“LET THE GAMES BEGIN”

For all you baseball fans, we are about to have some great baseball games here in southern Nevada, because within the upcoming week Legion baseball, culminating with the Legion World Series in Shelby N. Carolina, will be on going. Here in Las Vegas, there were 29 games played during the period from 18 through 27 July. Two divisions (Juniors and Seniors) played and there was some really great baseball played. The last two nights of the Senior playoffs were at the Las Vegas Ball Park in Summerlin. What a treat that was. The park really went out for The American Legion. Their game board let everyone know that the Legion was on the field. The final game pitted the Las Vegas Aces against the Southern Nevada Tribe. The game lived up to expectations as both teams demonstrated why they were in the final game. Two years ago, the Tribe won the State then went on to take Region and then National. Last year the Aces tried to repeat as they took State and Region. At Shelby, they played well and ended up 2nd. Many said they should have won the game and it was the talk of the day at the National Convention. At the final game of the tournament, Garrett Giles was MVP and Shane Spencer was Pitcher of the Tournament.

(Continued on page 5.) Photos courtesy of Fred Doten and Melissa Harkavy
I have been really busy since taking over as your Department Commander. Right after the Department Convention, I had lunch with Colonel Donald “Doc” Ballard, a Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient, and a close friend to request his attendance as a guest speaker at our next Department Convention in Fallon. Doc’s stories are legendary and while he is a retired Army Colonel, he received his CMH for his actions as a Navy Corpsman attached to a Marine Corps unit in Vietnam. Additionally, while Doc is in Fallon, I will be setting up a special tour of the Fallon Naval Air Station for him. The one thing you will find with Doc is that he will always tell you like it is, no filters!

On July 11th, I traveled to Battle Mountain to install the officers of Post 15 at their new veterans’ facility. District 3 Commander Horton and her District Officers also traveled to Battle Mountain to train the Post officers in membership and offer guidance in running a Post. I was given the opportunity to offer my thoughts about our Legion youth programs and membership and then congratulated everyone for the interesting projects they are doing in their area. For such a small Post, they are really working hard for their community.

In the middle of the month, I flew down to Las Vegas to meet with the Department Headquarters staff and to accomplish a few tasks for the Finance Office. But I also wanted to recognize the efforts that Glynis Seeley and Lionel Motta provide to our Department and organization. So I took them out to lunch as a thank you for all of their hard work. A nice addition to the lunch was that the Department Auxiliary President, Courtenay Burns, was also in town so she also came with us. Thank you all for what you do for us.
This month I would like to take the time to talk about an event that occurs every year on August 7. This holiday was first observed in 2014. August 7th is Purple Heart Day, which is meant to encourage people to pay their respects to fallen soldiers, listen to the stories of those soldiers and to thank them for their service to the nation.

The Purple Heart was created on August 7, 1782 by General George Washington and was only presented to enlisted soldiers who had performed a “singularly meritorious action”. When it was created it was known as the Badge of Military Merit and in 1783 it was awarded to three Revolutionary soldiers. World War one saw the first Purple Heart awarded to soldiers. The modern Purple Heart was established by the signing of General Order #3 and was not authorized to be awarded to anyone except those serving in the Army or the Army Air Corps. In 1942, another Presidential Order changed who could receive the award and the criteria changed to allow all branches of the military including the U.S. Cost Guard to be eligible.

This award is given to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who have sustained injuries from enemy attack. Also, the award is given to persons who are injured, wounded or died while a prisoner of war or while fighting certain types of domestic terrorists. Today an estimated 1.8 million Purple Hearts have been awarded.

A symbol of bravery which is a heart shaped purple medal with a gold border. The front features the profile of George Washington and the back has the words for military merit inscribed. The medal is attached to a piece of purple silk with a silver border.

Even though it may not be a holiday that is observed by the government and businesses closing it is recognized in the following ways:

Veteran and military organizations hold remembrance meetings for fallen heroes and to thank soldiers and veterans on this day;

Many people will fly the American flags at their homes and businesses.

The Nevada DMV does provide discounted license plates to Purple Heart awardees and some businesses in the State have designated parking for Purple Heart recipients.
Greetings all. I want to update you on VA Veterans Services (VAVS) and Veterans Employment. There are so many areas to report, so I will narrow them down.

The VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act of 2018 (the MISSION Act) was launched by the VA June 2019, concerning its new and improved community care program. This Act both ends the Veterans Choice Program and establishes a new Veterans Community Care Program. The information about this program can be found at: missionact.va.gov, it will provide you information about Eligibility, Covered Services, Copayments, Prescriptions, etc.

The VA implemented a new healthcare delivery program called VA Video Connect Mobile Application or Telehealth to give more options for veterans concerning their healthcare needs. Information about this can be found at: Telehealth.va.gov

Senate Bill S.2155 makes sure all VA Loans now require the veteran to make 6 mortgage payments before they are eligible for a rate and payment reduction. I have personally taken advantage of this program. My home isn't even a year old and I was able to refinance my VA Mortgage and reduce my rate and payment. Check it out, it may work for you. You can read the circular that updates guidance regarding loan seasoning based on Public Law 116-33, Protecting Affordable Mortgages for Veterans Act of 2019 (formally S.1749.)

The Las Vegas Vet Center is holding a Homeowner Education and Literacy Program (H.E.L.P.) event on August 30, 2019 from 9am-4pm (8:30 am check-in) at 7455 W. Washington Ave, Suite 240, Las Vegas, NV, breakfast and lunch will be provided. To register contact Christopher (Cris) Hudson at 702-791-9170.

There are two Veterans Fairs scheduled in Northern Nevada. I don’t have any information on Southern Nevada, however I will get the information on events there for the September and October Newsletters. Please feel free to email me about your upcoming veterans events.  (nvnative1959@sbcglobal.net)

Winnimucca Veterans Fair  Elko Veterans Fair
August 22, 2019  September 13, 2019
11am-2pm  9am-4pm
Winnimucca Convention Center  Elko National Guard Armory
50 W. Winnimucca Blvd; Winnimucca, NV  1375 13th Street; Elko, NV

The Attorney General’s office offers free legal assistance to veterans. The remaining dates and locations are:

Reno  Las Vegas
Reno VA Medical Center  Las Vegas VA Medical Center
975 Kirman Ave; Reno, NV  6900 North Pecos Rd. N. Las Vegas
Rooms L1927 and L1929  in the Auditorium
10am-2pm  10am-2pm
November 1-2, 2019  October 18-19, 2019

At this time I don’t have any information on Veterans Employment updates but will get upcoming Job Fairs and future events for September’s Newsletter. Please bare with me.

Until next month be healthy and safe.
As a little history, Legion Baseball was first proposed in Milbank, S.D during the 1925 American Legion convention. By chance, the Department Commander, Frank McCormick invited his close friend Major John Griffith to address the convention. Griffith, who was also the collegiate commissioner of the Western Conference (now the Big Ten) did not stick to a standard speech but spoke about how athletics could play in the development of youth. His inspiring remarks, “The American Legion could well consider the advisability of assisting in the training of young Americans through our athletic games,” He followed this with the statement, “Athletic competition teaches courage and respect for others, fostering their growth into active citizens”. The Legion, so impressed, passed a resolution the following year at the National Convention in Omaha, NE. It read, “RESOLVED: That The American Legion ... inaugurate and conduct baseball leagues and tournaments for local championships, and that local champions determined by the competitions be given opportunity to compete in departmental, sectional and regional tournaments, and that a junior world series championship baseball series be conducted at each national convention ... ”

In 1925, Posts in 15 states started what today is called American Legion Baseball. They organized and sponsored teams, established schedules, conducted championship tournaments, and had a successful year. Over the years, Legion Baseball had its issues, and on several instances almost ceased to exist. However, due to the persistence of Legion leadership it survived the passage of time. Today, American Legion Baseball enjoys a reputation as one of the most successful and tradition-rich amateur athletic programs. In today’s world, the program registers teams in all 50 states plus Canada. Since its inception in 1925, millions of players have participated in the program. Over 68 players have been inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. The first to be inducted was Bob Feller. His tribute to Legion Baseball and its impact on his life is inspirational. It should be noted, that Legion ballplayers also became prominent in other career fields, Vice President Dick Cheney being one of them. In conclusion, the contribution of Legion ballplayers to our society lends credence to the Legion’s sponsorship of youth activities.

The Legion makes a difference in the development of our leaders of tomorrow. We, as Legion members, need to support these players by attending their games. This year attendance was low; hopefully, next year we will do better. The Tribe will be at Regional. Let’s hope they go all the way.
Department Sponsored Insurance Programs

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust has been Your Department’s sponsored member benefits program for over 50 years and continues to fulfill members’ needs while being the only such program to benefit Your Department every year.

From Your American Legion Department

For more information on the products and services provided by The Legionnaire Insurance Trust, Call: 1-800-235-6943
Or visit us on the web at: www.theLIT.com
On the last Saturday of July, I attended the Department Legion Baseball Championship held for the first time at the Las Vegas Ballpark, Home of the Las Vegas Aviators, the Triple A team for the Oakland A’s. I was given the honor of throwing out the first pitch! While I may not have been standing on the pitcher’s mound, at least my throw made it over the plate! NEC Ron Michalski and I handed out the tournament awards before the Championship game between the Las Vegas Aces and the Southern Nevada Tribe. Afterwards, Ron and I recognized the Southern Nevada Tribe as the Tournament Champions! I want to thank NEC Ron Michalski for all of his hard work in running the tournament, PDC Mitch Roach for manning the front gate with ticket sales, Fred Doten and Post 60 for running the concession stand during the tournament, Melissa Harkavy of the Las Vegas Aviators, the Las Vegas Ballpark, and all of the Legionnaires who volunteered to make it all happen.

Lastly, District 3 Commander Horton had made arrangements to train the officers of Post 48 in Owyhee, Nevada. Seizing on the opportunity, my wife and I drove up to Owyhee to visit the Post. I have to say that we totally enjoyed the scenic drive from Elko up to Owyhee. When we arrived, I met up with District 3 1st Vice Commander Dick Robie and District 3 Adjutant Paul Schlehr at the Shoshone Paiute Tribal Headquarters. Unfortunately we seemed to have missed the Post officers. However, it allowed me to have a nice conversation with Paul and Dick while we waited and I was then able to take my wife to dinner that night at The Star in Elko (the real reason she came along!).

Now I’m off to Indianapolis to attend the Membership Conference to discuss long term membership planning, focusing on strategic recruiting, retention, and appealing to the new generation of veterans. And then at the end of the month, I will be at the National Convention, also in Indianapolis. Hopefully, I will be coming back with more information and stories to tell. Until then, remember, “Our Legion Youth is Our Legion’s Future!”

(Photos courtesy of J Stewart, F Doten and M Harkavy)
Greetings Comrades,

The biggest news in the ALR right now is the Legacy Run. If you don’t know about it, click on over to https://www.legion.org/riders/legacyrun to learn more.

The biggest new in the American Legion right now is the LEGION Act! It’s opening a long-since needed opportunity for new membership. Basically, The LEGION Act offers American Legion membership eligibility to any U.S. military veteran who served at least one day of active military duty since Dec. 7, 1941 and was honorably discharged or is serving now. Learn more at https://www.legion.org/dispatch/246641/11-key-things-know-about-legion-act

If you have an event you’d like to share, please let us know.

Ride Safe,

Trevor McCall
ALR Program Liaison, Department of Nevada
(402) 740-2794
blackjackmac68@yahoo.com

The American Legion Riders today are important part of the Legion family in support of virtually all programs of The American Legion.
A little NEC information:

When the post has a problem you should first go to your own Judge Advocate for a solution. If he or she cannot help them please go to the District first before going to the Department and do not go to National. If at all necessary when a problem cannot be resolved, it is our Department’s judge advocate that will contact National.

Baseball: Wow what tournaments we had and what a summer league. The Junior tournament stated it off on the 18th of July and played at UNLV’s Wilson stadium for the first time. They were all great games and these juniors played like seniors. The Las Vegas Aces Cardinal won the tournament in dramatic fashion as they needed to win two games against the Centennial Navy team. Well they accomplished that feat with a win in the first game scoring 5 runs in the top of the 7th to win 8-7 and then in the second game winning 11-8 in eleven innings. Congratulations to all the Junior teams that participated in the summer league. The Gold 2 tournament which was held at the Legacy High school filed was won by the Southern Nevada Tribe (Basic) who went undefeated. Thank you Legacy for hosting the tournament.

Our Senior division, Gold I, was played at UNLV’s Wilson Stadium for the first 3 days and then the final 2 days at the New Las Vegas Ballpark home of the Las Vegas Aviators. The days at the Las Vegas Ballpark where as exciting as was playing on a major league field. The Southern Nevada Tribe, (Basic), won the tournament and won the right to go to the Western Regional in Fairfield California. I think we all need to give them praise as they beat some great teams in the tournament. I would like to thank Pete Savage and the Reno Knights for coming down, on their own dime, to participate and put up a great performance. Maybe they can get some help from the posts up north next year.

I also would be remiss if I did not thank Past Department Commander Mitch Roach, and Tank, for his assistance in the tournament, if it wasn’t for him I would have been in deep trouble. I also would like to thank the Department Adjutant Lionel for his assistance along with two volunteers from the Veteran’s home in Boulder City and that was the Boyster’s, Julie and Zane.

Last but not least accolades go out to Post 60. They volunteered and worked the concession stand at UNLV and along with that big kudos go the District 2 commander, Fred Doten, for publishing the Program book this year.

It wouldn’t be possible without those who volunteered! THANK YOU ALL!!!!

Ron Michalski
Hello everyone! The summer has busy filled with events. I participated in a membership drive with Post 7 in Wells in July. I will be in Battle Mountain in August with Post 15. Via emails, my Department Membership Committee (Dale Talcott, Jerry Bootzin, Lincoln Litchfield, and Al Camp) and I have been tossing around ideas for retention of members, recruiting members, and reaching out to those in Post 100. Some ideas will need clarification before we proceed. The Membership Workshop in Indianapolis is this weekend and look forward to learning all about membership! When I get back I'll be contacting each Post for visits/membership drives and share what I have learned from the workshop. Even though the Posts do not have goals to work for yet, I urge all of you to continue renewing Post members, holding membership drives, and reaching out to those in Post 100 and those that have expired memberships. I look forward to partnering with each Post to achieve 100% membership for Nevada! Since President Trump signed the Legion Act, this goal is within our grasp. Feel free to call me/email me for membership drives. bannhorton3@aol.com, 720-394-5969.

1st PLACE / # 72 - $250.00 - Dave Evans (Post 7)
2nd PLACE / #52 - $125.00 - Richard Dickerson (Post 1)
3rd PLACE / #125 - Not Sold
4th PLACE / #197 - Not Sold

THERE ARE STILL 11 MONTHS OF DRAWING LEFT
The mission of Nevada’s Legionnaires is to provide services to fellow veterans, their families and their communities.

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A Legacy of Service Not Self is Born

A group of 20 officers who served in the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I were asked to suggest ideas on how to improve troop morale. One officer, Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., proposed an organization of veterans, which we know today as The American Legion.

The original purpose of The Legion was to “preserve the memories and incidence of our association in the great war,” helping those who had served in foreign wars to reintegrate into their hometowns while still remaining connected to those with whom they had served abroad.

The Legion served as a support group, a social club and an extended family for former servicemen. After two planning caucuses held by a committee of officers who had the confidence and respect of their military comrades, they designed a constitution to govern the group and set up headquarters in New York City to begin work on its programs of relief, employment and Americanism.

After the formation of The American Legion, a number of women’s organizations wanted to become the official affiliation of The American Legion. The women who had served so faithfully during the trying days of the war wanted to continue to serve.

After careful consideration, the committee agreed that a new organization should be made up of the women most closely associated with the men of the Legion, and that these women would serve with the Legion, in peace as they had in war.

The committee decided to build a new organization from the ground up, so the Auxiliary could then carry forward the phases of Legion activities more suitably performed by women.

In less than one year, 1,342 local units of the Women’s Auxiliary to The American Legion had been organized in more than 45 states.
The American Legion
August 2019 - July 2020
“300 Club” Lottery

FILL OUT THIS FORM ALONG WITH YOUR PAYMENT

YOUR LOTTERY NUMBER (S) FOR THE “300 CLUB”
WILL BE ISSUED IN THE ORDER THEY ARE RECEIVED

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City: __________________________ State: _______ Zip: _______
Phone: ______________________ Email: ___________ Post #___
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1st # Drawn = $250.00  3rd # Drawn = $75.00
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Payable to:
The American Legion
737 Veterans Memorial Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89101
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Open To All Legion & S.A.L. Members Only
Support The American Legion Department of Nevada
Buy Your Lottery Numbers Today
Only 300 Are To Be Sold

48 CHANCES TO WIN
4 Numbers are Drawn on the 15th of each Month

ONLY $50.00 Per Number

OK TO COPY THIS FORM
Our First Month is in the books and we are doing good. Always remember we live by our membership strength. I ask you to talk to your friends and fellow students to see if they may be interested in joining. As your friends become members in our organization this provides opportunities to forge lifelong friendships with those who share a common bond.

As some of you will continue your education our mission continues and I ask you to be diligent in your studies. Our organization allows you to become involved in American Legion programs alongside your fathers or for some to respect and honor your parents' and grandparents' service to our country in the military. As you get involved you will learn valuable leadership skills involving organization, public speaking, and negotiating, budgeting and fundraising skills.

As we continue to honor and respect our history be mindful of the ones that served, currently serving, those that gave the ultimate sacrifice. Honor their service while serving as a Son of the American Legion!

Always in your service!
David Sousa
Legionnaire Benefits
As a Member of the Legion Family, You Know How Important It Is to Help Protect Those in Need...

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In a significant legislative victory for The American Legion, President Trump signed a bill July 30 that declares the United States has been in a state of war since Dec. 7, 1941.

The American Legion sought the declaration as a way to honor approximately 1,600 U.S. servicemembers who were killed or wounded during previously undeclared periods of war.

The LEGION Act (Let Everyone Get Involved In Opportunities for National Service Act) also opens the door for approximately 6 million veterans to access American Legion programs and benefits for which they previously had not been eligible.

“Recognizing the service of these wartime veterans is the right thing to do and it is long overdue,” National Commander Brett Reistad said. “The families of those who were killed or wounded during these wartime acts should take pride in knowing that we recognize their sacrifice and service. Moreover, we are proud to welcome any of the six million living veterans from the previously unrecognized periods into our organization and call them ‘Legionnaires.’”

Now that the legislation has been signed, The American Legion’s eligibility criteria immediately changes from seven war eras to two: April 6, 1917, to Nov. 11, 1918, and Dec. 7, 1941 to a time later determined by the federal government. No other restrictions to American Legion membership are changed.

The law’s journey began on Feb. 14 when Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., introduced S. 504, along with Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C. A companion measure, H.R. 1641, was introduced in the House by Reps. Lou Correa, D-Calif., and Ben Cline, R-Va.

Reistad expressed gratitude to the bipartisan members of Congress for passing the legislation.

“We are grateful that President Trump fully acknowledges the importance of The American Legion by signing the LEGION Act in the White House today – just one week after it passed the House of Representatives,” Reistad said. “In an era of partisan gridlock, Republicans and Democrats in Congress overwhelmingly recognized the importance of allowing thousands of honorable but previously ineligible veterans the right to join the largest and most influential veterans organization in the country.”

Reistad pointed out that existing American Legion membership applications are in the process of being updated but can still be used. “In the meantime, I recommend that prospective Legionnaires and recruiters write ‘LEGION Act’ in the eligibility date section of American Legion membership applications if they fall outside the previous war eras,” Reistad said. “The larger pool of veterans now eligible for The American Legion will also open their family members to eligibility in the Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary as well.”
Since our charter, our American Legion Department of Nevada has been welcoming VETERANS from all branches of our Armed Forces. Today, we continue to welcome all military personnel serving our country. Joining a Post in our State enables you to continue serving your God, Country and Community. Our mission is to implement the goals, aspirations, dreams, peace and blessings for our country, friends and families embodied in our preamble.

The mission of Nevada's Legionnaires is to provide services to fellow Veterans, their Families and their communities.

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