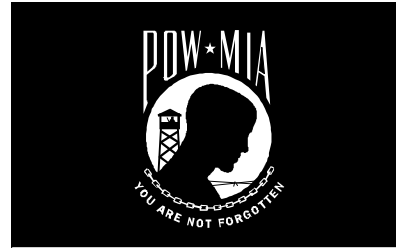


ADJUTANT'S  
NEWSLETTER  
OFFICE PHONE 856-8951  
EMAIL:  
ADJUTANTNH@LEGIONNH.ORG



THE DEPARTMENT OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
THE AMERICAN LEGION

TO MY LEGION FAMILY:



I would like to say to the whole Department of New Hampshire Legion Family!!

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

**&**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**



**Year in Reflection 2015**

I would like to thank all of you for your dedication and hard work for the American Legion and the Department of New Hampshire. This is not just for my Legionaries, but a job well done to our Department Auxiliary President, Jesse Bernard, and the

whole Auxiliary, and to our Detachment Commander, Scott Merrill, and the Sons of the American Legion. If not for you and your members we would have not had the success we had this last calendar year.



A special shout out to my staff here, at your Department Headquarters, who work hard every day to serve you. As well thanks to our Department Service Office for your service and help you give each day of the year.

To say the least it has been a trying year in regards to maintaining our membership and getting new members to join this great organization. However, I know we are not just sitting by waiting for members to come to us. As time goes on, membership will continue to be a top priority. But I do not want us to forget about the veterans we are here to serve as well. They are not just numbers on a piece of paper, they are people who have served this country and in many cases have paid a high price for the freedoms we have today. I believe sometimes we get wrapped up in percentages and goals where at times we forget really what those numbers really mean. I have included images and faces of veterans during the holiday season, please reflect as you scroll through this newsletter. I believe sometimes we get wrapped up in percentages and goals where at times we forget really what those numbers really mean.

I also believe it is important to get as many members as we can and the National Organization needs those numbers to maintain the programs we have today. But sometimes quantity outweighs the quality of care and service we are supposed to give to our veterans. When I see a homeless veteran or a Veteran who is struggling to maintain a roof over the head of his family and put food on the table, I sometimes think to myself are we really doing all we can do to support and serve these veterans.



This time of year I challenge each and every one of you to act and not turn away if you see a veteran who is struggling or homeless on the street. The simplest things can make all the difference to helping our veterans in need, from a small donation to a referral to a Service Officer to just something as small as giving them a hug and

thanking them for their service.

Although it is important we continue to meet those goals set for us, it is also important to make sure we help those who have supported us and lend a helping hand.

Let each and every year be a success in all you do for the American Legion.

My best to all of you over this Holiday season and merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



### Mid- Winter Conference

The Mid-Winter conference will be held on January 30, 2016. The location for this conference will be at the Roland E. Patnode Post 7, Rochester N.H. This conference will include the Auxiliary, Son of the American Legion, and Junior Auxiliary.

The doors open at 8:00am with coffee and registration, with the opening joint session to begin at 9:00am.

We are proud to have this year our National Judge Advocate, Phil Onderdonk, who will be addressing our Legionnaires in of our normal training. If you have not had a chance to hear our National Judge Advocate speak you are in for a treat. He will be addressing any affecting the American Legion and hopefully as many questions you may have as time allows.

This would be the year to come to this conference if you have not previously.

Additionally we again will have Mid-Winter packets for your Posts, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to get these packets to the Posts if you do not send a member to this conference to collect them. I encourage you to come and get them or you may not receive it until later in the year.

Mid-Winter packets will also be posted on the website again this year under the tab Mid-Winter Conference 2016.





## Washington Conference 2016

The 2016 Washington Conference will be held February 21-24, 2016 at the Washington Hilton, 1919 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009. This will include the National Commander's testimony before congress.

Tickets for to the February ANAVICUS breakfast must be purchased in advance. Order forms will be sent to members, and tickets will be mailed prior to the conference. More information will be forthcoming along with a schedule of events.



## News Release

### **VA New England Healthcare System Announces New Medical Center Director *Ocker Brings Leadership, Proven Experience to Manchester VAMC***

**BEDFORD, MA.** —The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Danielle S. Ocker as the director of Manchester VA Medical Center. Ocker will oversee a comprehensive healthcare system classified as a Complexity Level 3 facility that provides care to Veterans from Eastern New Hampshire, with an operating budget of \$145+ million.

“We are pleased to appoint Ms. Ocker as the new director of Manchester VA Medical Center,” said Dr. Michael Mayo-Smith, Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 1 director. “Her proven leadership qualities and experience will be valuable assets for the Veterans we are honored to serve, as well as the employees and volunteers who work at the medical center. Ms. Ocker has been serving as the acting director for the past 7 months, and as a nurse, fully appreciates the value and embraces a healthcare practice of relationship-centered care.”

A proven leader within VA, Ms. Ocker began her career at White River Junction (WRJ) VAMC as a student nurse in 1985. In 1986, Ms. Ocker received her Associate Degree in



Nursing from New Hampshire Technical College, and continued pursuing higher education from the University of Phoenix by first earning her Bachelor's Degree in Nursing in 2001, and a Master of Business Administration in 2009.

In her 30 years of service to the organization, Ms. Ocker worked in roles of progressive responsibility including as Staff Nurse; Nurse Manager of the Intensive Care Unit and Emergency Department; and Service Line Manager for Sensory and Physical Rehabilitation Service, where she facilitated the implementation of the Polytrauma/TBI Program.

“I have had the pleasure of working with Veterans, Employees and Volunteers at Manchester since May of 2015 in this capacity,” said Danielle Ocker, newly appointed medical center director at the Manchester VA Medical Center. “I am honored and take seriously the responsibility to continue the important work to fulfill President Lincoln's promise “To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan” by serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s Veterans. I look forward to changing the message and making Manchester VA a place where Veterans say, “Manchester VA that is my VA!”

Ms. Ocker offers the unique experience of both clinical and administrative leadership and most recently served Veterans in the position of associate director at the WRJ VA Medical Center. In this capacity she led state-wide emergency response and was responsible for the medical center emergency preparedness and facility infrastructure. She was instrumental in the implementation of the VA New England wide improvements enhancing the Veteran experience across New England for Veterans.

Ms. Ocker served in Senior Leadership capacity roles such as the acting medical center director in WRJ, Vt., Bedford, Mass, as well as the Manchester VA since May of 2015. Ms. Ocker is passionate about excellence in the workforce and is a Certified VHA Coach and Mentor. In addition, she is a VHA Coach and Mentor Core Trainer. She is actively engaged in many coaching/mentoring relationships and has been a Coach and Mentor at VHA's Health Care Leadership Institute.

Manchester VA Medical Center is part of the VA New England Healthcare System which includes eight medical centers, located in the six New England States: Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. It is an integral part of VISN 1, headquartered in Bedford, Mass. Manchester VA Medical Center is comprised of one main campus located in Manchester, N.H. and four Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) located in Conway, Portsmouth, Somersworth, and Tilton. The Portsmouth outpatient clinic is located at Pease Air National Guard Base.

Let's wish Ms. Ocker success. Manchester has been and continues to be one of the better facilities in the country that serve our veterans. We all know it will not be an easy job as the VA continues to work its way out of the issues it still faces.



With that note, I also want to highlight a problem which also still haunts the VA. I believe that our Legion Family needs to know about the hard work of our National Commander's, past and present. The following was a recent release by our National Organization which highlights the battle we still have with the VA over the problems that have plagued that organization.

### **Legion: Demoted VA officials actually rewarded**

*National commander calls continued lack of leadership accountability "disgusting."*  
WASHINGTON (November 25, 2015) – American Legion National Commander Dale Barnett

lashed out today over continued revelations about paltry punishments issued to Department of Veterans Affairs executives who were found to have manipulated the travel and relocation bonus system to line their pockets with hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"The lack of accountability displayed by VA leadership here is disgusting," said Barnett, who leads the nation's largest wartime veteran's organization. "These corrupt executives didn't face harsh consequences for their actions. They actually may have improved their economic worth."

According to the *Houston Chronicle*, former Philadelphia VA Regional Office Director Diana Rubens will take a \$20,000 pay cut from her salary of over \$180,000 to assume a slightly lesser VA management role in Houston. According to cost of living indicators, it takes about \$120,000 a year in Houston to maintain the lifestyle of an \$180,000 annual salary in Philadelphia. "She's still making out better on the deal," said Barnett, "even when you don't include the additional relocation package.

"It boggles the mind to see the level of protection VA employees have from their own wrongdoings when the very veterans they are supposed to be serving slip through the cracks, some of whom will sleep on the streets with empty bellies this Thanksgiving."

Barnett's reaction came after [revelations](#) in a *Military Times* article that Rubens and Kimberly Graves, who also was removed from her position in St. Paul, Minn., over similar actions that were exposed in a VA Inspector General's report, will receive thousands in additional relocation dollars after they were found to have manipulated the system for over \$400,000 earlier, money that VA will not try to recoup as part of their punishment.

"It's crushing to see that the system still protects the wrongdoers, with seemingly impenetrable armor to shield them from responsibility while veterans are stuck outside waiting for medical appointments and suffering through an outrageous backlog just to be fairly compensated for injuries they sustained

protecting America. To make matters worse, we also find out that Graves is headed to Phoenix. As if veterans in that city haven't already suffered enough after the wait-time scandal erupted in the VA health-care system there in 2014.

"VA's top management (Secretary Robert McDonald and Deputy Secretary Sloan Gibson) promised veterans that VA employees who wronged veterans would be held accountable, but cushy landing spots, still in leadership positions, at similar or even better pay when cost of living is factored in, are not even a slap on the wrist. I'm disgusted VA never fired these people, nor did it even try to recoup hundreds of thousands of dollars they manipulated out of the system. If this is the best justice we can expect, it doesn't bode well for VA's promise to win back the trust of veterans."



## American Legion Membership Dues Increase

This will be the last time I mention the dues increase before it takes effect. Although the increase takes effect on January 17, 2016, Commander Graham and I wanted to remind you that transmittals sent in to us after January 6, 2015 may not reach national until after the January 17<sup>th</sup> date due to the processing we have to do here. As a result national may come back and charge for additional fees.

I highly recommend that transmittals be sent in before January 6 or before if available. Transmittals after that period should include the additional 5 dollar increase. Department will not be covering any shortages if transmittals are not able to be processed after January 6<sup>th</sup>, and before the January 17<sup>th</sup>. We will do our best to make that happen but we expect a mad rush near the deadline and this will cause an increase in work load for this office. So please help us to help you. Remember membership may be held up at national as well resulting in notices to be sent out to our members who may have already paid. Let's try to keep that from happening.

Just a reminder, the per capita will increase from 21.50 to 26.50 on that date (JAN 17, 2016)

**REMEMBER: There is an incentive to this where Department Commander John Graham will take all Post Commanders and their Membership Chairs and**

one guest to dinner if their Post reaches 100% by News Year Eve, December 31, 2015.



## DATES TO REMEMBER

### DECEMBER

**Dates:** December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1952 Third Korean Winter Campaign

6<sup>th</sup>, Hanukkah

7<sup>th</sup>, 1941 Japanese aircraft attack Hawaii (flag flies at half-staff) 8<sup>th</sup>, 1941 U.S.

Declares War on Japan

-----Japanese attack the Philippines

10<sup>th</sup>, 1898 Official end of the Spanish-American War

11<sup>th</sup>, 1941 U.S. Declares War on Germany and Italy

12<sup>th</sup>, 1775 Calvary established / Birthday of Armor Branch

- -----2001 Battle of Tora Bora begins

13<sup>th</sup>, 1636 First muster of Massachusetts Bay Colony Militia/ Birthday of National

Guard -----1862 Battle of Fredericksburg

-----2003 Saddam Hussein is captured near Tikrit, Iraq

14<sup>th</sup>, 1914 Battle of Dogger Bank

-----Hanukkah ends 15<sup>th</sup>, 1864 Battle of Nashville

16<sup>th</sup>, 1944 Ardennes-Alsace Campaign begins (Battle of the Bulge)



17<sup>th</sup>, 2001 Battle of Tora Bora ends  
 20<sup>th</sup>, 1989 Operation Just Cause begins (Panama)  
 21<sup>st</sup>, 1864 Union forces capture Savannah, ending "March to the Sea"  
 ----- 1988 Terrorists sponsored by Libya blew up Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie,  
 Scotland (*James MacQuarrie was the captian of the Clipper Maid of the Seas Boeing 747 that was blown up over Lockerbie, Scotland. Captain MacQuarrie had been a pilot for 32 years. James was a graduate of Peterborough High School and Boston University. He served three years in the U.S. Navy and had belonged to the Massachusetts Air National Guard where he held the rank of Major.*)  
 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2001 "Shoe Bomber" Richard Reid arrested for attempt to destroy Paris- Miami flight  
 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1968 Pueblo crew released by North Korea  
 24<sup>th</sup>, 1814 Treaty of Ghent signed, ending War of 1812  
 25<sup>th</sup>, **Christmas**  
 26<sup>th</sup>, 1776 Battle of Trenton  
 28<sup>th</sup>, 1951 Creation of NSA  
 31<sup>st</sup>, 1862 Battle of Stones River begins  
 January 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 **New Year's Day** 9<sup>th</sup>, 1942 Jerry Rozycki who helped break ENIGMA, died in a ship sunk off France  
 15<sup>th</sup>, 1929 Martin Luther King Jr. is born, (April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1968 King is assassinated)  
 17<sup>th</sup>, 1991 Operation Desert Storm began  
 18<sup>th</sup>, 1918 A German Spy LotharWitzke arrested carrying a coded message  
 20<sup>th</sup>, 1981 Iran released U.S. hostages  
 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1968 North Koreans captured USS Pueblo  
 24<sup>th</sup>, 1918 Arthur Scherblus received a patent for a cipher machine now known as the ENIGMA  
 27<sup>th</sup>, 1973 Paris Peace Accords signed- end of U.S. involvement in Vietnam War  
 28<sup>th</sup>, 1980 USCG Blackthorn Sinking (WLB-391)  
 30<sup>th</sup>, 1968 Tet offensive in Vietnam began  
 Tower receives a call from a crew asking, "What time is it please?"  
 Tower responds, "Who is calling?"  
 The crew replied, "What difference does it make?"  
 Tower replies "It makes a lot of difference.  
 If it is an American Airlines flight, it is 3 o'clock.  
 If it is an Air Force plane, it is 1500 hours.  
 If it is a Navy aircraft, it is 6 bells.  
 If it is an Army aircraft, the big hand is on the 12 and the little hand is on the 3.  
 If it is a Marine Corps aircraft, it's Thursday afternoon and 120 minutes to "Happy Hour"



## "American Pride Night" Update



*American Pride*

MANCHESTER, N.H. – The Manchester Monarchs are proud to announce that prior to the **"American Pride Night"** game Mar. 5, against the Orlando Solar Bears, local women and men of the military will play a game against the Boston Bruins Alumni at the Verizon Wireless Arena.

The game is brought to you by the **World War II Foundation- Military Families Story Project** to support the efforts of all who sacrificed either at home or on the battlefield during the war.

Throughout American Pride Night, the Monarchs will be honoring World War II Veterans and those who have served our country.

Sponsorship in the ROAR game program for this special night is available, and includes company tickets, advertising opportunities, or an autograph signing with the Bruins Alumni.

V.I.P. ticket packages are also on sale, and will include admission to both games of the double feature. Packages begin at \$50 and include one (1) adult and one (1) youth ticket, with additional tickets available for \$20 each. Club seat packages are available for \$75, with additional tickets available for \$35 each.

The first 100 V.I.P. packages sold receive a meet and greet with the Bruins Alumni, while all other V.I.P. package holders will reserve spots in the High-Five Tunnel for the Bruins Alumni or Manchester Monarchs.

Tickets for American Pride Night are on sale now! To purchase your tickets, contact the Front Office at 603-626-7825 or email Jason Jones at [jjones@manchestermonarchs.com](mailto:jjones@manchestermonarchs.com).

Visit us at [manchestermonarchs.com](http://manchestermonarchs.com), follow the team @Monarchs Hockey and like us on Facebook for additional information.



## DD 214 Spin Codes

I was sent a Link to access a website that lists out some of the spin codes you may see on a DD form 214 that refer to the type of discharge and additional information of a person's service record.

Even on an Honorable discharge, a "Spin Code" (SPN - Separation Program Number) can hurt a veteran's chance of being hired by a prospective employer. These spin codes were put on DD 214

(discharge papers) from the 1940's through the early 1970's. Veterans can request a new DD 214 with the spin codes removed if necessary.

The following is a link that you refer to in case you see some of these codes on your DD Form 214, or if someone asks you about them.

<http://www.stopthenorthamericanunion.com/SpinCodes.html>

These codes do not normally indicate a person is not eligible to become a legionnaire and in most cases do not reflect on a persons eligibility as a legionnaire unless there is a question about the type of discharge a person receives, example: "less then honorable"

## A SALUTE TO ALL OUR VETERANS

