

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



COMMANDER  
JOSEPH P. LAMPERT

First Division is Online  
at

<http://www.ilfirstdivision.org>



Newsletter for December 2018

**First Division Commander Joseph P. Lampert**

Comrades,

As of November 30<sup>th</sup>, the First Division is in fourth place in the Department, with 74.63. We have 2 Districts in the Top Ten! Congratulations to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>! We need to push hard! Remember, if membership dues are not paid by December 31st, the Legionnaire is NO LONGER IN GOOD STANDING! That means NO LEGION BENEFITS, like the NEF! Use this to help encourage members to renew!

With the Holiday season around us, it is a perfect time to do wellness checks on our older, hospitalized and shut in members. Make a phone call or pay a visit, it's worth it!

The 2019 Membership Caravan will be coming through the First Division on Sunday, January 20<sup>th</sup>. The stops are: Evanston Post #42, Breakfast. Franklin D. Roosevelt Post #923, Snack. Illiana Post #220, Lunch. Times will be confirmed after the pre-drive has been completed. Immediate Past National Commander Denise Rohan will

be our keynote speaker. **THIS IS A LEGION FAMILY EVENT!** Please plan on attending and bring renewals to turn in.

As a reminder, ALL POSTS need to send in their Delegate dues (\$10.00 per delegate) and names of the delegates to the Division Adjutant.

I look forward to seeing you at the Division Christmas Brunch! The next Division meeting is Wednesday, February 6<sup>th</sup> at Morton Grove Post #134.

I wish all of you and your families Happy Holidays and a Joyful New Year!

Still Serving America

*Joseph P. Lampert*

**First Division Sr. Vice Commander Gigi Callaway**

First, I wish everyone a happy holiday season and a merry new year.

I hope this newsletter finds every doing well. December is filled with family, friends and Legion events.

**First Division's Annual Holiday Party and Membership Drive** will be a brunch held on December 16<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm. (Brunch will begin at 11 am. Located at Robert E. Coulter, Jr., Post 1941, 900 S. La Grange Road in La Grange.) The attire is casual. The event is at no cost however, we encourage you to bring membership cards or a new member with you!

This month message is simple; "build the legacy". Building starts with staying connected. Have your membership committee, along with you, make the phone calls. Start simply by asking about the member's welfare. (Begin the call as a wellness check and move on from there.) Remember to use the resources at the District, Division

and Department to connect with those programs or projects that may make a difference to that member. December's goal is 100 percent. For those posts that are already at 100 percent, congratulations on building a legacy. If you need my assistance contact me. (It's best to email or text.)

Looking forward to see you on December 16<sup>th</sup>!

May you have a Joyous Christmas, Happy Holiday, and Happy New Year!

Warm regards, *Gigi Callaway*

**First Division Jr. Vice Commander Al Pizarro**

Hello Fightin' First Division Members,

I am currently working on the Past Commander's Luncheon and the Armed Forces Day Dinner. From my Family to yours, We would like to wish all Legion Family members a Very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!!

Respectfully, *Al Pizarro*

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

That almost all of my articles over the years have dealt with what veterans should do. This month I will tell you what NOT to do.

If you are sent a flyer stating you can have a free meal if you just will listen to lawyers talk about the Veterans Administration Non-Service Connected pension benefit with aid and attendance be careful. They can't charge you for filing a claim for that benefit but they usually will talk you into setting up various trusts and wills which will cost your money. **DON'T** sign anything unless you know exactly what you are doing. If need be bring a son or daughter along.

If you get a telephone call from someone claiming they are from the Veterans

Administration hospital prescription department and they just need to confirm your Social Security number **DON'T** give it to them. That's a big scam to steal your identity. Or if they call and say your savings account was hacked and they need your account number **HANG UP**.

When you get that call from a person asking for donations to help needy veterans **DON'T** make a contribution over the telephone unless you are 100% sure the group is on the up and up. If concerned, simply ask them to send you a request in the mail. Then when you get that info check them out at one of the many websites like [www.givewell.org](http://www.givewell.org) or [www.charitywatch.org](http://www.charitywatch.org) .

If you are on the VA non-service connected pension program and someone asks you to collect their winnings for a lotto ticket or gambling casino-**DON'T**. Regardless of their excuse (lost wallet, left driver's license at home, etc.) by collecting the winnings for them, the IRS will be notified under your Social Security number and name. Later when the VA and IRS computers run their cross matches you will end up with a large debt.

If you decide to appeal your Veterans Administration claim and hire a lawyer **DON'T** just accept any fee agreement. The lawyer must get their fees approved by the VA.

If you have forgotten to take your medications and have a lot of pills left over **DON'T** give them to someone who has the same illness e.g. hypertension. Everybody is different and what is a valid dose for you could kill someone else or at the very least make them very sick.

If you're like me and have dozens of passwords for various online accounts **DON'T** use the same password. If a hacker gets your password, they can have a field day with your other accounts.

**DON'T** just notify the VA hospital or clinic when you move. You must also notify the VA benefits side, especially if you have a claim or appeal pending. These two large VA computer systems don't yet talk to each other. So if you don't notify both parts of the VA you may get your medicine and appointment info at the new address but important information on your appeal may be returned by the Post Office as undeliverable.

PS The Post Office will still forward mail for at least six months and perhaps even up to a year.

Safe deposit boxes are nice places to keep important documents but **DON'T**

keep your only copy of your military discharge papers in it. Have another copy somewhere at home so that when you pass away your next-of-kin will have access to it. Most bank vaults are not open on weekends, nights and holidays. In most cases the Funeral Home only needs a clear, readable copy, not the original.

Finally if you have been dating several months or having been living with someone for a while **DON'T** add them to your checking or savings account if your VA checks are on direct deposit. If you have a falling out or a lovers tiff that person can clean out your account and you have no recourse with the VA.

That was fun! And I'll leave you with one final tip; **DON'T** forget to read my article in next month's newsletter.

Those who have fought hard for their country and their families know what it is to value special times at home with loved ones. Wishing you lots of joy this Christmas and plenty of happy times with your friends and family.

*Ray Joczrek*

### **First Division Adjutant Leonard Jakubiak**

#### **MINUTES FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> DIVISION COUNCIL ON NOV 7, 2018**

Executive board meeting was called to order at 710pm, roll call of Districts was taken 1<sup>st</sup> Commander, 2<sup>nd</sup> No show, 3<sup>rd</sup> Commander/Sr Vice, 4<sup>th</sup> No show, 5<sup>th</sup> Commander, 7<sup>th</sup> Commander/Sr Vice/Jr Vice, 8<sup>th</sup> No show, 9<sup>th</sup> Commander were in attendance.

**Guest Gary Keegan** from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division advised the board that his Division will not teaming up with us for the sweepstakes raffle, his board said NO. 1st Div Adjutant advised the board on the outcome of the Delegate forms and dues, and will bring it up at the regular meeting.

First Division Cook County Council meeting was called to order at 730pm after all protocol were followed. Roll call of Districts 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> were no show.

*(Minutes from November 7, 2018 meeting continued)*

**Kevin O'Connell 1st Div SAL** welcomed us to the hosting Post 36 Des Plaines.

**Gary Keegan 2<sup>nd</sup> Div** officer announced that he is running for Dept Sr Vice 2019-2020, the 1<sup>st</sup> Division agreed to support him in his endeavor.

Our **Division Commander Joe Lampert** advised us that the 100 year pins are for sale for \$100, money from the sales will go to Special Olympics, Boys State, Gifts to the Yanks and Oratorical Contest 100% of the money will be divide to the four groups. The Department of Illinois finalized the In-State Legacy Run for the Legion Riders. It will split into two weekends: June 22/23 for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Divisions, June 29/30 for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. Registration fee is \$25.00 per bike. We will be riding for the Legacy Scholarship Fund, Operation Comfort Warriors & Gifts to the Yanks that Gave. If Riders wish to donate to other Legion Charities, they need to inform the registrar. For updates and info check the Department website, Facebook page, Newsletter and ALR Chapters. The National Legacy Run route is in the works. Department Convention 2019 the First Division and the American Legion Riders will sharing the hospitality room.

Division Membership Chairman **Sr Vice Commander Gigi Callaway** did her candy bar quiz with the membership about reading the Division newsletter. She also advised the district commander that there are still posts that are not certified. How are members going to get their membership cards! The Division standings are in we are number two, 69.12%, Gigi offered help just call her.

**Jr Vice Commander Al Pizarro** report will be in the next newsletter.

Finance Officer Bernie Darmetko reported on our finances and after all bills we are in a hole for \$230.92. A fundraiser will bring in money by raffling off the 100 year centennial coin for \$20 per ticket.

**Service Officer Ray Tozcek** spoken on VA benefits and recapped what was in the November newsletter, he also dropped off several Federal Benefit Veteran, Dependents and Survivors books for the membership to take to their posts.

**Internal Affairs Commission chairman** brought up that there has been much discussion concerning membership at National. He reminded the commission

*(Minutes from November 7, 2018 meeting continued)*

that the resolution to eliminate districts which fall below 1,000 members was passed at a D.E.C. At this time there is one District well below the 1,000 member mark and that there is now one further. Al Coughlin informed the Commission that he discussed with Department Adjutant Marty Conatser what needs to be done since the one District has hit the three year mark as indicated in the resolution. We will discuss the action that needs to be done prior to the Spring DEC 2019. The 1<sup>st</sup> District Commander disagrees with this report.

**2018 Media & Comm Commission Al Coughlin** 1<sup>st</sup> Division rep gave us a update on that meeting a centennial bookazine and website but everything is being push for the Centennial/100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

**Legislative Commission rep Ken Trumbull** that there were so many bills in Congress to read them all, they can be found on the National website, so take a look.

American Legion Scholarship Eligibility committee the 1<sup>st</sup> Division has been allocated (5) \$1000 renewable scholarships for current Illinois High School seniors who will be continuing their education at an accredited college or trade school in the fall of 2019. Get the application in ASAP by March 15, 2019. Ken Rasmussen

**Ways and Means Ken Trumbull** working on a new raffle for our Division. Children & Youth Jan Lipski is raffling a 32" flat screen TV at \$5, a ticket for Toys \$ Tots program.

**1st Division Adjutant Lenny Jakubiak**, I am not going to chase down any post in the Division to pay Delegate Dues and names of Delegates. According to Division Bylaws every post is to pay delegate dues prior to the first meeting of the year. And now if you show up to a Division meeting or Division Convention and want to vote on an item or person, you will be unable to.  
Simple and Sweet

Joe Lampert, Commander

Lenny Jakubiak, Adjutant

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

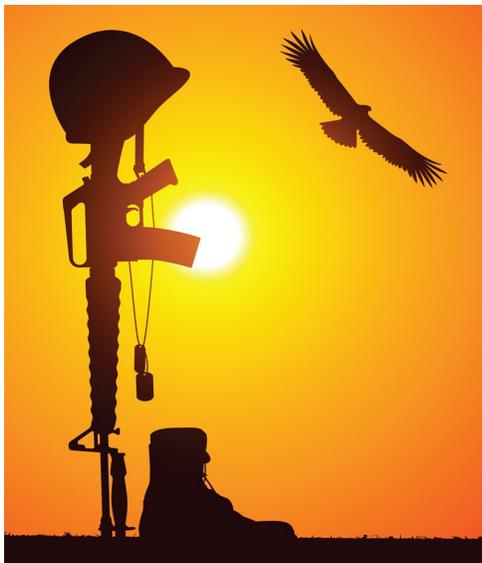
Dec. 16th Robert E. Coulter 1941 Christmas Party  
900 La Grange Rd, La Grange, IL 60525

Feb. 6th Morton Grove Post #134  
6140 Dempster St. Morton Grove, IL 60053

Apr. 3rd Harold Washington 1987  
4500 S Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60653

Jun. 1st Robert E. Coulter 1941 Mini Convention  
900 La Grange Rd, La Grange, IL 60525

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)

***"Do more than is required of you."***

**- General George S. Patton**

The bare minimum amount of work didn't cut it for Patton. "An Army is a team. It lives, sleeps, eats, and fights as a team. This individual heroic stuff is pure horse sh--," he said.

He wanted his men to think about what more they could do for the greater good of the unit, instead of only thinking about themselves. This quote can certainly apply to organizations outside of the military.

## OFFICER CONTACT INFORMATION

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### December Events from LEGION.org

<b>Dec 1, 2018</b>	<b>Holiday Donor Blood Drive</b> Nov. 22-Dec. 31.
<b>Dec 3, 2018</b>	<b>Hanukkah</b>
<b>Dec 7, 2018</b>	<b>Pearl Harbor Day (1941)</b>
<b>Dec 12, 2018</b>	<b>Pearl Harbor Day Membership Target Date (75%)</b> For more information, contact Matt Herndon, Deputy Director, Membership. <a href="mailto:mherndon@legion.org">mherndon@legion.org</a> (317) 630-1406 <a href="http://www.legion.org/membership/standings">www.legion.org/membership/standings</a>
<b>Dec 15, 2018</b>	<b>Bill of Rights Day</b>
<b>Dec 16, 2018</b>	<b>National Guard Birthday</b>
<b>Dec 20, 2018</b>	<b>Panama/Operation Just Cause (1989)</b>
<b>Dec 25, 2018</b>	<b>Christmas</b>
<b>Dec 31, 2018</b>	<b>New Year's Eve</b>

If you have an event that you would like us to help you promote, please send the information along to Shepherd Kendal Bishop at [div1newsletter@yandex.com](mailto:div1newsletter@yandex.com) And we will try to fit your information into the newsletter. If you would like to have the newsletter emailed to your inbox, let us know at the same address above and we will put you on the list. We use this same system to send out important messages that come up between newsletters.

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

Local newspapers are interested in printing articles about your American Legion Members doing the great things they do within your community?

Unfortunately, they can not always send a reporter to cover your event, so the community does not hear of wonderful things that your members do. Do not disrepair...or even complain about it, there is a solution to getting your information published.

It's time to publicize your self, tell your own story on your own terms. How is this done? How hard is this to do? It very simple and easy to do.

The next event you have, designate one or more members to take photos. Have the photographers identify who is in the photos and what is going on. Organize which photos you want to use, number them in the order you want to present them and attach the information in a separate note sheet with the photo number listed in the narrative.

While the event is happening, or just after the event, you write the story as you would want it presented in the news. Attach everything in an email to the editor or specific department within the news structure. This can be found by calling the local media and asking where to send to. The editors may trim down your story for size and content, but your story will remain.

This can also be done for spotlighting a member who has done an outstanding job or has an interesting story to tell.

Newspapers are always looking for human interest stories, and are happy to take submissions to fill open areas of their periodicals. After a few articles, you may notice your membership increase along with attendance for your events.

Speaking of attendance at events, try to have an interesting write up for upcoming events and fundraisers and get them into the media as well. Include time, location and what the event is for or where the fundraising is going to. This you will want to have into the media about a month before the event will happen, but check deadlines for the local news so they can get the information to print on time.

Above all else, remember your 1<sup>st</sup> Division Newsletter, I mean seriously, The added stories are inspirational for us too.

Sample letter Post 183, Portage Park, sends out for flags that are still flying that need to be retired.

Owners, property at *Address, City, state, zip*

Dear Owners,

Our American Legion Post is located (location) and is comprised of (#) members. They represent veterans from World War II, the Korean and Vietnam conflicts as well as the two Gulf Wars. All have served their country honorably and are proud to have worn the uniform of the United States of America.

We take pride in our country and also its symbol, the American Flag. All over the local area, homes and businesses like yours display our flag for all to see. It represents not only our country with all its freedoms but also all those who have proudly served or who are still serving today.

The weather in area, for the last few years has been bad, lots of heavy winds and many thunderstorms. This weather has really done a number on your flag flying on your pole. It is in need of replacement.

We would ask that you look into getting it replaced as soon as is feasible and thank you in advance for doing this small act. Over our history many brave men and women have given their lives for our country. Our flag represents that commitment.

On behalf of our post we just want to thank you in advance for this small act. It means a lot to our veterans who live in the area and drive/walk past your home each day.

GOD Bless America and keep her free!

Sincerely,

*(Name, position, post phone number)*



First Division, Cook County Council  
The American Legion,  
Department of Illinois  
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If you would have any issues or concerns  
about the newsletter, please feel free  
to contact:

Shepherd K. S. Bishop

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**Monthly Publication**

**Editor**

**Joe Lampert, Commander**