



The Official Newsletter of The American Legion John W. Sheets Post 27 ★ Unit 27 ★ Squadron 27 ★ Farmington, Utah

The American Legion  
John W. Sheets Post 27  
P.O. Box 427  
Farmington, UT  
84025  
[www.post27.org](http://www.post27.org)

# COMMANDER'S CALL



Jon Rue

Greeting fellow Legionnaires, Auxiliary members, Sons, family members, and friends of the American Legion. Sadly, I need to open this edition with the news that we lost **Frank Lennartz**, a long-time Post 27 member on Valentine's Day. The Friday before his passing, a few of us presented Frank with the Utah Cold War medal. He was sincerely grateful, appreciated the miniature flags we left him, and in good spirits. At this time, I will defer the rest of my comments and yield to William Huber, who has written a special for this newsletter ~



A beloved friend, comrade and fellow Post 27 Legionnaire has departed from among our ranks. Frank Lennartz passed out of mortality on February 14, 2024. Had he lived, he would have been 90 years old this March. I first came to know Frank back in 2005 when John Sheets, the acting commander, was reaching out to rekindle a flame in Post 27. Back then Frank, John and two other old post members were all that was remaining of Post 27 which had all but faded away like so many other posts in Utah. John had reached out to me and several others to come out to a post meeting at Farmington City's old city hall that summer. Frank,

with a welcoming smile, was one of those who greeted me in friendship as we set about to organize ourselves as a post with officers.

Frank was a significant part in growing the post from just four members to over 50 in that very first year. Frank, like the rest of us in our due turn, gave us a brief biographical sketch of his time in the military. Frank had entered the US Air Force during the early days of the Korean War. As I recall, following his initial training, he found himself assigned to the Tooele Army Depot. There Frank helped with the logistic ordnance support effort to keep our aircraft fully armed in Korea. Life continued on and in due course Frank met his future wife, LaDawn. Together they made a home here in Utah and established a family bringing two sons and a daughter into the world.

Over the years Frank filled many rolls in our Post 27 family to include 1st Vice Commander, Sergeant-at-Arms, member of the Post's Military Funeral Honor Team as well as the honor guard. He brought sound thoughts into the post's discussions, was a frequent rifleman not only in the military funeral honors ceremonies but frequently as a part of the honor guard leading the Farmington City's Farmington Days parade. In the Post's effort to engender greater patriotism and respect for the flag, the post preformed a number of flag retirement ceremonies at area elementary schools to thousands of children in the fourth through sixth grades. Frank worked with the BSA Scouts helping them to learn to carry the flags to be burned in a respectful

and dignified manner. He would also be part of the ceremony's formal flag inspection team helping the audience to recognize the symbol of our nation and rendering proper respect to it.

About 2010-2011 Frank served as District 2's Adjutant when John Sheets was the District Commander. Frank was always willing to provide a helping hand. Frank's health issues eventually caught up with him and limited him to staying at the Villas at Baer Creek assisted living facility. On February 9, 2024, Commander Rue, Chaplain Steve Steed and past post commander William Huber met Frank to present him with a Cold War Era Metal, recognizing his ongoing support to our nation (as seen right). They were joined by approximately a dozen staff and fellow resident members. Frank was receiving hospice care at the time of his passing. Fairwell to a faithful airman and citizen of this great nation.



At the February General Meeting, and again at the March Meetings, nominations were/will be held for the next year's Officers of the Post. I accepted the nomination for Post Commander, but am willing to step aside if another Post member desires to run. Bob Anderson was also nominated again as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, and our current 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander, Daniel Woodward was also nominated to repeat. Nominations can be made from the floor before the election which will be held at the General Meeting on March 14 at the Davis Memorial Courthouse & on Zoom.

Last month the Post also held our Oratorical Contest. This was organized by our current 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice, Dan Woodward, and conducted by William Huber as Dan was under the weather that evening. I am grateful to Dan and the numerous volunteers that worked to pull off this year's event. We had four contestants this year! Simon Parnell, a sophomore at NUAMES was the winner of our Post's competition. Additionally, he won the District Contest and will compete at the Department (State) level on Saturday, March 9 at the Old Provo Courthouse. If you can, join us to help support Simon!!

American Legion National Commander in town later in March. Be on the lookout for more information. Finally, I hope to see as many of you as possible at the General Meeting on March 14.

## Post 27 Family EVENTS CALENDAR

March 10 – Daylight Saving Time begins.  
March 14 – Post 27 General Meeting, 7:00 pm,  
Davis County Memorial Courthouse  
Auxiliary Meeting, 6:00 pm, Room 211



April 11 – Post 27 General Meeting, 7:00 pm,  
Davis County Memorial Courthouse  
Auxiliary Meeting, 6:00 pm, Room 211

## 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander



My heart is hurting at the loss of a good man, friend to all, a selfless Legionnaire, Frank Lennartz. He performed countless Military Funeral Honors among many tasks and duties throughout the years. He was a credit to The American Legion, Post 27, and he will be missed.

We continue to need an increase in membership to keep Post 27 viable, productive, and fun. The more interested and interesting members we bring into Post 27, the more the Post can help our veterans by spreading the duties between many hands thus easing the load for each Legionnaire. Please share our purpose and enjoyment of being a Legionnaire with all who will listen and ask them to join us.

**Bob Anderson** Boys State is coming soon in June. It is another reason to get involved in the Legion's mission of supporting youth programs and Americanism. Boys State is a very worthwhile event impacting the lives of potential future leaders. Come one, come all.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander

March is an interesting month. The transition starting from Winter into the first of Spring, if we are lucky! You start thinking about things you need to start planning for. One of the upcoming things we need to start planning for is Boys State and Girls State. This is a great opportunity for our students to learn about the importance of our government, how it works, and how to participate in it. Boys State will be held June 9-15, 2024. Students will be able to start applying March 1 thru April 15. We are supporting 4 schools: Davis, Farmington, Career and NUAMES.



Dan Woodward

You can help! If you have time, availability and drive, there are all sorts of jobs needing filled. We will need to interview students after they apply. We will need counselors for the event in June. If you have an interest in being a larger part of the miracle, please send an email with a description of your skills and experience to [ubs@utahboysstate.org](mailto:ubs@utahboysstate.org). We'll take all the counselors that our funding can support so give generously. To become involved, contact Utah Boys State President Doug Case (435-790-4782) or Director Kent Hansen (801-589-7667). For more information on the annual Utah Boys State program, go to [www.utahboysstate.org](http://www.utahboysstate.org).

# Adjutant

## Hail & Farewell

Welcome **Bruce McGraw**. Welcome back, **Brian Knox**  
*Sad Farewell to our beloved comrade* **Frank Lennartz**



Dale Crockett

**Membership is our Lifeblood!** 

*American Legion Membership:* Statistics are membership numbers through Feb 1 2024.

2024 GOAL	PUFL	REGULAR	ONLINE	NEW	TRANSFERS	2023 TOTAL	PERCENT OF GOAL
128	21	53	33	1	3	111	87%

*Sons of the American Legion Membership:* Statistics are membership numbers through Feb 1 2024.

2024 GOAL	REGULAR	NEW	TRANSFERS	2023 TOTAL	PERCENT OF GOAL
32	24	7	1	33	103%

I want to submit last month's article because it is really important. I have had a total of eight members renew for the 3-year sign-up plan. The following is what was printed for the February newsletter. Sorry for the repeat but everyone needs to do this to save money. "I have important information to give our membership about future dues. Starting in the 2025 membership which begins on July 1, 2024, the membership dues are going to increase. I'm not sure yet what the increase will be, but it will probably be a minimum of \$10 more over the \$35. There is a couple of ways to avoid the increase by 2 ways. First, the Legion has just recently started a new program where a member can go online at [legion.org/renew](http://legion.org/renew) and be able to sign up for three years at a time or still one year. This means you can renew for the 2024-2026 membership at \$35 for the next three years for \$105 if you have not renewed yet for 2024. There are around 15% of you that have not renewed. For those that have renewed already for 2024, you can go online and renew for the 2025-2027 membership for the next three years for \$105. All members can do that up until July 1, 2024, but after that date, you will get the new price for renewing for one year or the option of three years. As you can see, it would be cheaper for you to do the 3-year option now and before July 1, 2024. Secondly, you might want to consider the option of Paid Up For Life (PUFL) so you don't need to worry about increases in yearly dues. Two days ago, I went in to [legion.org](http://legion.org) and paid for the PUFL

for yourself. It is based on your age and at 73 years of age, it came to \$599.00. Next year I am sure the prices for PUFL will also go up. It is important to note that I cannot renew members for the 3 year option or PUFL option, but I can still help you renew for the one year option. If you want the 3 year option or the PUFL option, members need to go online at [legion.org/renew](http://legion.org/renew) or call membership support at 1-800-433-3318 and they will do it for you. A little warning, they are busy and I had to wait for over 35 minutes to speak to someone. I think all of you should seriously look at doing this. It will save you a lot in fees.”

***If I can do anything for you to make your membership renewal easier or more convenient in the future, or answer any questions you may have regarding membership, please let me know. I can be reached at Home (801) 451-9493/Cell (801) 560-2186 or email [dalescrockett@yahoo.com](mailto:dalescrockett@yahoo.com). You can also VENMO me to renew @Dale-Crockett-7 if you have the app. It does not cost you anything and you can get it from the APP Store.***



## CHAPLAIN

### Gold Star Family

The Gold Star symbol began during World War I. At the start of the American involvement in 1917, families hung banners with blue stars representing family members in the services. If the service member died in combat, the family changed the blue star to gold. The Gold Star allowed members of the community to know the price that the family has paid for the cause of freedom. Hence the term “Gold Star Family.” Individual military family members who lost a loved one also started to be referred to as “Gold Star Wives,” “Gold Star Mothers,” etc.



Steve Steed



After the war, Gold Star mothers banded together. The group incorporated in 1928. A few years later, in 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt built upon this growing movement to honor the mothers of deceased service members, and designated the last Sunday of September as National Gold Star Mother's Day. In 1995, President Barack Obama amended “Gold Star Mother's Day” to include families and designated it as "Gold Star Mother's and Family Day" which is celebrated on the last Sunday in September.

There are still Gold Star families from World War I, and many thousands from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. Those who die in service to their country leave behind parents, siblings, spouses, children, and extended families. These are recognized as Gold Star families. The title is meant to honor the service member's ultimate sacrifice while acknowledging their family's loss, grief, and continued healing.

Gold Star Family... a designation no one aspires to.

Even though the nation isn't currently part of an all-encompassing conflict like a World War, over 1.3 million people are involved in the military today, so you may know a family that still grieves a recently fallen soldier. Understanding the sacrifice and acknowledging the holidays designated to remember are the best ways to support the families and honor the soldiers.

Those who have lost loved ones to service never forget where they were when they received the news. It's something they will carry with them forever: the day blue turned to gold.

All Gave Some, Some Gave All. May God continue to bless and comfort Gold Star Families!

# HISTORIAN

## Court-martialed "deserter" earns the Medal of Honor

By Katie Lange , DOD News

It's not often that overzealousness can lead to a court martial on charges of desertion, but that was the case for Army Col. Lewis Lee Millett Sr. during World War II. He had a long military career after that incident, though, later solidifying his legacy when he earned the Medal of Honor for leading the last major American bayonet charge in military history.



Kent Hansen



Millett was born Dec. 15, 1920, in Mechanic Falls, Maine. He grew up hearing stories about his Civil War veteran grandfather, and his uncle, World War I doughboy. Those stories of leadership led him to become the vice president of his senior class and a National Guard member while he was still in high school.

By the time Millett graduated in 1940, war had broken out in Europe. He wanted to serve, so he enlisted in the Army Air Corps. But after a few months, Millett didn't think the U.S. was ever going to join the war. He was so eager to fight that he left the Army to join the Royal Canadian Artillery Regiment, which had joined the Allies in the war. Millett went through that unit's training, but by the time he was sent to Europe, the attacks on Pearl Harbor had happened, leading the U.S. to enter the war. So, while serving in London as a radar operator for Canada, Millett turned himself in to the U.S. Embassy. Officials put him back in the U.S. Army and assigned him to the 1st Armored

Division. Millett was eventually sent to fight in North Africa as an antitank gunner.

While in Tunisia, he earned the Silver Star for saving several Allied soldiers. During the incident, Millett saw a burning halftrack that was likely going to blow up. The halftrack was filled with ammunition, so Millett jumped into it and drove it away from the other soldiers. He managed to jump to safety just before it exploded. On another occasion, Millett also shot down a German fighter plane using a vehicle-mounted machine gun.

By the time Millett got to Italy, though, his desertion to join the Canadian forces finally caught up to him. He was court martialed and convicted, which led to a \$52 fine and the denial of leave. "He didn't give a hoot about the leave privileges because he wasn't going anyway, but he was a little annoyed about the 52 bucks," Millett's brother, Albert, said. "They told him they had to do that so they could promote him."

A few weeks later, Millett earned a battlefield commission. After the war, Millett joined the 103rd Infantry of the Maine National Guard. At some point he married Virginia Young, but that ended in divorce, Millett's obituary said. As a civilian, he went to Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, for about three years. But by 1949, he was called back to active duty.

Millett was eventually sent to Korea with the 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment of the 25th Infantry Division. It was during a pivotal assault that became known as the Battle of Bayonet Hill where Millett earned his Medal of Honor. In early February 1951, Millett led Company E through a rice paddy into an attack against a well-fortified enemy position around Hill 180 near Soam-Ni, Korea. After two days of fighting, Millett and his men were eventually pushed back down to the base of the hill. On Feb. 7, one of the company's platoons got pinned down by heavy fire. Millett knew they had to get to higher ground. He also had read a translated enemy report that claimed U.S. troops weren't willing to engage in close combat, and that was something he wanted to prove wrong. So, Millett ordered the other two platoons forward and, putting himself at the head of the

charge, fixed his bayonet onto his rifle. He then ordered everyone to do the same and follow him up the hill in a close-combat assault that became the last major American bayonet charge in military history.

During the fierce fight, Millett stabbed two enemy soldiers with his bayonet, threw a bunch of grenades, then clubbed and bayoneted his way through more enemy fighters as he urged his men forward. According to a 2019 article written by the 51st Fighter Wing's public affairs unit, since Millett was leading the charge, he had to dodge enemy and friendly grenades. He managed to avoid eight of them, but a ninth injured him, leaving shrapnel in his legs and back.

Eventually, the U.S. platoons fought their way to the top of the hill. As the enemy fled, Millett signaled to his men that they'd made it. The skirmish led to the deaths of nine friendly fighters and about 100 enemy soldiers. Millett refused to be evacuated for his wounds until the hill was firmly secured.

For his bravery and leadership, Millett received the Medal of Honor on July 5, 1951, from President Harry S. Truman during a ceremony in the White House Rose Garden. During the festivities surrounding the ceremony, Millett met a woman named Winona Williams. They eventually married and had four kids: Lewis Jr., Timothy, Elizabeth and John, the latter of whom joined the service, too, but died alongside 255 other soldiers who were killed in an airplane crash in 1985.

Meanwhile, Millett continued with his military career. He went to Ranger School and eventually ran a 101st Airborne Division school for reconnaissance training. He served in several special operations advisory assignments overseas during the Vietnam War and even helped found the Royal Thai Army Ranger School.

Millett finally retired from the Army in 1973. He then went on to serve for more than 15 years as the honorary colonel of the 27th Infantry Regiment Association. Millett's later life was spent living in Idyllwild, California. Even though he was retired, he remained active in the veteran community and with units at March Air Reserve Base. In June 2000, Millett was one of eight Korean War veterans who returned to South Korea to serve as keynote speaker at the Army's 225th Birthday Ball. One of his last acts of service was as grand marshal of a Salute to Veterans parade in April 2009 in Riverside, California. Millett died Nov. 14, 2009, from congestive heart failure as he got treatment at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Loma Linda, California. The 88-year-old was then buried at Riverside National Cemetery near its Medal of Honor Memorial.

## Women's History Month

March is Women's History Month and there were two significant events for First Army in March of 1945.

On March 7 of that year, First Army became the first Allied command to cross the Rhine River. This was the first time that enemy forces had crossed the Rhine since Napoleon. Then on March 13, nurses from the 2nd Hospital unit of First Army's 51st Field Hospital became the first nurses to cross the Rhine River. They crossed at the site of the collapsed Remagen bridge on a pontoon bridge six days after the initial assault crossing.



**The first Army nurses to cross the Rhine River on March 13, 1945.**

**From left, they are: Lois K. Grant, Ione C. Kinnick, Helen D. Johnson, Madalyn H. Andreko, Josephine J. Jennis, Bertha B. Wachter, Mildred A. Judkins, Kay Watry, Florence R. Bestman, Frances M. Anderson, and Dorothy V. Judd. Photo by Warren Marlow**

# POW/MIA NEWS

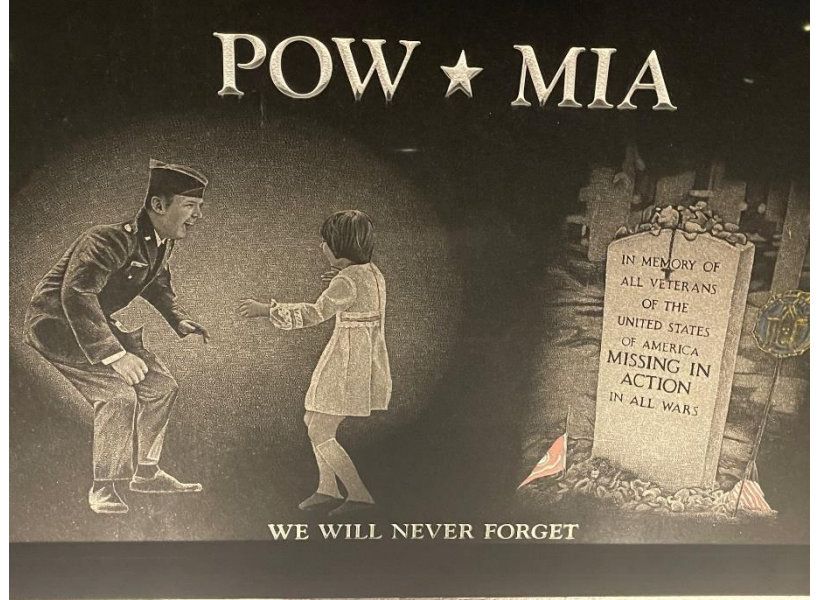
## Operation Homecoming - Return of Vietnam POWs (Feb-Apr 1973)



**Jay Hess**

Operation Homecoming has been largely forgotten but it was live TV as it happened. Here are some details.

From February 12 to April 4, there were 54 C-141 missions flying out of Hanoi bringing the former POWs home. The C-141 (AF Serial Number 66-0177) that flew the first group of prisoners of war to Clark Air Base in the Philippines Feb 12, 1973 has been commonly known as the Hanoi Taxi. It was retired May 6, 2006 and is on display at the AF Museum Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.



March 14, 51 years ago, was the happy day that ended the 5 ½ year POW experience for me. Along with other former VN POWs, I was a passenger on the Hanoi Taxi on its next to last flight on May 5, 2006.

Of the 591 POWs who were released, 566 were military and 25 were civilians. The longest held was John Downey. He was released the day before me. He was captured in China during the Korea Conflict (1953) and spent 20 years in Solitary confinement there.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency lists 735 Military POWs held during the war. 73 died in captivity, mostly in the jungles of Vietnam and Laos. Twenty eight aircrews died in North Vietnam POW camps due to shoot down/capture injuries, torture, maltreatment, etc. There were 30 who escaped; 28 from South Vietnam and 2 Navy pilots from Laos. There are three VN former POWs living in Utah. The names on the Vietnam Memorial wall represent over 58, 000 who gave their all.

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## American Legion Auxiliary



**Deb Hansen**

Hello all!

We are taking on March with great enthusiasm! March 1 we will be doing interviews for Girls State at NUAMES and soon after we will be at Davis High!

Our Virtual Food Drive for the Hill Airmans' Attic is well underway and we will be accepting donations through March 15!

We express our condolences to LaDawn Lennartz on the loss of her dear husband Frank. There is no funeral right now as Frank has donated his body to the University of Utah for medical research. What a kind and selfless gift he gives to the many students who will study him...I wish they could hear his beautiful New York accent! We have an Air Force fleece

blanket ready for the time when we will present it to LaDawn.

Speaking of fleece, we have the Army fleece and just need the knots tied and we will be able to have 2 in our store of fleece for families of our departed Post members. Any volunteers?!

We will be electing a slate of officers and we will appoint several others! Please let Deb know if you are interested in President, Vice President, Membership Treasurer and we will appoint Chaplain and Sergeant at Arms!

Please be ready by March 31 to report your service hours for the year April 1, 2023-March 31, 2024. Service to Veterans and active duty military counts too! (Does that mean I can count the hours I take my grandson, whose Dad is active duty USAF, skiing?!!!!) See you at our March 14 Unit Meeting at 6:00 pm!!

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## **VIRTUAL FOOD DRIVE**

**You supply the money  
& the Auxiliary will do all the shopping.**

***For Hill Air Force Base Food Pantry  
and Military Families***

**The Airman's Attic has supplied a list of required items to buy**

## **DONATE UNTIL MARCH 15**

Stephenson's: 1258 Eagle Way, Fruit Heights

Decker's: 2270 Field Stone Way, Layton

Cash/Check Donations: "ALA DEPT OF UTAH UNIT 27"

Send to: AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, P.O. BOX 427, FARMINGTON, UT 84024-0427

Or send to: Paula Stephenson at the address above

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LEGION**

# **FYI**



## **APRIL MEETING GUEST SPEAKER**

**April 11, 2024, 7:00 PM**

**American Legion John W. Sheets Post 27**

**DAVIS County Memorial Courthouse, Room 211**

**28 E. State Street, Farmington, UT 84025**

David Tomczak, Veteran Employment Counselor with the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP), Utah Department of Workforce Services, will talk about Accelerated Credentialing to Employment and schooling for veterans and spouses, resumes, networking, employment for veterans 59 years old and older, and how to attend colleges courses for free. He will provide

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handouts for veteran/spouse and military/spouse specific programs. Mr. Tomczak can also start the process for a certified Service Officer in filing for benefits with the VA.

## AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF UTAH TRAINING THURSDAYS



**WHEN:** FIRST THURSDAY EACH MONTH THRU MAY 2024, 6:00–7:00 PM  
ADDED SUBJECTS AS NEEDED LAST THURSDAY EACH MONTH

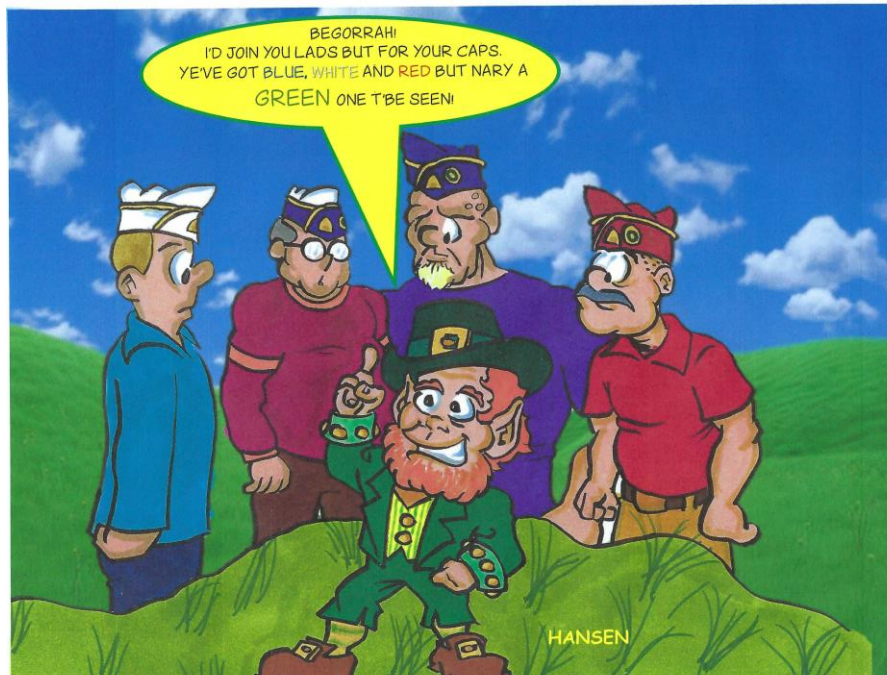
**ZOOM.COM:** MEETING ID: 895 1643 2296 PASSCODE: 716204

### SUBJECT OF THE MONTH

MARCH 7	HOW TO APPLY FOR VA BENEFITS
MARCH 28	HONOR GUARDS & MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS
APRIL 4	CONSOLIDATED POST REPORTS (CPRS)
MAY 7	LEGION FAMILY PROGRAMS WORKING TOGETHER

**ALL LEGION FAMILY MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO JOIN THE ZOOM TRAINING.**

## **Legion Laughs** BY KENT HANSEN



Check us out on Facebook  
at

“American Legion Post  
27 Farmington Utah”



or the link from our Post  
website at

[www.post27.org](http://www.post27.org)



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## **BASIC TRAINING COURSE**



*Learn why we do what we do!*

It's a **FREE** self-paced online training for The American Legion Family.

Go to: [WWW.LEGION.ORG/ALEI](http://WWW.LEGION.ORG/ALEI)

## **VA Claims Assistance**

Disability Claims, Applications, Appeals **FREE**

### **Gregory Popp**

Veteran Service Officer  
The American Legion  
State of Utah



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The American Legion  
American Legion STATE OF UTAH

### **WAYNE JACKSON**

Past Utah State Commander  
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 AMERICAN  
LEGION

**TERRY SCHOW**  
**(801) 644-2058**

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN & MILITARY AFFAIRS:

[www.veterans.utah.gov](http://www.veterans.utah.gov)

- In the subjects scrolling at the beginning, select the **CONTACT US** button under the subject "VA Benefits & Claims Assistance"
- A veteran can make an appointment in person or virtually from this source