TO MY LEGION FAMILY:

THE 97TH ANNUAL DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

Last month I addressed the Department Convention coming up on June 25 – 28, 2015 in Manchester, N.H. at the Radisson Hotel. This is the same location the convention has been in for the last few years. The deadline for reserving rooms was March 31. As I write this, there are about 48 Posts in this Department that have not made any attempt at reserving rooms for convention. It is important that each Post try to send some representation to the convention. This is the time to make your voice heard and vote for the future leadership of this organization and its annual operating budget. If you have any questions on rooms or the Convention you may contact the Convention Committee Chairmen, Bob Blais, email: robt125@comcast.net, or the Housing Chairmen, Deb Davis, email: armygirl13@myfairpoint.net.

I set up a tab on the website where I will be putting information for people to go to and see what is going on along with any forms or applications that need to be filled out for specific events or information. This can be found on the front page of the website at www.legionnh.org.

Additionally, the Department is trying to make its Ad Book better from years past. This year we have a company out of Massachusetts, Eastern Advertising, who will be soliciting for commercial and business ads for our Ad Book. I want to make you aware of this in case your Post receives any calls from businesses in your area wondering if this is a true solicitation. The money raised from this book will go towards offsetting the cost of convention and to programs of the American Legion. I have posted on the website the Ad form for Posts to use when requesting to submit an Ad for the Post or a candidate which will go directly to us. The deadline for getting theses Ad forms back to us is May 1st.
THE 97TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

I also wanted to address the National Convention that is fast approaching and is to be held on August 25 – September 3, 2015. The convention sight this year will be Baltimore, Maryland. I have started taking room reservations for those wishing to go. The room costs are $149.00 a night which includes the 15.50% tax. If you wish to drive to this convention at the same time the parking rate is $25.00 a day and is Valet parking only. The Department of New Hampshire will be staying at the Baltimore Harbor Hotel which is three blocks from the convention center. A one night deposit of $149 needs to be sent in with your housing form to the Department. The deadline for reserving rooms is July 10, 2015.

I have set up a tab on the front page of the department website for the National Convention where I will be attaching information for this convention as time goes along. The Housing form for this convention can be found on the website and I will include it in the newsletter package.

If you are planning on going to the National Commanders banquet then the cost of a ticket is $45.00 a person. I have a limited amount of tickets and need to know as soon as possible if you are going to purchase one so I can adjust the count if need be and request more from national.

REAFFIRMATION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION POLICY CONCERNING AFFILIATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:

Recently we have some issues with political organizations reaching out to American Legion Posts attempting to partnership with them mainly so they can claim the use of the American Legion name. One of these organizations is called the “Concerned Veterans for America”. This group has been trying to meet with some of our Posts and partnership with them for what they call fund raising events. However at the same time they are driving political beliefs and attempting to piggy back on the American Legion and what this organization has done to bring light to the issues of the VA.

National has told me this is a political move to use the Legion name and any Posts that partnerships with this or any other politically motivated organization will be risking their Post charter. As many of you know Article II, Section 2 of the National Constitution & Bylaws states, “The American legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles or for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.”

In addition to this the American Legion constructed and passed a resolution which reaffirms the affiliation with other organizations as follows:
提交者：决议委员会

WHEREAS，美国 Legion 在 1952 年 10 月 10 日至 12 日在印第安纳波利斯举行的国家执行委员会的第 6 号决议中，就其与其它组织的联系问题作出了明确规定。

WHEREAS，该决议的采纳是对美国 Legion 的长期政策的再确认，该政策已被证明具有智慧，即禁止美国 Legion 加入任何它不能充分发言和投票以决定此类组织政策的任何组织。

RESOLVED，由美国 Legion 国家执行委员会在印第安纳波利斯市召开的定期会议上于 1988 年 5 月 4-5 日作出决议，美国 Legion 不应成为任何可能使其陷入与美国 Legion 所采用的政策相悖的组织。

RESOLVED，美国领事应将此决议发给所有部门和全国官员，让他们每年更新一次。

如果您的分会与该组织或任何其他类似组织有联系，您不确定其意图，请联系部门总部，我将为您检查并提供有关其隶属关系和意图的答案。

VA 寻求新法律来改变退伍军人选择规则：

对于许多人来说，包括我，选择卡仍然是一个问题，因为它关乎何时以及如何使用它。显然，许多人也是一样，因为 VA 继续改变影响该卡的规则。以下文章讨论了一些这些规则的变化。

VA 副部长 Sloan Gibson 承认退伍军人对 VA Choice 项目感到沮丧，但他表示 VA 意图解决出现的新问题。

VA 部门已经请求新立法，让 VA 能够支付退伍军人无法获得治疗的 VA 诊所附近的私人医疗服务。

VA 副部长 Sloan Gibson 告诉参议院 VA 事务委员会周二，退伍军人对 VA Choice 项目感到“沮丧”，特别是它对退伍军人的

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requirement that measures eligibility by a veteran's proximity to any VA health facility— even those that are not full-service medical centers.

Gibson said many veterans are excluded from the program because of this provision in the law and few have applied for waivers to the rules.

"Many veterans are frustrated with the Choice program," Gibson said. "Such confusion leads to lower use of Choice."

The VA announced earlier Tuesday that it will change another aspect of the program, the definition of the 40-mile distance rule for veterans to access the Veterans Choice program.

Instead of using an "as the crow flies" measure of 40 miles, VA will rely on actual driving distance from a VA medical facility as the qualifier to use the program.

Some lawmakers expressed skepticism that VA needs formal legislation to make the change to accommodate veterans who live within the 40-mile distance but can't get the care they need.

But lawmakers pledged to make the fix. Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., chairman of the Senate committee, said his staff would work with the staff of the committee's ranking Democrat, Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., to draft legislation in the next two weeks. "The faster we act on that, the better off we are. I don't think there's any disagreement on the committee," Isakson said.

VA officials say the department distributed nearly 80 million VA Choice Cards when the program was initiated in November 2014. To date, it has approved about 46,000 requests for care and managed 44,461 appointments.

VA has a process to get patients to private care if they face undue burdens accessing VA care, but only 125 have asked for a waiver so far, Gibson said.

"It's our program, and we're working hard to improve it, to quickly overcome issues as we discover them and to ask for your assistance in areas where we need help," Gibson told the senators.

He said next month VA will send teams to facilities in some areas served by private contracts to analyze why they have long wait lists for care but few Veterans Choice referrals.

He also asked Congress to update the laws that allow VA to enter into agreements for providing care through civilian doctors.
"This change would let us streamline and speed up how we purchase care for an individual veteran," Gibson said.

Representatives of veterans' advocacy groups who testified at the hearing said they're delighted that VA decided to change the criteria for enforcing the 40-mile rule — a change that VA says will take effect in the coming weeks — but still harbor some concerns about VA's support of the Choice program.

"Seems to be a problem of following the letter of the law instead of the spirit of the law," grumbled Roscoe Butler, the American Legion's deputy director for health care.

Blumenthal also expressed concern that regardless of future legislative changes, VA might find loopholes to deny veterans care. He urged the department to act quickly in helping veterans use the program.

"This is not a threat to VA," Blumenthal said. "It's a different mode of helping serving the health care needs of veterans." (Kime, Patricia, 2015, Military Times).

2015 FIRST FLIGHT HONOR FLIGHT NEW ENGLAND:

This will be the first time I addressing this program but I believe very much in what this flight does and is similar in nature to what the Pease Greeters do out at the Pease Airport for returning heroes. I was one who benefited from these greetings when returning from deployment in 2009 and appreciated all that these volunteers do to greet our men and women of our armed services.

1ST FLIGHT OF THE 2015 FLYING SEASON!!!

SUNDAY APRIL 19TH, 2015

Greeters for the send off / welcome home can meet us at the Manchester/Boston Regional Airport terminal.

PLEASE COME SHOW YOUR SUPPORT AND PASS THIS INFO TO ANYONE YOU THINK WOULD BE INTERESTED. BRING FLAGS, BANNERS, ENTHUSIASM, AND GRATITUDE FOR OUR HEROES!!!
The FIRST flight of the 2015 season is fast approaching. We are so happy to begin the new season in the place where it all began. The Manchester send offs and welcome homes are events like no other. Our heroes are always amazed by the turn out and by the sincere appreciation that our HFNE family shows to them. As with all flights since 2009, YOU will be the ones to make this flight successful.

APRIL 19TH 2015- Southwest Airlines

The bus with our heroes will arrive curbside at the Southwest Terminal approximately 6 AM

We should be landing at the Southwest Terminal at 10:15 PM.

The HFNE veteran T-shirt says it all. Since 2009, it has been their mission to say THANK YOU to the men and women who sacrificed so much for us and this great nation. We will not relent, and our mission will not be over until our New England heroes receive the thanks they so richly deserve. HFNE will always be committed to our heroes, no matter where they reside in New England.

PLEASE ENCOURAGE THE WWII AND KOREAN WAR HEROES IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO JOIN US.

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS AND IDEAS FOR FUNDRAISING.

PLEASE JOIN US ON FACEBOOK.
DATES TO REMEMBER

April 11, Auxiliary Spring Conference, Lebanon Post 22, 9:30 am
April 12, CMN Bowl-A-Thon, Boutwells Bowling center, Concord
April 18, District 1 Spring Meeting, Location TBT, 10:00 am
April 18, Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home, Pease ANGB, 2:00 pm
April 19, District 4 Spring Meeting, Manchester Post 43, 12:00 pm
April 25, Commander Dionne Testimonial Dinner, Hooksett Post 37, 6:00 pm
April 25, District 8 Spring Meeting,

MILITARY DATES TO REMEMBER

April 1st, 1945: U.S. forces land on Okinawa
April 1st, 1968: Operation Pegasus begins
April 2nd, 1865: Siege of Petersburg ends
April 2nd, 1942: India-Burma Campaign begins
April 4th, 1945: North Apennines Campaign ends
April 5th, 1945: Po Valley Campaign begins
April 6th, 1862: Battle of Shiloh begins
April 6th, 1917: U. S. enters WWI
April 7th, 1862: Battle of Shiloh ends
April 9th, 1865: Lee surrenders at Appomattox
April 9th, 1942: U. S. forces on Bataan surrender
April 9th, 1987: Special Forces becomes a separate branch of the Army
April 12th, 1861: Rebel forces fire on Fort Sumter
April 12th, 1983: Aviation Branch established
April 16th, 1947: Medical Specialists Corps established
April 19th, 1775: Battle of Lexington and Concord
April 25th, 1898: U. S. declares war on Spain
April 26th, 1832: Black Hawk War begins
April 28th, 1952: Occupation of Japan ends
April 28th, 1965: U. S. forces invade Dominican Republic
April 29th, 1970: U. S. forces invade Cambodia
April 30th, 1863: Battle of Chancellorsville begins

MEMBERSHIP IN THE AMERICAN LEGION:

I was going to take this section out of the newsletter this month but after our poor showing for our April 95% deadline I decided to leave this in. None of it has changed and this Department is still in last place in membership ranking across national. As I write this we are approximately 1100 members shy of our 95% goal which is on April 8.
I tried to open people’s eyes by showing them the following statistics but apparently either people do not care or patriotism is dying in this Department. This is a hard cold fact that if we do not do something soon to turn our membership around we will start to lose the voice we have in Congress and at the state level along with over shadowing the VA and the many other veteran programs that the American Legion has promoted over the years. This is includes scholarships and children and youth programs and many others across the board.

Did you know that the last time our membership was below 2 million was 1945 when it was 1,667,742? Our 2014 total ended the year at 2,208,651 – lowest total we have seen in 70 years!

I know none of us want to see those totals drop below 2 million.

This year the Department of New Hampshire will be at its lowest mark for membership since 1966 when we had a total of 17,706 members and run the risk of going even lower to figures this Department has not seen since 1955.

Recently I sat down with PDC Bill Hooley and we went over a strategy that he is looking to incorporate in his Post. This will involve sending letters out past members and veterans within the community explaining what the American Legion is all about. Additionally there needs to be more face to face contact with veterans who still have many questions about the American Legion that not always a mailing can cover. I am going to include the following as part of a draft letter that I believe Post Commanders can use as a recruiting tool to send out to prospective members in their community. This can be tailored to your Post specifically as this one was and include any information that you feel is important.

Dear Veteran,

Remember when you decided to enlist into the military, you took an oath to defend our nation and its constitution not knowing where your assignment may be or whether you would be stationed state side or in an overseas location far away from home. However you dreamed of doing your part for this great nation with honor and pride protecting this countries freedom and fighting for the future of your family to be free. You did this not thinking about the sacrifice you may have to make and this shows you care for all the things this country was built on.

The battle is not over and we need your help. The American Legion continues to fight for those things you earned while serving this country. To carry on the mission of aiding our veterans, their families and all the programs the American Legion supports which give back to those who fought and served so bravely. Help us help them and you. Join the American Legion and become a voice for our veterans. Whether you come to our Post for a meeting or to socialize with the many veterans and families that belong to this Post there are many advantages and perk’s that come along with becoming a member of the American Legion. There is a bi-monthly Legion magazine, a State newspaper, Post newsletters that show what the American Legion is doing for you and the community around you. Additionally there is a breakfast the last Sunday of the month. For just $7.00, $6.50 for seniors, children are welcome; you can enjoy an atmosphere that encompasses a sense of family; plus many other benefits and events which are part of this American Legion Post.

In order for you to understand the American Legion it is important that you know what the American Legion does. As a potential member of the American Legion you become part of a voice and seat before Congress. You become part of an organization that is at the forefront of all service organizations and without the American Legion there would have been no GI Bill. Many veterans do not know the GI Bill was one of the greatest pieces of social legislation ever passed for veterans
and was solely supported by the American Legion at a time when people thought it would do no good. A lot of people thought America couldn’t afford it. But the GI Bill made it possible for veterans, like you, after World War II to get an education and accomplish great things. This continues today and if not for the GI Bill thousands of veterans would not be getting the education they are today. The American Legion ensured this legislation passed and since has helped all veterans who had few if any benefits.

The American Legion is a veteran’s organization that provides financial, social and economic support to members of the armed forces and their families. Since 1919, the American Legion has been a support structure for veterans. No other organization can even say or come close to that. The American Legion continues to provide services to help veterans file claims and find employment and also supports all members of the military. As a result the American Legion led the way in ensuring our veterans continue to receive the best care holding the VA accountable for recent events inside that organization leading to a much needed restructure of leadership in the VA.

The American Legion has been involved directly and indirectly in helping people come back from natural disasters for decades through programs like the National Emergency Fund that has raised millions of dollars to help veterans and their families recover from all types of natural disasters through direct participation in cleanup to financial assistance and services.

You can become part of this great organization that was built on honor and pride, the very things that many joined the service for to begin with. Be part of the American Legion tradition that has been in existence for almost 100 years. Will you not help us become stronger, be a member of the American Legion!

Our Post dues are ____________.

Sincerely
Post Commander
American Legion

Let’s get it done!!

The fate of where we go is in our hands. The solution is simple – we have to sign up and keep more members than we have - not an easy task but one I know together we can accomplish it.

FACT SHEET: ‘Superbug’ and Scopes:

If you are wondering why I am putting fact in my newsletter this month; well I believe sometimes we have to be concerned about what is going on medically with our veterans too and this particular fact was one that was brought to my attention some time ago. I wanted to pass it on to those that may have concerns or have heard issues about these procedures.

There has been some concern regarding the ‘superbug’ and scopes associated with the spread of the disease.

What you should know:

- Manchester VAMC does not perform procedures that require or utilize these scopes.
- Manchester VA does not use duodenoscopes
The scopes in question are *duodenoscopes*, which are used in complex procedures that examine or treat diseases of the bile or pancreatic duct. These procedures, Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography (ERCP), require a specialized scope that uses a complex elevator wire channel and have an opening at the tip.

The scopes used at the Manchester VA are the standard colonoscopes and endoscopes that **DO NOT** have a special channel or opening, and are used for examination and diagnosing.

**What we use:**

- Endoscope

**Scopes in question:**

- Duodenoscope

Veterans, if you have questions, please feel free to contact our Infection Preventionist, Meri Robinson, MSN, RN at (603) 657-5395.

**PLEASE POST ON YOUR POSTS BULLETIN BOARD**