



THE AMERICAN LEGION

Post 27 / SQUADRON 27

NEWSLETTER

FARMINGTON, UTAH



December 2013

STILL SERVING AMERICA

www.post27.org

Commander's Corner



Kent Hansen

Holiday Wrapping Up. As the year winds to a close, perhaps it's wise to reflect on the state of our Post. Of course, we know that Post 27 is one of the smaller posts in the Department but also one of the most active. And we take justifiable pride in that. One of the nice things about Legion membership is the fact that Legionnaires can adjust their activity levels to their personal circumstances and availability. We are grateful for and value highly those good Legionnaires who pay their dues but do not attend frequently. With that said, I want to give a hearty salute to the Dynamic Dozen who are always there and who anchor every event and project.

These few core members have shouldered Herculean tasks and successfully completed them all. We have rendered numerous funeral honors to fallen veterans, presented flags to many new

Eagle scouts, marched in several parades, conducted Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Independence Day ceremonies, raised money for Project Comfort Warriors, conducted a successful Oratorical competition, actively participated in Boys State, retired hundreds of unusable flags at a massive ceremony at the Davis County Fair, negotiated for and took possession of our new Post home and anchored the annual Department Convention!



Within our tiny ranks can be found a plethora of stellar leadership. District II is commanded by our own Chuck Stephenson. Area 1 is led by our own John Sheets. And Vice Commander of the entire Department is our beloved Past Commander Paula Stephenson. Post 27 shines at every level! So, as we look back at 2013 and are warmed by the successes of the past year, let's use them as inspiration to launch ourselves to even greater heights in 2014.

Please accept my thanks to each and every one of you for making Post 27 a unit that our community, our state, our nation, and The American Legion can be proud of.

Our Post Initiative. I want to close this message with a serious appeal. In the wake of the devastating typhoon in the Philippines, the message is driven home that disaster can strike anytime and anywhere. The American Legion has established the National Emergency Fund (NEF) in 1989 in response to Hurricane Hugo.



Since then, the fund has provided more than \$8 million in direct financial assistance to American Legion Family members and posts. This funding has prevented damaged posts from closing and enabled American Legion Family members to recover from tragedy.

Beginning at our Holiday Dinner Party at Oakridge Country Club on Dec. 7, Post 27 will kick off our efforts to support the NEF with a donation basket. This is in keeping with our tradition of providing service. Throughout the year, we will be pleased to accept donations to help the fund remain strong. I can't think of a better way to celebrate the holidays.

For more information about the National Emergency Fund, go to: www.legion.org/NEF.



Check us out on Facebook at "American Legion Post 27 Farmington Utah" or there is a link from our Post website at www.post27.org.



Visit us on
Facebook

1st Vice Commander

My thanks to all our members that help to make our post GREAT. Our participation in the Eagle Flag Program and Military funeral Program, are always very much appreciated by those we serve. If this is something that you have an interest in come and join us, we can bring you up to speed in a short time. When visiting with fellow vets, ask them what they know about the Legion and invite them to come to our meeting and look us over and see what we are all about. Remember, membership is the life blood of our organization.

Come and join us at our Christmas Dinner Party at the Oakridge Country Club on December 7. This is a family affair and a good opportunity to invite prospective members. I want to wish all our Legion Family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Frank Lennartz

2nd Vice Commander



A strong America is like a door that swings on four strong hinges, they are: 1-- An EDUCATED Citizenry, 2-- An Moral and Ethical Society, 3-- A Government Of the People, By the People, For the People, 4-- A Light to the World.

An Educated Citizenry

Experience has taught that "people tend to behave according to what they believe." Because of this, the Founders knew that unless the principles of their great success formula were carefully taught to the people, the genius of America could be lost in a single generation. The Founders legislated in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 that education should include 1) religion, 2) morality, and 3) knowledge. They said these were all-important for maintaining a free and prosperous society.

Kenneth Hadley

It is interesting that the teaching of these principles constitutes one of the most neglected areas in education today. This accounts for a lot of the squeaks in the American door.

2009 by Glenn J. and Julianne S. Kimber The Healing of America Study Course TM SERIES #3--Page 1

Adjutant

2013 has been a very good year for Post 27. I would like to extend to you my personal appreciation for all the Post has done at the local level as well as its enormous contribution to the success of this year's Department Convention. More members than ever are taking part in our many programs and activities; our first flag retirement ceremony in August was an event that everyone in the community should be proud of; and the blessing of a permanent meeting space is something that all of us have been looking forward to for many years. I look forward to 2014 and the many opportunities that will come our way.



Chuck Stephenson

American Legion Flag Rewards Program. Post 27 has enrolled in the American Legion Emblem Sales Flag Rewards Program. The program allows Post 27 to receive back \$0.10 (in credit) for every \$1.00 in flag sales. Flags sold may be either through the Post or directly from Emblem Sales. This is an exciting opportunity to make additional revenue - additional details will be provided/published early next year.

Membership. You only have 31 more days to renew and claim your "early bird" status for 2014.

Statistics are membership numbers through 11 November 2013.

2014 GOAL	PUPL	REGULAR	ONLINE	NEW	TRANSFERS	2014	TOTAL
81	5	35	15	2	2	57	70.3%

National Headquarters target date is 75% through Pearl Harbor Day. Please don't put it off until next year – give yourself the gift of membership - we need your renewals now to meet our December target date. You may renew online with a credit card at www.legion.org or send your \$30. Annual Membership Dues to our Finance Officer John Sheets. If I can do anything for you to make your membership renewal easier or more convenient, please let me know. I can be reached at H (801) 444-7189 C (801) 698-7750 or email stphnsnc@aol.com.

Sons of The American Legion. Squadron 27's Annual Membership is only \$7.50. Please send your 2014renewal checks to Finance Officer John Sheets.

2014 GOAL	REGULAR	NEW	2014 TOTAL	% OF GOAL
15	11	0	11	73%

Department of Utah Belt Buckles. The William E. "Bill" Christoffersen "BIG BEE" 50 Years Commemorative Belt Buckles are available for purchase. The buckles were designed to commemorate Bill Christoffersen's 50-plus years as National Executive Committeeman – the longest serving Committeeman for the American Legion. They are 3 ¾" by 2 ¾" oval in shape and depict the state of Utah with the American Legion Family logos on either side. They are a limited edition, numbered and can be purchased for \$60. each. If you are interested in purchasing one of these beauties, please let me know – the buckle will make a GREAT Christmas present.

Happy Holidays and a Joyous New Year. At this most festive time of the year, it goes without saying that we miss and support our brothers and sisters who are currently serving around the world and here at home, to keep us safe and allow us to celebrate the holiday in many different and diverse ways. Most have been away from family and friends for quite some time. It seems that at times many American's take their freedom for granted. The phrase that is uttered often is that "Freedom is Not Free." Those separated from friends and family know this more than most. Keep them in your thoughts and prayers. It is an honor to continue to serve with those in The American Legion.

Sergeant-at-Arms



Frank Ferrante

I recently read with interest an article published online "The American Legion" about Legion support felt in the wake of the recent Midwest storms. The town of Gifford, Ill. and other surrounding towns, felt winds of 140 miles per hour in Sunday's storms on 17 November 2013, leaving behind wreckage and forcing the communities to rebuild. The American Legion has been on hand in the wake of the disaster, proving aid and helping Legionnaires and Legion Family members affected by the storms. It is reassuring to know that when natural disasters like tornadoes, floods or wildfire strike, you can count on fellow Legionnaires to help and the American Legion's National Emergency Funds (NEF) to swiftly deliver needed money to veterans in their communities. As a Legionnaire on site said, "This is veterans helping veterans and their families". This spirit of giving should remind us during the Christmas holiday season to help in some way disadvantage children and their families.

American Flag Etiquette: The flag should be cleaned and mended when necessary.

Chaplain

'For God And Country', an Expression That Stirs the Soul!

Christmas always brings back memories of the two and one-half years I spent in the service during and after world War II. I remember gathering fellow Army soldiers around any available piano and doing my best to play their favorite songs. "I'll Be Home For Christmas, if Only in My Dreams", "Let It Snow", "I'll See You In My Dreams", and various 'Christmas carols'. There was always a shared loneliness, far from home and the warm embrace of family members, and the girl whose picture we each carried in our wallets. I only spent two Christmas holiday seasons away from my home in Farmington but the memory does not dim.



JGolden Barton



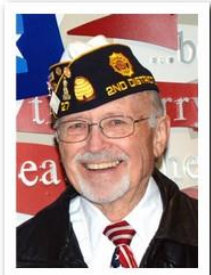
I cannot compare my experience with those who hunkered down in freezing fox holes during the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, or the cold armored tanks near the Rhine in Germany. Or those in the South Pacific fighting the enemy, like my brother, Wilson, a Marine fighter pilot who flew a Christmas Eve mission over the Japanese stronghold of Raoul on the island of New Guinea. No piano available for so many of them. Nor can I grasp the deep despair and hope of prisoners held by the enemy. Yet, deep in my heart I know they gathered, even if only a few and sang songs that warmed their hearts, that perhaps thawed frozen limbs and wrapped thoughts of home with an assurance of God's love. Lyrics that diminished the fear of battle and tempering the anger of the warrior. Giving perhaps, some small light in the dim cell of the captive.

The memories of the past, at this special holiday season, must surely live on in the

heart of each Farmington American Legion Post 27 member. How grateful we are, to the powers of heaven that brought each of us back to the safety and warmth of our homes, back to our loved ones, back to the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Yes, for God and Country we served, and this holiday season pray for all our brothers and sisters who serve in the military, far away from the warm hearth of those whom they love. May the happiness and joy of this Christmas season extend to each of those who now serve, and to each of you who have served God and Country.

Finance Officer



John Sheets

The Eagle Scout Flag Presentation program is very good for the image of The American Legion and a great benefit to the Eagle Scout. However, the major contributor to the Post financial picture is Funeral Honors. Thanks to a few courageous members who face heat, rain, wind and snow to honor our comrades who have transferred to Post Everlasting. We have



developed an efficient group, each of whom knows all functions of the team, from the appointed commander, riflemen firing the volley, bugler playing taps and casing presenter. Our participation in the Funeral Honors Ceremony assisting the DoD's Military Honors team is a solemn event and is an opportunity for us to honor the fallen comrade for his family. Come and Join us in this fulfilling duty, you will be glad you did.

Historian



Kent Hansen

A couple of months ago, when I told General Krulak, the former Commandant of the Marine Corps, now the chair of the Naval Academy Board of Visitors, that we were having General Mattis speak this evening, he said, "Let me tell you a Jim Mattis story." General Krulak said, when he was Commandant of the Marine Corps, every year, starting about a week before Christmas, he and his wife would bake hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of Christmas cookies. They would package them in small bundles.

Then on Christmas day, he would load his vehicle. At about 4:00 a.m., General Krulak would drive himself to every Marine guard post in the Washington-Annapolis-Baltimore area and deliver a small package of Christmas cookies to whatever Marines were pulling guard duty that day. He said that one year, he had gone down to Quantico as one of his stops to deliver Christmas cookies to the Marines on guard duty. He went to the command center and gave a package to the lance corporal who was on duty. He asked, "Who's the officer of the day?" The lance corporal said, "Sir, it's Brigadier General Mattis." And General Krulak said, "No, no, no. I know who General Mattis is. I mean, who's the officer of the day today, Christmas day?" The lance corporal, feeling a little anxious, said, "Sir, it is Brigadier General Mattis." General Krulak said that, about that time, he spotted in the back room a cot, or a daybed. He said, "No, Lance Corporal. Who slept in that bed last night?" The lance corporal said, "Sir, it was Brigadier General Mattis."



Gen. James Mattis

About that time, General Krulak said that General Mattis came in, in a duty uniform with a sword, and General Krulak said, "Jim, what are you doing here on Christmas day? Why do you have duty?" General Mattis told him that the young officer who was scheduled to have duty on Christmas day had a family, and General Mattis decided it was better for the young officer to spend Christmas Day with his family, and so he chose to have duty on Christmas Day. General Krulak said, "That's the kind of officer that Jim Mattis is."

The story above was told by Dr. Albert C. Pierce, the Director of the Center for the Study of Professional Military Ethics at The United States Naval Academy. He was introducing General James Mattis who gave a lecture on Ethical Challenges in Contemporary Conflict in the spring of 2006. This was taken from the transcript of that lecture.

A Christmas Present from Jay Hess...



Jay Hess

"There is A Way"

"Is there room for one more in there?" A casually dressed nearly all-American type carefully picks his way around and over the slightly boisterous crowd seated on the floor. The last space was now filled.

On a screen in the Takhli, Thailand Officer's Club flashes the story of the men who fly the F-105 over North Vietnam. The Title – "There is a Way."

An hour before, the late comer was in a sweat-stained flight suit debriefing his flight over the north.

There had been lots of FLAK, some MiGs and SAMs. A faint voice caught his ear. It came from one of the aircrews debriefing behind him. It said, kidding, "There ain't no way." There had been some close calls.

Three months pass. Our late comer, now looking anything but all-American, awaits Christmas 1967 in a Hanoi prison. He is with three new friends. There is no use even thinking or talking about the Christmas Spirit. "There ain't no Way."

Christmas Eve comes. Our despondent former flyers feel a little bit moved by the Spirit of Christmas as the camp radio, in poorest fidelity, plays, to everyone's astonishment, Christmas music.

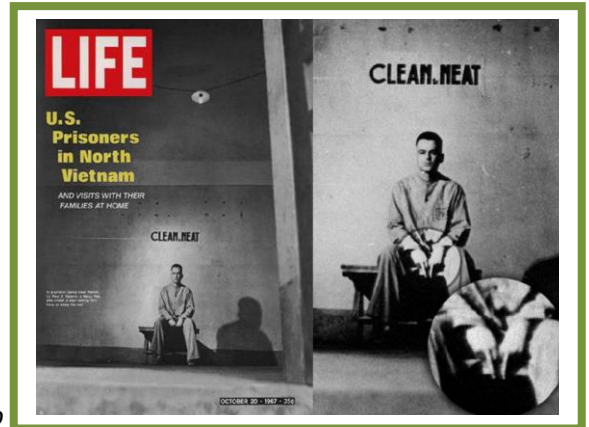
Later, the peep hatch on the door opens. A small gift from the minister of the Evangelical Church of the DRVN, is handed in. It is four small plastic bags each containing a tangerine, cookie and a few pieces of candy. At least one POW feels bad for not doing more to promote the Spirit of Christmas.

The camp gong ruins the quiet of Christmas morning as usual. Taking advantage of the Christmas Spirit, the four sleep in. Startled, they are later awakened by the sound of keys and a bang on the door. They scramble to get to their feet. Two of the four stumbled around looking for their missing rubber tire sandals. "Better hurry, the Turn Key is coming in," the other two whisper in unison. With one shoe off and one shoe on, they start toward the door. Then they stop in amazement. Across the room in the corner is a Christmas Tree. Santa's been there!

For an instant, through sleepy eyes and in the confusion, it is real – a real Christmas Tree. And no one could get in there – except Santa.

The guard yells. We line up. The spell is broken. Changing like Cinderella's coach at midnight, the tree becomes a small broom placed handle down in a teapot. Gauze from Mike's bandage is wrapped around it for tinsel. Four candy wrappers are stuck between the straws for balls. Tangerine peelings and leaves, stealthily gathered from the courtyard over the previous days, were scattered beneath. The two missing sandals are lined up in front. On them are two colorfully wrapped pieces of candy.

Well, at least one of us learned a big lesson that day. Even when you think there is not a way, There is A Way. So on Christmas Eve when I had a stocking, I hung it on the mosquito net line. There was always something in it on Christmas morning.



It helped to keep that lesson in mind. Even then, if someone had told me "You've got to hang on for five more years," it would have been a great test. The kidding response may have been, "There ain't no Way."

"There Was A Way." The way was hope, faith, training, mutual support, prayer, courage, thoughts of family and home, many working to improve our treatment, gutsy B-52 crews, luck and caring folks, many even wearing bracelets with a name on it. Thanks for all these, for patient negotiators, for a courageous President, for peace, for those who have expressed their joy at our return and for all who have done so much for us since we've come home.

Tomorrow, try to remember with me, "There is A Way!"

Legion Laffs



Calendar of Events

- December 1 – 4 – American Legion Auxiliary VA Gift Shop.
- December 7 – Pearl Harbor Day. *Fly the flag!*
- December 7 – Post 27 Christmas Party. 6:00 pm, Oakridge Country Club, 1492 W. Shepard Lane, Farmington.
- December 25 – Christmas Day.
- December 26 – Kwanzaa.
- January 1 – New Year's Day. *Fly the flag!*
- January 8 – Post 27 Oratorical Contest. 6:30 pm, Davis County Memorial Courthouse, Room 116.
- January 9 -- Post 27 Meeting, 6:30 pm, Davis County Memorial Courthouse, Room 116.
- January 20 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day. *Fly the flag!*

From the Department...

First, I want to congratulate Chuck Stephenson on his completion of the National American Legion College in Indianapolis in early November. There are only a handful of graduates from the Department of Utah that have completed this course, and continue to "give back" to the American Legion at the local, state, and national level, benefiting all of us and our military. Great job, Chuck!

For news that you can use:

If you have not taken an **original** or **certified copy** of your discharge certificates to your County Recorder's Office to get them on file, it is in your best interest to do so. Can't find the original? Go to www.archives.gov/veterans and order yours from the National Archives and Records Administration. Then take it down to the County Recorder. And by the way, make a copy for Post 27 (black out SSN/service number) and send or give to our Adjutant Chuck Stephenson, 1258 Eagle Way, Fruit Heights, UT 84037. We need copies of discharge certificates so that when the IRS comes knocking at our Post door, we can prove we are all wartime veterans with honorable discharges. These copies are always kept under lock and key. If you live in Davis County, the Recorder's Office is in Room 106, Davis County Admin Building, 61 South Main Street, Farmington, open 8 am to 5 pm 9 (except legal holidays).

- Thinking about the **American Legion Paid-Up-For-Life Program**? We have received word the program is changing and the cost may be dropping to a more reasonable rate. We don't have an exact rollout date yet, but be patient and stay tuned . . .
- The American Legion has rolled out a new addition to its membership database: genders. This will help identify specific members for information from the VA that is specific for women veterans and their benefits (i.e. maternity care, specific women's health issues, etc). Believe it or not, many women veterans don't think they have the same benefits as the men, and the VA is having a hard time reaching them. The American Legion will help getting benefit information to ALL veterans, men and women. We will soon start seeing the gender box on new applications being printed by National.
- All four Utah Veterans Homes (skilled nursing facilities) are now open for business (and taking patients). They are located in Salt Lake City, Ogden, Payson, and Ivins. For more information, go to www.veterans.utah.gov.



Paula Stephenson
Vice Commander
Dept. of Utah



Chuck Stephenson receiving diploma for completing the National American Legion College on Nov. 1. L. to R. National Commander Daniel Dellinger, Chuck, Larry Besson, National Chairman Internal Affairs, Butch Miller, Past National Commander.

