



THE AMERICAN LEGION AT UBON RATCHATHANI, THAILAND

BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBIN OLDS

POST NUMBER TH01

Post Meeting: 2nd Wednesday of Every Month, At 10:00 A.M.

Post Location: PEPPERS RESTAURANT AND BAKERY



December 2024

POST EMAIL: COMMANDER@AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM

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2024 POST TH01 OFFICERS

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Member-at-Large – Wayne Wright

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Member-at-Large – Douglas Palzer

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Calendar for December 2024

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| December 7 | Pearl Harbor Remembrance |
| December 11 | Post General Membership Meeting at Peppers Restaurant and Bakery |
| December 25 | Christmas |



From the Commander:

Fellow Legionnaires,

I'm back in action! I recently traveled to the States for work and family visits. I also attended to some personal medical and retirement matters. Thankfully, everything is going well now.

I regret missing our Post Veterans Day Ceremony, but I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our brothers who represented us so admirably in Ubon Ratchathani. Your dedication to honoring our veterans is truly appreciated, and once again, we were well represented.

Can you believe it's almost December? Where has this year gone? It has been a fantastic year for TH01, and in just a month, we'll be welcoming 2025.

That's it for now! As always, please keep an eye out for our next newest member. Don't forget about our general membership meetings—your attendance is encouraged. These meetings provide an excellent opportunity to share your recommendations and ideas on how we can continue to improve.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Looking forward to seeing you all soon!

For God and Country
Rob Davis
Commander

Membership Renewal Membership Chair - By Ted Potyrala



We currently have 88 members but 4 members have decided not to renew so that takes us down to 84 listed members.

So far 69 members have renewed. The remaining members that have not renewed are 15. We need 21 members to reach 90. If the remaining 15 all renew you can see we still fall short by 6 members. We need at least 6 new members need to make up the difference. All this needs to be done by 31 December if we want the Post to receive \$3 per member, \$270 plus. If we reach 102% by the first of May, we will receive \$1 per member \$90+. As you know, our post cannot raise money because rules here in Thailand say it is illegal. That is why getting this \$270 is important. Everyone that renews by 15 December will have their name entered into a drawing for \$100. This money was donated so it does not come out of Post funds.

When it comes to recruiting new members, all of us are recruiters. We all have friends and family members that could be members of the American Legion. Christmas is just around the corner. Think about gifting them a membership in our Post. If you need information about our Post and what we do; let me know. Many veterans want to give back to other veterans and communities. Maybe they were once stationed here in Ubon or somewhere in Thailand. They may not even realize that there is an American Legion Post in Ubon. All of the money we get from dues goes to helping veterans, their family's and the communities. If they say that they heard that the legion is just a place to get cheap drinks that is definitely not us. We have no bar.

Have a Merry Christmas.



Adjutants Corner

You are now a member of the American Legion. How much do you know about the American Legion? What do they do? If you were like me you really don't know. However, all that changed when I took the Basic Training course. I discovered the work that the American Legion does and all the programs that it offers. This course is available free of charge to all members. It covers the organization of the American Legion from the National HQ down to the Posts, It also covers the history of the American Legion. The course goes in depth on the various programs available to help our veterans and their families and there are a lot. The course gives a good understanding of what it means to be an American Legionnaire.

Then there is the American Legion publications like the American Legion **Officer's guide and Manual of Ceremonies** that goes in depth on how to run a Post. The manual provides basic guidance on all the officer positions as well as instructions on conducting various ceremonial functions including the monthly Post membership meeting.

An additional aid provided by National HQ is their online podcast "**Training Tuesday**" put on each month. The podcast covers a variety of subjects all geared to help the Post succeed. The best thing is the podcasts are recorded and can be seen by going to the link [Training Tuesdays](#).

Each year the Department puts on a two-day training session called the Department of France's Mid-Winter Conference. The Department provides training on various topics the Posts would like covered. The topics are intended to give you a better understanding of the American Legion, its programs, Officer positions, and four pillars. This year it will be held on 25 – 26 January.

All of these tools are available for your use to make you a better Legionnaire and to help our Post to fulfill our obligation to the 4 Pillars of the American Legion, to support our fellow veterans and their families, and to support our local communities. I strongly urge you to use these tools to learn more and help us give back to our vets. We need you all to step up!



POST SERVICE OFFICER...LARRY HAYNIE, POST TH01-Ubon, Thailand

Hello My Fellow Veterans;

For those of us veterans who marry a Thai and then decide to make Thailand our home, we have several options to help our families and ourselves make life a little easier.

First, as American taxpayers, veterans can obtain an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) for their Thai Spouse. An IRS Form W-7 can be downloaded from the IRS website. Complete the form, submit all required documents and then your spouse is usually issued an ITIN number.

The ITIN then allows veterans to file a Joint Tax return, which may result in lower taxes or even tax refunds.

Secondly, an ITIN is a very important number the spouse of a veteran. Should a veteran pass away, the spouse can then contact a Post Service Officer to seek assistance in obtaining a Widow's Pension or Dependent Indemnity Compensation (DIC). All necessary VA documents require a Social Security Account Number (SSAN) for the spouse. However, if the spouse does not have a SSAN, the ITIN can be used in lieu of a Social Security number.

It is to a veterans benefit to obtain an ITIN for his Thai spouse. If a Thai spouse resides in the US with her husband for at least 5 years (it is not necessary to be consecutive time) the Thai spouse may then become eligible for Social Security benefits after her spouse passes away.

My first Thai wife went to the US with me in 1976. I obtained a "Green Card" for my wife when we were stationed at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. For the next 19 years, my wife followed me on my military assignments. In 2001 my wife became a US Citizen. When a Thai woman marries an American, especially an active duty military member, most leave Thailand and follow their husbands during their military service. Military wives sacrifice a lot to be with their spouses. We as veterans owe our wives a large debt of gratitude, happiness, and peace of mind.

Events:



Ted Potyrala
1st. Vice Commander
American Legion Post
TH01

Remembrance Day Ceremony Mother Ubon



Members and guests of American Legion Post TH01, Ubon Thailand

11th. Month, 11th day, 11th hour Peace was finally attained 1918

On November 11th members of our post and families, including a member of Post TH02, attended the Remembrance Day Ceremony (Veterans Day) at Thung Sri Muang park in Ubon Thailand.



This ceremony was held in remembrance of both the end of WWII and the POWs that were held at a Japanese prisoner of war camp located near Ubon during WWII.

It also remembers “Little Mother Ubon” who, with her daughter, went to the camp at night giving food to the prisoners, at the risk of being shot. At the end of the war the former prisoners wanted to show their

appreciation to the Mother coined "Mother Ubon" and her daughter for what they did. The POWs also wanted to show their gratitude to the Thai community who helped the POWs after their release. The POWs built a monument located in Tung Sri Muang Park in Ubon.to commemorate Mother Ubon and the Thai community. For the last 15 years, a service has been held at the site of the monument. This year nineteen countries were represented including The United States, Thailand, England, Scotland, and Belgium.



The ceremony began around 10:00 with various organizations presenting wreaths. Speeches were made by the Vice Governor of Ubon province and others. A Thai band and a Scottish Bagpiper provided music. Poppies were passed out to people in attendance. At 11:00 a.m. a two minutes of silence was held in honor of those veterans.

I was impressed how every year these veterans and non-veterans travel to Thailand for this event. They didn't come for picnics or veterans' day specials. Only to give their respect to veterans that they did not even know.



Remembrance Day 2024 Chiang Mai



By Mike Cook

Comrade Mike Cook along with VFW Post 12074 attended the Remembrance Ceremony in Chiang Mai Thailand. Chiang Mai experienced severe flooding which damaged the Foreign Cemetery. Because of the flooding, there were no public commemorations. However, the U.S. VFW Chiang Mai Chapter, the U.S. Consulate General, Mike Cook American Legion Post TH01 and the Honorary British Consul gathered November 11 to honor veterans and those who passed before us by cleaning their final resting place.





Ted Potyrala
1st. Vice Commander
American Legion Post TH01

Grave Decoration

On 29 November 2024, Jeff Ludwig, Wayne Wright and Ted Potyrala along with Ann Ludwig and Plang Potyrala visited the grave sites of Bruce Templeman and Joel Aldrich to decorate their graves with an American flag and a bouquet of flowers. Before we left for the temple, Wayne Jortner stopped by to pay his respects. Noi Templeman accompanied us to Bruce's grave located at a temple in Loeng Nok Tha Thailand. Two of Bruce's friends were also there.



Jeff Ludwig Ted Potyrala Jeff, Noi Templeman, Ted



Jeff & Ted Hand Salute



Ann and Jeff, Noi Ted and Plang

After we left Bruce's grave, we were joined by Wayne Wright and traveled up to Naku Nakae Thailand where Joel Aldrich's grave is located on the property where he lived. Joel's wife Usa attended the decorating of his grave.



Joel,s grave



Jeff Wayne Ted



Wayne Jeff Ted



Usa Aldrich Jeff



Safety Message: Holiday driving in Thailand

We are getting into the start of the Holiday season. With Christmas and New Year's parties. Lot of good food and friendship and unfortunately lots of acholic beverages. It's a time where you may have drivers on the road who are impaired. We all know It's important this time of year in the USA to drive defensively but how is it in Thailand? Just how safe are the roads in Thailand?

Let me share some statistics concerning driving in Thailand. There were 25.7 deaths due to traffic injuries per 100,000 people in 2021 in Thailand, compared with a global average of 15. Road safety watchdog Thai RSC says that already this year there have been more than 10,000 fatalities and 600,000 injuries on the country's roads. At least 20,000 people die on Thailand's roads every year, making them the ninth most dangerous in the world, according to research by the World Health Organization (WHO). The country records some of the most dangerous roads in the world, where roughly 50 people die every day in accidents. Therefore, you should exert extreme caution when driving. In particular, look out for poor-quality, low-lit roads in rural regions, and always drive defensively. On multi-lane roads, the right lane is the fast lane, the left is the slow lane. The left lane is mostly used by motorbikes and you really have to be careful because you never know when a motorbike might suddenly decide to turn straight in front of your car.

The Bad: Challenges of Driving in Thailand especially during the holiday season

Traffic Jams. Thailand is notorious for its traffic jams, especially in major cities such as Bangkok. Rush hour can be particularly frustrating, with long waits and slow-moving traffic. You will most likely occur traffic jams just before the holidays and right after as people will be traveling to visit friends and family.

Reckless Driving. Reckless driving is a common occurrence in Thailand. Many drivers do not obey traffic laws, and accidents are prevalent. It is not uncommon to see drivers speeding, weaving in and out of traffic, going the wrong way on the highway and streets. Ignoring traffic signals is a common occurrence especially for motorcycles. It gets worse when alcohol is involved.

Poor Road Conditions. Road conditions in Thailand can vary greatly, with many roads in disrepair. Potholes, uneven surfaces, and debris on the road can make driving challenging and hazardous.

Drunk Driving. Drunk driving is a significant problem in Thailand, and it contributes to many accidents and fatalities on the road. Despite efforts by the government to crack down on drunk driving, many drivers continue to get behind the wheel while under the influence of alcohol. This gets worse during the holiday season.

Tips for Safe Driving in Thailand

Follow the Traffic Rules. It is essential to follow the traffic rules when driving in Thailand. This includes obeying traffic signals, staying within the speed limit, and using your turn signals when changing lanes or turning.

Be Vigilant on the Road. Be alert and aware of your surroundings when driving in Thailand. Watch out for reckless drivers and be prepared to react quickly to unexpected situations. It's not if it will happen but when so be ready.

Avoid Driving During Peak Hours, If possible, try to avoid driving during peak hours when traffic is at its heaviest. Rush hour in Bangkok can be particularly challenging, with traffic jams and slow-moving traffic.

Chaplain's Prayer:

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

The little boy lay snugly in bed dreaming his little boy dreams. Thoughts of Santa, reindeer, and toys were at the top of his list it seemed. But just before he fell asleep these words came from his heart. Under the covers safe and warm you could hear his simple prayer start.

"God, please bless all the soldiers who are fighting so far away. Keep them safe and hold them tight they won't be home Christmas Day."

Across the town in a nursing home Soldiers shared many stories Of Normandy, Germany and Korea - their victories and their glories. They spoke of the troops overseas empathy covered each word. As they sat to eat their evening meal their brotherly prayer could be heard.

"God, please bless all the soldiers who are fighting so far away. Keep them safe and hold them tight they won't be home Christmas Day."

On Christmas Eve a mother is busy there is so much that's yet to be done. She's grateful her hands are not idle but her thoughts still drift to her son. The Army will be serving him dinner tomorrow on Christmas Day. Overseas he is serving his country as she works, you hear her heart say.

"God, please bless all the soldiers who are fighting so far away. Keep them safe and hold them tight they won't be home Christmas Day."

Across the seas he awoke on Christmas thinking home looked nothing like this. But care packages sent from family and friends helped fill gaps in the things that he missed. The mess hall was filled with a holiday meal as the troops each bowed and prayed. One soldier stood and took the lead at other posts his words were replayed.

"God, please bless friends and family who are safe so far away. They are the reason we're serving our hearts are home Christmas Day."

Ref: <https://www.asa-usa.org/recent-news/a-christmas-prayer-to-soldiers>



December Birthdays:

- ROB Davis
- Brian Walters



Important links

[CLICK THE FOLLOWING LINKS FOR POST TH01...](#)

WEBSITE

<https://americanlegionthailand.com>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/americanlegionthailandpostth01>

YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC74pEhMUgz5KmGcs7RMEXyA>

LINKS CONCERNING ISSUES OF GENERAL EXPAT INTEREST IN THAILAND

US DOLLAR TO THAI BAHT EXCHANGE RATE

\$1.00 USD to 33.74 THB

<https://www.x-rates.com/calculator/?from=USD&to=THB&amount=1>