceeds from the *Breast Cancer 3 Day* benefits *Susan G. Korman for the Cure*, to fund breast cancer research and community outreach, and the balance to the *National Philanthropic Trust Breast Cancer Fund*, to provide an endowment for breast cancer initiatives.

If you would like to find out more about this event, go to <http://www.the3day.org>. If you would care to donate to Lisa's cause you can visit her personal web site at: <http://www.the3day.org/philadelphia07/lindamcallister>.

Service Officer Report

The American Legion has announced a new member benefit. A new Prescription Drug Program that I feel may be of benefit to those with limited or no prescription drug program. I know that many of our members are not computer literate or have no access to a computer, so after reading this article, I have provided the CareMark cards for you or you may use the provided link and print your own copy. You may print additional cards for everyone in your household. You need only to fill in your 9-digit membership ID number to use your card.

I am sure we can help print out the cards at the Post should you need assistance that way. An 800 phone number is provided below should you have further questions about the program or visit the below listed website for additional help. I will also be available to find answers to your questions. Contact me at the Post or leave a name and telephone number. I will be glad to be of service to you.

American Legion Discount Prescription Drug Program

Welcome to The American Legion Prescription Discount Program! This program is not insurance. It is simply a convenient, easy to use program to save on prescription medicine when it is not covered by insurance.

On your computer, go to <http://www.caremark.com/legion> to download (PDF file) and print your card and start saving today!

Easy

Simply present your American Legion Prescription Discount card along with your prescription(s) at a participating pharmacy. The program offers an average savings of 20 percent off the regular retail price. Finding a participating pharmacy is easy – nine out of 10 pharmacies nationwide participant in the program, including all major chains and many independent pharmacies.

No Limits

You and your family may use your discount card any time your prescription is not covered by insurance. There are no restrictions and no limits on how many times you may use your card.

Extra Savings

When you use your new prescription discount card, you will automatically receive a Health Advocate Card in the mail. Your special Health Advocate Card offers you a 20 percent savings off CVS branded products in all CVS/pharmacy® stores nationwide. You will receive this card in the mail approximately two to three weeks after you begin using your prescription discount card. Once you receive your Health Advocate Card, simply present it at the time of purchase to receive this discount.

Additional Services

As part of this program you will also be eligible for higher discounts on select medications, as well as high-tech and injectable drugs. For details of these programs and our mail service program, which offers an average savings of 50 percent off the regular retail price of a 90-day supply of select medications, call toll-free 1-888-414-3141 or visit www.caremark.com/legion.

Detach your card and start savings today!

<p>The American Legion Prescription Discount Card</p> <p>RXBIN: 004336 PCN: ADV RXGRP: RX9998 ISSUER: (80840)</p> <p>ID: _____ 01</p> <p>Please fill in your American Legion/SAL membership number above.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This plan is not insurance.</p>		<p>CAREMARK <i>It all starts with care®</i></p> <p>Members: Call toll free 1-888-414-3141</p> <p>Pharmacist: The PCN, RxGRP and full member ID must be submitted online to process claims for this program. For information call toll-free 1-800-364-6331.</p>
--	---	---

Operation Landstuhl tops \$257K

RENO, NV, August 29, 2007 - The national commander of The American Legion announced today that The American Legion family has raised \$257,360.55 for troops recovering at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. National Commander Paul A. Morin announced the total after receiving checks on the platform of The American Legion 89th National Convention in Reno, Nevada.

“Just two months ago, American Legion Auxiliary President JoAnn Cronin, Sons of the American Legion Commander Earl Ruttkofsky and I asked our members to raise \$50,000. Once again, our members continue to astound me with their generosity and can-do attitude,” Morin said. “The patients at Landstuhl are American heroes. They have bled for this country and it is fitting that the American Legion family remember and honor them.”

Operation Landstuhl began after Morin and Cronin paid a visit to the facility and found that the patients were in need of certain comfort items. “The staff at Landstuhl does a tremendous job,” Morin said. “Their dedication to the patients is beyond reproach. That said, the government appropriations process can be slow and cumbersome. We want to make sure that the troops have all of the comfort items they need. This includes DVDs, shoes, clothes, pre-paid calling cards and other items that we often take for granted back in the United State. This is where Operation Landstuhl can help.”

The American Legion has already sent \$25,000 of calling cards to the facility so the patients can call family and friends in the United States. The American Legion Auxiliary presented a \$28,000 check to Operation Landstuhl, and The American Legion Department of Wisconsin donated an additional \$25,000.

“The ability of The American Legion family to react in such a positive manner to help their comrades-in-arms continues to be one of the true hallmarks of this organization,” said K. Robert Lewis, chairman of The American Legion’s Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission.

“Those who have answered this nation’s call to arms understand and appreciate the needs of their wounded comrades. Our members will always answer the call.”

The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and patriotic youth programs. The Legion’s 2.7 million wartime veterans work for the betterment of their communities through more than 14,000 posts across the nation.

Illinois Veteran Elected Leader of The American Legion

RENO, NV, August 30, 2007 - A career National Guard veteran from Champaign, Ill., has been elected national commander of the nation’s largest veterans organization.

Delegates to The American Legion’s 89th National Convention here chose Martin F. (Marty) Conatser to lead the 2.7 million-member organization of wartime veterans for a one-year term. Conatser retired from the National Guard in 1996 as a sergeant major. He is a member of the Lincoln American Legion Post #102 in DeLand, Ill., and has served in many leadership roles during his 25-years as a member of The American Legion. Conatser has served as District, Division and Department (State) Membership Director and Commander. At the national level, he was on the Membership and Post Activities Committee and became its chairman in 2003. During 2004 and 2005 he chaired the National Legislative Commission.

Conatser resides in Champaign, Ill., with his wife, Sharon and is the father of three boys, Richard, Rick, and Bryan. Two daughters-in-law, a grandson, and two granddaughters are all members of the American Legion family.

Conatser took the oath of office long with five other national officers. Serving as national vice commanders are Thomas L. Burns, Jr. of Ocean View, Del.; Peggy G. Dettori of Kodiak, Alaska; Randall A. Fisher of Louisville, Ky.; Donald J. Hayden of Kilkenny, Minn.; and David A. Korth, of Marshfield, Wisc.

National Historian James M. Holmes of Speedway, Ind.; National Sergeant at Arms Denver Ray Phelps of Ogden, Ill.; and National Chaplain Rev. Elliott Laurence Foss, Jr. of Kingsland, Ga., were appointed to their positions by Conatser following the close of the national convention.

American Legion Blasts 9th Circuit’s Cross Ban

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, September 10, 2007 - The leader of the nation’s largest veterans organization criticized last week’s decision by the 9th Circuit Court to remove a cross from a World War I veterans memorial in California’s Mojave Desert as the beginning of the “slippery slope of extreme secularism.”

This Is What I Call Legion Family

Lisa Hatcher and I decided to run a "Beef & Beer" to raise funds for her 3 day cancer walk in October. (See Accompanying Article on Page 3). We approached Cdr Bill Holmes with the idea and he told us to run with it. He graciously donated the hall, beverages and the beef. Lisa then said "Let's do a Chinese Auction ". So, why not? Whatever it is. We asked SAL Cmdr. Tim Stillman for help and he graciously donated salads, rolls and the man power for whatever was needed. President Leslie O'Neill said the Auxiliary were good for the deserts, and the baskets for the auction. The Glendora VFW donated the meatballs. So it looked like a go.

Now I had to find out what a Chinese Auction was—So Donna Barrett and Carol Roach sat me aside and explained it all to me, but since I looked dazed, I know, don't say it, anyway, they said they would handle it and did they ever! We ended up with 35 baskets. Donna's daughter, Erika, put together three baskets on her own. She also collected 8 other baskets and donations from businesses. Way to go girl! Many members donated baskets, as well. Next we needed a DJ, so who better to ask, then another family member, Danny Sullivan, from the Sal's, The tickets and flyer's were provided by Jonathan Interlante. Now, mind you, all of this was in the form of donations.

Chris Mayland is well aware of my kitchen abilities or I guess limitations, so she and Dottie Choate prepared the food with members of the Auxiliary serving.

We were hoping that the weather would cooperate since we were going to go outside and utilize the new roof overhang. Our Hall only holds 120 people and we sold 200 tickets! Amazingly 160 people showed up. The others said they were just donating to a great cause. All in all, it was organized chaos, but it worked out just fine. The weather was great, the food delicious and music outstanding. Lisa took the floor half way through the afternoon and spoke of the walk and why she was doing it. The event ended in typical Legion fashion, with all standing and singing **God Bless America**. Lisa then invited everyone outside to watch as the McAllister family release the balloons to the heavens in Linda's memory and for all of the cancer victims of the world. It was a very moving and beautiful sight. Photos of the event can be viewed on our web site.

Over \$6200 was raised that afternoon to help in the fight against breast cancer. Once again, this is what I call **LEGION FAMILY**— God Bless all of you.

Jerry McAllister

One Person's Thoughts

*When I read the paper,
I want to cry.
So many, it seems,
Have to die.*

*In a war which we
Don't understand,
Do they all have to leave us
To save our Land?*

*Who gives the orders,
And do they really know,
Who they have to answer
To this bloody show?*

*All we can do
Is hope and pray,
That soon, all will be home,
And home to stay.*

God Bless Them All.

**Written by Jerry's Mother,
Edna McAllister**



Camden County American Legion Baseball

Post 281 sponsors teams in the Senior, Junior, Sophomore, and Freshman Divisions of American Legion Baseball. Gloucester Township-Post 281 became the 2007 Department of New Jersey Sophomore Champions in results just released by Camden County. In addition Mike Kalewski from Gloucester Twp-Post 281 was named the Most Valuable Player. Congratulations to both the Team and to Mike for attaining such success.

Post 281's Dart League Completes Competition

Post 281 had four teams in the Dart League with weekly matches from April through September. The eighteen week season was divided in two 9 week segments with the Royals winning the first half Championship and the Phillies taking the second half. The two teams played for the Championship on September 13th, with the Phillies taking the crown. (See Team Roster's on Page 9 & Dart League Commissioner Skip Lowe's Article on Page 3)

THE AMERICAN LEGION—A BRIEF HISTORY

I became a member of The American Legion seven years ago even though I had been eligible to join since the end of the Korean War in 1955. For some reason, young men recently released from military service find other things to do, and do not join veteran organizations until they get older. That's not always the case, but it was the case with me. Since I joined, I found that Post 281 has a membership of nearly 700, and of those 700, only 96 are veterans of recent conflicts such as Lebanon/Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf whereas we have 122 World War II, 132 Korean, and 343 Vietnam Veterans.

But how did this veteran's organization begin, who founded it and how did it get its name? I had heard of The American Legion; we had a Legion in my hometown in Northern New York while I was growing up during World War II. I never gave a thought to how the Legion came to be. During the past year I have made an effort to find out. And I was surprised to find that the Legion was formed in France at the end of hostilities in WW I. Here is a brief historical account of the beginning of the largest of all veteran's organizations that has become as integral and accepted part of the American scene as hot dogs, baseball and presidential elections. The following paragraphs will trace the story of this giant veterans' organization from its conception on foreign soil to the position of stature it enjoys

The American Legion was born at a caucus of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) in Paris, France. The AEF was the US Military force sent to Europe in WWI, and it was the first time in American history that the US sent soldiers abroad to defend foreign soil. General John "Black Jack" Pershing was designated the Supreme Commander of the American Army in France. However it was Lt. Col Theodore Roosevelt Jr. who proposed a caucus held in March 15-17, 1919 in Paris, France and the subsequent organizational caucus held May 8-10, 1919 in St Louis, MO that built an association of veterans whose primary goal was to create a fraternity of veterans based upon comradeship born of wartime service and dedicated to fair and equitable treatment for all veterans, particularly the disabled, and the widows and orphans whose loved ones paid the ultimate price for freedom. Roosevelt's unwavering service during these vital times won him the affectionate title, "Father of the American Legion".

It was at the caucus in Paris in March of 1919 that The American Legion received its name. The honor of naming the new organization went to Maurice K. Gordon, then a major in the 36th Division and later a judge in Kentucky.

A controversy had developed concerning the name, and it was Gordon who made the successful motion to label the fledgling group The American Legion.

Even though The American Legion was formed overseas, organizers realized members of the armed services had no choice whether they served in the United States or overseas. Accordingly, it was decided that membership should be open to all who served honorably in the armed forces in World War I. (Eligibility requirements for membership have since been revised to open membership in the Legion to veterans who served honorably in the armed forces of the United States in World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon and Grenada, Panama and the Persian Gulf).

At the caucus held in May 1919 in St. Louis, MO., two representatives from each state produced the blueprint of The American Legion, approved the principals set forth at the Paris caucus, adopted a tentative constitution and created the machinery to provide for a permanent organization. It was at the St. Louis caucus that the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion was put into final form. A short preamble had been written in Paris by a subcommittee and in St Louis the now-immortal Preamble was developed by the

Continued on Page 8

TAPS



**Dr. Charles Cunningham
Leonard Ganly
Earl W./ Lloyd
Mathew Messina
Robert H. Ward**

UPCOMING POST 281 EVENTS

**Oct. 20, 8 PM
Auxiliary Com-
edy Night**

**Oct. 28, 8:30 AM
Tailgate Party**

**November 11, 8
AM Veteran's
Breakfast—11
AM Ceremonies**

**December 7 PM
St. John of God's
Christmas Party**

(See calendar on page 10 for more events).

AMERICAN LEGION HISTORY CONTINUED

fertile minds of John C. Greenway of Arizona, Hamilton Fish of New York and George N. Davis of Delaware.

Organizational work proceeded rapidly after the St. Louis caucus. Temporary offices were opened in New York City and on September 16, 1919, the Congress of the United States chartered The American Legion, thus giving official sanction to the constitution adopted in St. Louis.

The first national convention of The American Legion met November 10-12, 1919 in Minneapolis, MN. Many delegates were still in uniforms of the armed services. The first American Legion National Convention parade was on the first anniversary of Armistice Day, November 11, 1919. Included in the line of march were 648 delegates representing the infant organization's membership of 648,000.

A somber note was injected at this first convention with the arrival of news that four Legionaries of a newly formed Post in Centralia, Wash. were shot down in cold blood while marching in the Armistice Day parade in their home town by members of the Industrial Workers of the World, a radical group incited by propaganda based on class hatred. Thus, the American Legion received its first challenge by un-American elements, some of which to this day classify the Legion as their greatest enemy.

Frank D'Olier of Pennsylvania became the first National Commander and Lemuel Bolles of Washington the first National Adjutant. D'Olier later became president to the Prudential Insurance Company and performed several non-salaried tasks for his country during World War II.

Representatives from five cities, Detroit, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Minneapolis, and Washington, DC bid to gain the new organization's permanent national headquarters. Indianapolis won, and the national headquarters of the American Legion was moved in 1919 from its temporary location in New York City to the Hoosier capital.

The American Legion is a not-for-profit, federally chartered organization, one of only a handful of such organizations in the country. Chartered by Congress in 1919, The American Legion, as a national entity, is not incorporated under the laws of any state. Legally, it has the nearly unique status of a federal corporation. The annual National Convention is the governing body of the American Legion. Each of the American Legion's 55 Departments (one for each state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, France, Mexico and the Philippines) is entitled to a minimum of five delegates to the National Convention, plus one delegate for each 1,000 members or major fraction thereof, as of 30 days before the convention. The National Commander, members of the National Executive Council (NEC), all living Past National Commanders, and the five National Vice Commanders are also delegates to the National Convention.

One of the first things The American Legion did was go broke. It exercised this inalienable American privilege rather promptly by starting a weekly magazine on July 4, 1919. Paper was scarce and expensive, printing costs were high, but the American Legion began publication without waiting to build a back-up of advertising contracts, and within six months, the organization was \$275,000 in the red.

It became apparent that the 25-cent dues being collected in 1919 would not cover organizational expenses until November 10, when the first convention would assemble. Gasper G. Bacon, the treasurer chosen at St. Louis, went into a huddle with the National Commander, D'Olier and others and decided to take steps. It was a case of borrow or quit, and they did not intend to quit.

Early in 1920, the magazine was still losing money. Finally the magazine was suspended for a month, its advertising placed in experience hands, and the threat of bankruptcy was averted. At Minneapolis, the national dues were fixed at one dollar per member, of which 75 cents was to support the weekly magazine and 25 cents to sustain the National Headquarters. The Departments and Posts would fix their own dues and manage their own finances. The young American Legion remained in debt, but not impoverished.

One other steady source of revenue arose through the National Emblem Sales Division, which sold the buttons, badges, caps, uniforms, souvenirs and other merchandise bearing the official and copyrighted American Legion emblem.

The magazine was reorganized into a monthly in 1925, and National Commander James A. Drain had secured a vote of the NEC authorizing the Legion to raise a \$5 million endowment fund. By 1945, the national endowment, reserve and restricted funds, special trusts and minor revolving funds totaled almost ten million dollars. The American Legion had the free use of a memorial building for its headquarters in Indianapolis and owned a modest office building, converted from an old mansion, in downtown Washington.

Of The American Legion's nearly 15,000 Posts, about 60 percent own their own facilities or clubhouses. The founders of the Legion probably did not visualize that someday their organization would own over a billion dollars in real estate and that the operation of club rooms (canteens) would be an activity of thousands of Posts.

The greatest single legislative achievement of The American Legion was the enactment of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, more popularly known as the GI Bill of Rights. Not only is The American Legion

AMERICAN LEGION HISTORY CONTINUED

universally recognized as the originator of this complex and multi-dimensional bill, but also as the force which overcame major political opposition by massing public opinion in favor of the measure. The GI Bill of Rights is best described by its subtitles; 1. Hospitalization, claims and procedures; 2. Education of Veterans; 3. Home, farm and business loans; 4. Employment of veterans; 5. Readjustment allowances for the unemployed; and 6. General administrative and penal provisions.

While the heart and soul of the American Legion rests in its millions of members and nearly 15,000 Posts guided by its 55 Departments, the nerve center of the organization is the National Headquarters. In 1950, the Legion's National Headquarters moved into a magnificent building erected by the state of Indiana on the War Memorial Plaza in Indianapolis. The building, which sits across the Plaza Mall and houses the National Headquarters of the American Legion and Auxiliary, provides The American Legion with double the floor space of its former headquarters.

Membership Eligibility in The American Legion is limited to a person who was a member of the Army, Navy, Marine Corp, Coast Guard or Air Force of the United States and assigned to **active duty** at some during any of the following periods; April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918; December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946; June 25, 1950, to January 31, 1955; December 22, 1961, to May 7, 1975; August 24, 1982, to July 31, 1984; December 20, 1989, to January 31, 1990; August 2, 1990 to Cessation of Hostilities; all dates inclusive. The place of service is not a consideration in the determination of eligibility, and there is no requirement as to length of service. In the average American Legion Post, about 90-93 percent of membership will be renewals. Death will take 2 or 3 percent each year. Some members will move away and join another Post. Some will simply lose interest and drop out.

This article, because of space limitations, is limited to just a few highlights of the American Legion story since 1919. Most of the material in this article was taken from "American Legion Extension Institute, History and Organization" and from a book I'm currently reading "The American Legion Story" by Raymond Moley, Jr. who authored the book in 1966 and who served overseas in World War II and Korea as a Lt. Commander in the Navy. A more recent book published in 1990 titled, "The American Legion; an official History 1919-1989", by Thomas A. Rumer will provide much more detail than described above.

I sincerely hope this article was enlightening to those of you, who like me, knew little of this great organizations beginning.

Al O'Neil

Cross Ban -Continued from Page 6

"Today it's a memorial. Tomorrow, these same judges can order the removal of crosses on veterans gravestones, the dismissal of military chaplains and the closure of base chapels."

Conatser pointed out that a loophole in the current law allows the ACLU and other groups to collect millions of dollars in attorney's fees from the taxpayers, who, by and large, support the memorials.

Cliff Griffiths

Let's Welcome Post 281's New Members

Max Beauregar
Thomas J. Epp
Richard S. Kamman
Thomas M. Kurzeja
Anthony Porcellini
James J. Golling
Joseph Rutter
Stanley M. Sirisky
Robert Zamitis

Dart League Rosters

Phillies

**Mike Britt
Walt Carey
Skip Lowe
Al O'Neil
Ron Welsh

Royals

**Tim Stillman
Dave Niessner
Glenn Pickell
Chip Roach
Ron Spriggs

Cubs

**Charlie Donohue Jr.
Cliff Griffiths
Charlie Kellogg
Jim Kellogg
Mike Donohue

Yankees

**Ron Marra
Bob Baker
TP Bill Cowgill
John Rowand
Greg Severance

**Team Captain

**THE AMERICAN LEGION, EST. 1919
SUMMER 2007 NEWSLETTER**

Stetser-Lamartine Post 281
PO Box 94
Glendora, NJ 08029

American Legion Established
1919.
Post 281 Established 1939

Post 281 Phone:
856-228-9869

Reach Editor **Al O'Neil** at:
aloneil@comcast.net or call
856-784-2061

**RENEW YOUR DUES FOR
2008! SEND THEM IN
ASAP AND REMAIN A
MEMBER OF THE BEST
POST IN SOUTH JERSEY**

REMINDER:

*Articles and reports for
the Winter Edition of
the newsletter must be
in by the deadline of
December 21.*

Visit our Post canteen:
Each Friday starting
around 5 PM we have
Food Specials—Crabs,
Shrimp, on occasion Buf-
falo Wings, and French
Fries. Come out and en-
joy the food, drink and
the camaraderie of fellow
Legionnaires.

US Flags are for sale at
the Post. Order some new
flags for the front porch,
after they have taken a
beating all Summer. Fly a
new flag, not an old one.

**Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Glendora, N.J. 08029
Permit No. 2**

POST 281 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All Functions Are at the Post Unless Otherwise Notated.

October 2 SAL Meeting 7:30 PM
October 3 Regular American Legion Monthly Meeting 7:30 PM
October 10 Auxiliary Meeting 7:30 PM
October 17 Honor Guard Meeting 7:30 PM
October 20 Auxiliary Comedy Night 8:00 PM
October 28 Charles Donohue Sr. Annual Tailgate Party Eagles vs Vikings Starts at 8:30 AM
October 31 Post 281 E-Board Meeting 7:30 PM
November 4 Auxiliary Turkey Shoot 1:00 PM
November 6 SAL Meeting 7:30 PM
November 7 Regular American Legion Monthly Meeting 7:30 PM
November 11 Veteran's Day Breakfast 8:00 AM, Ceremonies Start 11:00 AM
November 14 Auxiliary Meeting 7:30 PM
November 18 Auxiliary Bus Trip to Lancaster
November 21 Honor Guard Meeting 7:30 PM
November 28 Post 281 E-Board Meeting 7:30 PM
December 4 SAL Meeting 7:30 PM
December 5 Regular American Legion Meeting 7:30 PM
December 7 St. John of God Christmas Party 7:00 PM
December 9 Children's Christmas Party 1:00 PM
December 15 500 Club Final Drawing 3:00 PM
December 19 Honor Guard Meeting 7:30 PM
December 21 Winter Newsletter Deadline Articles and Reports
December 22 Post 281 Legion Family Christmas Party 7:00 PM
December 26 Post 281 E-Board Meeting 7:30 PM
January 2 Regular American Legion Monthly Meeting 7:30 PM
January 9 Auxiliary Meeting 7:30 PM
January 16 Honor Guard Meeting 7:30 PM