

Welcome to the American Legion  
**FIRST DIVISION**  
Newsletter



Commander  
Gigi Callaway

First Division is Online  
at

<http://www.ilfirstdivision.org>

**Newsletter for August 2019**

### **First Division Commander Gigi Callaway**

It is an honor to serve as Commander for the First Division, I thank you again for your vote and confidence. For those that I have not had a pleasure to meet; let me introduce myself. I grew up with strong family values and strong beliefs in God and country. After serving twenty years on active duty with the Navy I retired and a year later became a member of the American Legion. It has been over two decades as a Legionnaire. The goal this year is to bring success to every District, and it is my hope that you will join me in accomplishing that this legion year.

Already, this year is off to a good start with a Division strategic planning meeting with Districts which was held on June 23, 2019. In that meeting, we set the course for the new Legion year. The emphasis was on four key committees: Communications; Events; Membership; and Finance. Some new, old and audacious initiatives that were introduced, and we have begun to establish an action plan for the committees. Another meeting was held at Department Convention on July 12<sup>th</sup>; it was encouraging to see it start to come together. There be a short Division strategic planning meeting beginning at noon before installation on August 11, 2019.

Additionally, I am calling on all Past Division Commanders to be part of a special committee. The "Emeritus Advisory Action Committee" will be sent a save the date which is forthcoming via email. (This is an idea that was shared with a few of you already and was well received!)

In closing, one of our greatest strengths has always been the support for veterans, our community and Legion programs. These efforts have also allowed us greater opportunities for networking and collaboration which serves as an invaluable tool for goals and initiatives. It will be important, to every one of us, that we attend the

Division meeting as well as support each other individually. It is our belief that being a veteran family organization is what sets us apart from others and enables us to successfully accomplish our goals. Let's show them how it done and make it happen this year!

Looking forward to seeing everyone at Installation on August 11th.

Kind regards, *Gigi Callaway*

### **First Division Sr. Vice Commander Al Pizarro**

Hello Fightin' First Division Family,

The First Division was 1st in membership in the Department of Illinois, congratulations to Commander Joe and Senior Vice Gigi, great job! Now we must maintain this momentum, get your Districts certified! If your District is not certified you will not receive your membership cards.

Our goal this year is to have all Posts and Districts at 75% by Veterans Day, we can do this!

My brother and Past 1st Division Commander Pete Hirt agreed to assist me and take charge of our Hospitality Suite at the Department Convention, this is his report;

*Several Districts, Department Commander Mike and other Legionnaires supplied and kept the hospitality room stocked with their generous donations. Food for the lunches, Thursday Hot Dogs and Friday Chicken courtesy of Al Coughlin and Jim Koska. Serving Friday's lunch Auxiliary members from three units. DJ's John and Patty, brought to you by Commander Joe. Bartenders Les Montag and Mark Kwiatkowski courtesy of Schaumburg Post 1983.*

To all who assisted with the Division Hospitality Suite, thank you!

Respectfully, *Al Pizarro*

As a new paratrooper, I was struck by all the T-shirts on base emblazoned with the motto "Death from above!" Later I noticed a submariner with a T-shirt that declared "Death from below!"

Then, standing in line for chow one day, I was served by an Army cook. His T-shirt had a skull with a crossed fork and spoon underneath and yet another warning: "Death from within!"

## **First Division Jr. Vice Commander Thomas Chambers**

Welcome to another exciting year with the first division.  
The upcoming events are as follows, and are subject to change.

1. 2019-2020 Installation of Officers for first division  
Sunday Aug. 11th 2019  
*Send in your request to attend. I hope to see everyone there.*
2. There will be a Christmas brunch and membership drive Dec.14th at the Morton Grove post.
3. We are planning a Winter Ball in January (Tentatively for January 19th ) with time and place to be announced.
4. Past Commanders dinner tentatively on March 29th, 2020 Time and place (TBD)
5. The Mini- Convention will be held on June 6th, 8:00 am at the Evergreen Park Post #854

I am asking for volunteers for next year's Hospitality room at the state convention. This includes the Legion, the Auxiliary, The Son's of the American Legion and the Legion Riders. All help will be appreciated.

Remember to work together and we can enjoy our successes, this is your Legion.

*Tom Chambers*

## **VA&R Chairman and Service Officer of the First Division Raymond P. Toczek**

A hearty welcome to all new Service Officers of our Posts and Districts, returning Service Officers and those appointed to be representatives for our VA&R committees. I would like to take a few moments to introduce myself and the staff of the Chicago VA&R office.

I was drafted into the Army in 1970, trained as an MP and my duty station was West Berlin. Upon returning I used my GI Bill and got my BA degree at Northeastern Illinois University. I then went to work for the Veterans Administration and retired after 33 years. During that time I held many jobs including manning the VA toll free number, hospital liaison, privacy desk, POW coordinator and had four 90 day tours in Germany as their Overseas Military Coordinator. Since retiring I have worked in the Legion's Chicago office for 12years.

I work part-time as well as my coworker, Wayne Macejak (Air Force). He is stationed at Veterans Health Administration Hines on Tuesday and Thursday. Our office is run by a Navy veteran, Carolina Contreras and she is assisted by another Navy veteran, Jason Girard. Our two support staff includes Marlene Kuhl and Toy Jenkarchang.

We assist all our Posts and Districts in answering questions about the various VA benefit programs. We also help in filing claims and sometimes appeals. Where we can't directly help, we will refer veterans and family members to someone who can e.g. enrollment in the hospital or burial in a national cemetery. When you come in contact with a vet or family member seeking answers please refer them to our 24/7 number of 312-980-4266. We can usually return calls that same day. We have walk-in hours Monday through Thursday from 9:00 to 12:00 and can make appointments as needed. Our office is at 2122 W. Taylor St. in Chicago, right next door to Jesse Brown hospital. Remember we are here to help vets get answers.

For those who are on the VA&R committees our mission is to keep on top of benefit law changes and get that info to our members. The committees also suggest law changes and we help guide the resolutions through the proper channels.

In closing contact us as needed. When in doubt fill it out (claims) and always check out the latest rumor, most are false but some turn out to be true.

The staff and I look forward to a very productive year.

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.

*Ray Toczek*

### **The Two Basic Rules for Flying:**

- 1 - Try to stay in the middle of the air.
- 2 - Do not go near the edges of it.
  - 2A - The edges of the air can be recognized by the appearance of ground, buildings, sea, trees, and interstellar space.
  - 2B - It is much more difficult to fly there.

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS for FIRST DIVISION**

<b>August 11, 2019</b>	<b><i>Division Installation</i></b> at Crystal Sky Banquets 7941 47 <sup>th</sup> St, McCook, IL 60525 Cocktails @ 1:00 pm, Program @ 1:30 pm, Dinner to follow installation
<b>September 4, 2019</b>	<b><i>Division Meeting:</i></b> Calumet Memorial Post 330, 950 Legion Drive, Calumet City, IL 60409

<b>September 17, 2019</b>	<b><i>Emeritus Advisory Committee:</i></b> This is a special committee consisting of all Past Division Commanders. <b><i>(Place and Time TBD)</i></b>
<b>November 6, 2019</b>	<b><i>Division Meeting:</i></b> Evanston Post 42 1030 Central St, Evanston, IL 60201
<b>December 14, 2019</b>	<b><i>Christmas Party / Membership Drive:</i></b> Morton Grove Post 134 6140 Dempster St. Morton Grove, IL 60053 Brunch: 10:00 AM until 1:30 PM
<b>February 5, 2020</b>	<b><i>Division Meeting:</i></b> Dorie Miller Post 915 General Richard L Jones Armory 5200 S Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60615
<b>April 1, 2020</b>	<b><i>Division Meeting:</i></b> Broadview- Hillside Post 626 4941 Butterfield Rd, Hillside, IL 60162
<b>June 6, 2020</b>	<b><i>Division Mini Convention:</i></b> Evergreen Park Post 854 9701 S Kedzie Ave, Evergreen Park, IL 60805 <b>Doors open: 8:00 AM</b> <b>Meeting starts: 9:00 AM</b>

**All Division meetings: DEC @ 7:00, meeting @ 7:30**



**\* IN REMEMBRANCE OF OUR FALLEN  
LEGIONNAIRES\***

We can no longer not be in the know! After all,  
those who do transfer into Post Everlasting are our  
Brothers, Sisters and family!!!!

Please send the names of Fallen Legionnaires to:  
[div1newsletter@yandex.com](mailto:div1newsletter@yandex.com)

**OFFICER CONTACT INFORMATION**

2019-2020 First Division

PO Box 280, Riverside, IL 60546

[illfirstdivision@gmail.com](mailto:illfirstdivision@gmail.com)    <http://www.ilfirstdivision.org>

(224) 800-1177

**COMMANDER:**  
GIGI CALLAWAY

**SENIOR VICE COMMANDER:**  
AL PIZARRO

<b>JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER:</b> THOMAS CHAMBERS	<b>DIVISION ADJUTANT:</b> HAROLD DILLARD
<b>Finance Officer &amp; Aide to Commander</b> <b>BERNARD DARMETKO</b> Phone: (708) 860 - 1897 Email: bcdarmetko@comcast.net	<b>SERVICE OFFICER:</b> <b>RAYMOND TOCZEK</b> Phone: (312) 980 – 4264 Email: Raymond.toczek@va.gov
<b>Medical Officer &amp; Aide to Commander</b> DR. DON HORN	<b>Historian &amp; Special Adviser</b> WILLIAM COOPER

### Events from ILLEGION.org

August 2, 2019 to August 4, 2019	<b>American Legion Family State Golf Tournament</b> August 2, 2019 @ 5:16 pm – August 4, 2019 @ 6:16 pm Where: Danville, IL
August 4, 2019	<b>Coast Guard Birthday</b>
August 23, 2019 to August 29, 2019	<b>National Convention</b> Indiana Convention Center & Lucas Oil Stadium 100 S. Capitol Ave. Indianapolis, IN 46225
September 2, 2019	<b>Labor Day</b> – Office Closed
September 7, 2019	<b>SAL DEC</b> - The Haven, 10289 Haven Lane, Carbondale, IL 62220
September 11, 2019	<b>Patriot Day</b>
September 14, 2019	<b>Commander's Homecoming</b> 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Effingham, IL
September 16, 2019	<b>AMERICAN LEGION DAY</b>
September 18, 2019	<b>Air Force Birthday</b>
September 20, 2019	<b>POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY</b>
September 28, 2019	<b>Fall Meetings</b> 10:00 am – 3:00 pm Department Headquarters, 2720 E. Lincoln St. Bloomington, IL 61704

***An old U.S. Army truism***

Coffee tastes better if the latrines are dug downstream from an encampment.

*Source: milhist.net*

### Events from LEGION.ORG

August 1, 2019	<b>Samsung American Legion Scholarship applications due to National Headquarters</b> <a href="http://www.legion.org/scholarships/samsung">www.legion.org/scholarships/samsung</a>
----------------	--



August 1, 2019	<b>Certification of American Legion Baseball department tournament champion due to National Headquarters</b>
August 2, 2019	<b>Invasion of Kuwait/Operation Desert Shield (1990)</b>
August 4, 2019	<b>Coast Guard Birthday</b>
August 6-11, 2019	<b>American Legion Baseball regional tournaments</b> <a href="http://www.legion.org/baseball/tournaments/regional">www.legion.org/baseball/tournaments/regional</a>
August 7, 2019	<b>Purple Heart Day</b>
August 8, 2019	<b>DSO School</b>
August 9, 2019	<b>American Legion Baseball scholarship department applications due to National Headquarters</b> <a href="http://www.legion.org/baseball">www.legion.org/baseball</a>
August 9-10, 2019	<b>National Membership Workshop</b>
August 15-20, 2019	<b>93rd American Legion Baseball World Series</b> Shelby, N.C.
August 18-22, 2019	<b>Legacy Run</b> en route to the national convention in Indianapolis.
August 23-29, 2019	<b>101st American Legion National Convention</b> Indianapolis, Ind.

### ***Old U.S. Air Force Truisms***

“Never fly in the same cockpit with someone braver than you.”

“The only time you have too much fuel is when you’re on fire.”

“Weather forecasts are horoscopes with numbers.”

“Airspeed, altitude, and brains: Two are always needed to successfully complete the flight.”

Source: [urcaptainspekin.com](http://urcaptainspekin.com)

Do you have an outstanding member at your Post that you would like to tell their story? We would love to help spread the word about our great membership. Submissions can be made to: [div1newsletter@yandex.com](mailto:div1newsletter@yandex.com) and our team of editors will do our best to let the world know how special our members really are.

### **DID YOU KNOW...**

The American Legion Department of Illinois has a website with links to upcoming events, all the programs and events within the Department.

There are sections on Department and Membership Awards and how to apply for them. District and Division meeting dates and locations are also listed so we can see you at the meetings.

In the Media section there is an area for subscribing to the Department Newsletter – which is a great source of information for everyone from the Post/Unit/Squadron level and up. There are also archived issues so you can catch up on what you may have missed.

You can submit your organizations event photos to be published and in the Veterans Links section, you can find a lot of areas the American Legion is involved with that you most likely didn't know about that can be passed along to members.

Don't forget to get your Post's website listed in the "Post Links" section under "Resources".  
<http://www.illegion.org>

## Changes to the newsletter for the New Term

As discussed at the Division planning meeting held on June 23, 2019.

1. Send your articles to Greg with a copy to Kendal.

(The copy to Kendal ([div1newsletter@yandex.com](mailto:div1newsletter@yandex.com)) is for his info only so that he is aware that your article has been sent to Greg, the copy editor). [gkjacobs2001@yahoo.com](mailto:gkjacobs2001@yahoo.com)

2. Once Greg, as copy editor [copy editor function is as proofreaders] reviews your article, he will send the article back to you (for corrections if needed) and cc Kendal. If there are NO corrections, the copy editor will email you saying your article as been reviewed with a copy to Kendal. You need not do anything, Kendal has received it twice already. However, if there are correction, make the corrections and send it to Division Newsletter manager, Kendal Bishop.

3. As in the past (and there is no change here) the Commander is final Editor.

All articles are due to Kendal by the 20th of each month. Except for August which is due on July 15th. At times there may be exceptions such as this August newsletter.

Note of interest: There is now a Member Spotlight article. This should be a Blue Cap. The first one was placed in July's Newsletter. Submit a "Blue Cap" member for the spotlight for consideration. (Take a look at July's article as an example)

Also, let your pictures tell a story. Depending on space, let us see what is going on either at the post or district. Submit photo, short description, name of event, people in the photo and the photographer's name.

Best regards,

*Gigi Callaway*, Commander, First Division, Department of Illinois

### *The Gentleman & Ladies Quarterly:*

*Never have to guess again, the proper way to pass food; the platters of food are always passed counterclockwise. Exception is if someone seated directly to your left asks for something, you can hand it directly to him or her.*





Road to Recovery®

## An Urgent Call to Action

An estimated 64,270 Illinois residents will learn they have cancer this year and getting to their scheduled treatment will be one of their greatest roadblocks. To ensure patients get to the critical care they need without additional stress, the American Cancer Society offers the Road To Recovery® program. This program can help provide free transportation to and from treatment for cancer patients who do not have a ride or are unable to drive themselves.

The need is great for additional Road to Recovery drivers in every community. Veterans being treated at VA Hospitals may face an additional challenge. Typically the veteran will travel greater distances to treatment. The American Cancer Society is urgently asking drivers to donate their passenger seat and volunteer to take cancer patients to treatment. One cancer patient requiring radiation therapy could need between 20 to 30 trips to treatment over the course of six weeks. A patient receiving chemotherapy may need weekly treatment for up to a year.”

The Road To Recovery program provides transportation options for patients in these situations and is always in need of volunteer drivers. To volunteer or for more information on the Road To Recovery program, visit [cancer.org/drive](http://cancer.org/drive), or call 1.800.227.2345.

### 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade in Des Plaines, IL - 9<sup>th</sup> District - Photos by Greg Jacobs



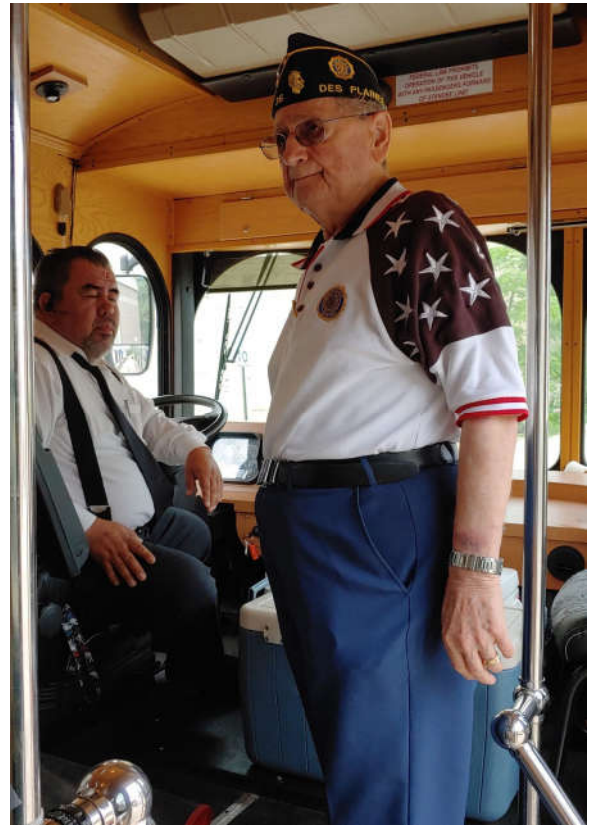
Robert Kowalski, USMC, Viet Nam  
Was the American flag bearer for the Veterans  
groups in the parade



With the length of the parade, a trolley backed  
up our Veterans that had difficulty getting  
through the whole route.



Kevin O'Connell, Squadron 36 & 1st Division S.A.L. Commander (Left) along with Bill McMurray (Right) acting Color Guard Commander, Post 974



Zen Kalita,  
Post 36 Finance Officer on the bus



Paul Fischer,  
Post 36 Historian  
with  
some of his  
personal military  
collection  
on display for the  
4th of July  
at his home post of  
Des Plaines.



American Legion Department of Illinois, First Division  
&  
SAL Detachment of Illinois, First Division



Cordially invites you to attend the  
**2019-2020 Installation of Officers**

Sunday, August 11, 2019  
• No Host Cocktails 1:00 pm • Program 1:30 pm  
• Dinner 3:00 pm

Crystal Sky Banquets  
7941 47th St, McCook, IL 60525

*Attire:*

*Incoming Officers: Legion/SAL Dress (Blue jacket, gray pants, white shirt, tie and cap)*  
*Guests: Legion Summer Dress or Business Dress Casual*

*Free parking is available (Main door off Joliet Road and Joliet Ave)*

Please R.S.V.P. by August 1, 2019  
\$30 per person

Please remit the section below the dotted line together with your payment to:  
American Legion First Division Council,  
P.O. Box 280 Riverside, Illinois 60546-0280

-----  
RSVP

M \_\_\_\_\_

Has reserved \_\_\_\_\_ seat(s) for  
American Legion, First Division and SAL Detachment Installation on August 11, 2019

Cost of dinner per person (pp) will be \$30.00  
postmarked by August 1, 2019





First Division, Cook County Council  
The American Legion,  
Department of Illinois  
828 N. Roy Ave, Melrose Park, IL 60164

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Bloomington, IL  
Permit No. 18

***Chief Editor: Gigi Callaway***

***Reviewing Editor: Greg Jacobs***

If you would have any issues or concerns about the newsletter, please feel free

to contact: ***Shepherd K. S. Bishop – Managing Editor***

Member National American Legion Press Association

**[div1newsletter@yandex.com](mailto:div1newsletter@yandex.com)**