

THE AMERICAN LEGION AT UBON RATCHATHANI, THAILAND



BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBIN OLDS

POST NUMBER TH01

POST MEETING: 2ND WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH, AT 10:00 AM
POST LOCATION: WING 21 ROYAL THAI AIR FORCE (RTAF) AIRBASE
POST VENUE: WING 21 GOLF DRIVING RANGE CLUBHOUSE



AUGUST 2022

POST EMAIL: [HTTP://AMERILEGIONTH01@GMAIL.COM](http://AMERILEGIONTH01@GMAIL.COM)

VOL. 5, ISSUE 8

LINKS CONCERNING ISSUES OF GENERAL EXPAT INTEREST IN THAILAND

AMERICAN LEGION 2023 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Membership/Renew?fbclid=IwAR3kG7akDFdUfEooHme5l1dHFeftSedZsFW6CUHwEXZQE1oqg_lgrq1K1Kg#legion-org

US DOLLAR TO THAI BAHT EXCHANGE RATE (AS OF 31/07/22)

\$1.00:฿36.32

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



POST COMMANDER'S COMMENTS...*BRUCE TEMPLEMAN*

A word from the Commander...

My Fellow Legionnaires,

Our Independence Day gathering was a wonderful time for meeting other Americans, local expats and spouses. It has been a long time since we have been able to get together and this was a fine, low key, and safe way to start back on the road to normalcy. There was so much food that we need to make sure we invite more guests next year. There was no formality surrounding this event, which made for a relaxed time. The camaraderie was evident. We look forward to having more of our membership join with the Activities and Events Committee to come up with more activities and venues to have fun.

We have been given an opportunity to partner with VFW Post 10217 in Korat. Each organization will be raising money to donate to our community project, The Tawanchai Foundation. To do our part as Legionnaires, we need to set goals for fundraising through Post activities and events as well as solicit individual and corporate donations. Partnering with VFW Post 10217 will help us make the Tawanchai

Foundation more secure in their mission to help children with cleft palates. Partnering will also increase our network of veteran services to help each other.

Some other areas of partnership for us to explore are holding joint holiday observances in locations equitable to each organization and jointly participating in performing Military Funeral Honors for veterans. I hope that together, we can serve our veterans here in Thailand to a higher degree.

It's also time for us to renew our membership with the Post. Please renew your dues as soon as possible so we can focus on serving others. We need to take care of ourselves first, and that means keeping the Post running and solvent to do the work we are chartered for. Let's get to 100% renewal in record time so we can simply focus on getting in new members and serving our community.

Bruce A. Templeman
Commander
American Legion Post TH01
Ubun Ratchathani, Thailand

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR ALL PEOPLE LIVING IN THAILAND TO UNDERSTAND

The Thai government recently legalized the use of medical marijuana. Since the legalization, many people in Thailand have confused this authorization as legalization of recreational use and recreational use in public.

Regardless of all the blogs and social media posts that you may have read, they only tell you what you want to hear, and not the official word. The official position of the Thai government is reflected in the following message from the US Embassy in Bangkok.

MESSAGE FOR U.S. CITIZENS IN THAILAND (22 JUNE 2022) **RECREATIONAL USE OF MARIJUANA IN PUBLIC IS ILLEGAL IN THAILAND**

“Thailand made marijuana legal for medical purposes on June 9, 2022. However, according to a health directive announced in the Royal Gazette on June 14, anyone smoking cannabis and hemp in public for recreational purposes shall face imprisonment of up to three months or a fine of up to 25,000 baht if they cause a public nuisance or pose health hazards to others.”

<https://th.usembassy.gov/message-for-u-s-citizens-in-thailand-june-22-2022/>

AN INTERESTING ARTICLE THAT WOULD BENEFIT MANY OF OUR MEMBERS THAT LIVE IN THE NORTHEAST OF THAILAND

THE EAST–WEST ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (EWEC) RAILWAY FROM MYANMAR TO VIETNAM

The East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) has been slowly developing, since the turn of this century. Thai Highway 12 runs from the northeastern Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge in Mukdahan to Tak in the west. Its purpose is to ultimately link the port of Danang, Vietnam on the South China Sea with the port of Mawlamyine, Myanmar on the Andaman Sea.

The initial development has been focused on improving the roads, but the goal is to have a rail line built to deliver goods cheaply and more efficiently.

[The East–West Economic Corridor Railway from Myanmar to Vietnam \(futuresoutheastasia.com\)](https://futuresoutheastasia.com)

HOLIDAY & EVENTS CALENDAR

04 August

United States Coast Birthday

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Coast_Guard

07 August

Friendship Day (Observed)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friendship_Day

10 August

**American Legion Post THo1 Membership
Monthly Meeting**

12 August

The Queen's Birthday

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suthida>

19 August

National Aviation Day (Observed)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Aviation_Day

21 August

Senior Citizens Day (Observed)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Senior_Citizen%27s_Day

26 August

Women's Equality Day (Observed)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women's_Equality_Day

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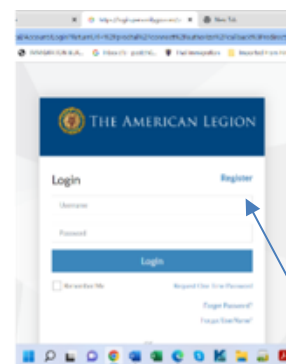
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ADJUTANT'S CORNER...JEFF LUDWIG

Greetings Comrades,

The 2023 membership renewal program is firmly on it way. It is an excellent time to review your records to ensure all the information is correct. You can do this by simply logging into your account in [myLegion.org](https://mylegion.org). Not yet registered, no problem. It is a simple process. Just click on register and follow the simple instructions. Just make sure to use the email that you have on file in myLegion.org. If you are not sure contact me and I will verify your email.



In addition to reviewing your account in [myLegion.org](https://mylegion.org), you can also sign up for various media and training materiel. Once you click on category the American Legion will send related articles and training aid straight to you email. You can also catch up on any past American Legion magazines you might have missed. You can also shop on line at the American Legion store.

Once logged in you will have a number of members discounts available to you in such categories as travel, auto rental, financial, insurance, media entertainment, Retail, and Post discounts. Check it out. You will find some really good deals.

The easiest and quickest method is to renew online: <https://www.legion.org/renew>. Once you go there, the online instructions are easy to follow. Also, they have resolved the issue of renewing online with an overseas credit card and/or an overseas address. If you are uncomfortable with the online renewal, you can always simply.

SAFETY MESSAGE

August is eye health and safety month. Your eyes play a significant role in your health. Millions of individuals experience eye problems each year. Some eye issues result in permanent vision loss or blindness, while others can be corrected with contact lenses or glasses.

Millions of individuals experience eye problems each year. Some eye issues result in permanent vision loss or blindness, while others can be corrected with contact lenses or glasses.

The National Eye Institute estimate that in the years between 2010 and 2050, the number of individuals affected by the most common eye diseases — including age-related macular degeneration (AMD), cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma — “will double.”

You can take steps to protect your eyes are from disease and damage. *Medical News Today* compiled the following 5 tips for healthy eyesight and to help you protect your eyes well into your golden years.

1. Go for regular eye exams

One of the best things you can do to look after your sight is to go for regular eye tests with a trained eye specialist who can detect early signs of problems. Although your vision may appear to be healthy, there is no way to be 100 percent certain unless a trained professional observes your eyes.



Not only does an eye test determine whether you need glasses, but it can also spot eye conditions that can be treated effectively if detected early enough. is recommended from the age of If you are 60 and older or you're at increased risk of certain eye diseases, you should get a type of eye exam known as a comprehensive dilated eye exam. During a comprehensive dilated eye exam, an eye care specialist adds drops into each eye to widen, or dilate, the pupil. Once dilated, more light enters the eye, which enables the eye care professional to view the macula, retina, and optic nerve and identify any signs of damage and disease.

2. Eat vision-healthy foods

It is possible to eat your way to healthy vision. You often hear that eating carrots benefits the eyes, but there are plenty of other foods that are important for good eyesight, too. Eating grapes has been tied to a lower risk of AMD. Consuming a diet rich in fruits and vegetables has been shown to promote eye health. Dark leafy greens, in particular — including collard greens, kale, and spinach — contain lutein and zeaxanthin, which are antioxidants that help to prevent the formation of cataracts. Evidence demonstrates that grapes may also support healthy eyes. In a laboratory model of retinal degeneration, scientists showed that a diet enriched with grapes protected the retina against the damaging effects of oxidative stress. Other research indicated that grapes provide higher levels of antioxidant protection for eyes than lutein alone and may slow or help to prevent AMD.



Studies have found that there are eye health benefits from consuming fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, halibut, mackerel, sardines, and tuna. Omega-3 fatty acids may improve ocular

surface inflammation and symptoms of ocular irritation that are associated with moderate to severe dry eye. They may also help vision cells to survive future disease or injury.

3. Keep your weight under control

Being overweight or obese puts you at a higher risk of developing conditions such as diabetes or other systemic disorders, which may eventually lead to vision loss. It is never too late to get your weight under control by eating a healthful diet and exercising regularly to prevent vision complications. Research conducted by the University of Melbourne in Australia and Leeds Beckett University in the United Kingdom discovered that considerable weight loss could potentially reverse eye damage caused by diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity. Another study recently presented at the 121st Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, held in New Orleans, LA, reported that individuals who are physically active have a 73 percent lower risk of developing glaucoma than more sedentary individuals. This finding highlights the importance of leading an active lifestyle.

4. Wear sunglasses when outside

In addition to being a trendy fashion accessory, the most important role of sunglasses is to protect your eyes from the ultraviolet (UV) rays emitted by the sun. A report by the Vision Council in 2016 revealed that while three quarters of people in the U.S. were concerned about eye issues that may arise from UV rays, only 31 percent protect their

eyes with sunglasses when they go outside. When selecting sunglasses, never opt for style over safety. Look for shades that block 99–100 percent of UVA and UVB radiation and always buy from a reputable source.



Whether you are heading to the beach, surfing some waves, hiking up a mountain, or cheering for your favorite soccer team, be sure to protect your eyes and wear the appropriate sunglasses.

5. Rest your eyes regularly

If you work all day at a computer screen, you may forget to blink often and end up with fatigued eyes by the end of the day. The National Eye



Institute implementing a 20-20-20 rule. For every 20 minutes that you spend staring at a screen, look at something else that is around 20 feet in front of you for 20 seconds to reduce eye strain. Research indicates that half of the world will be short-sighted by 2050 if we continue with the current trend of spending so much time on near-based electronic devices. A study, which was published in the journal *Ophthalmology*, suggests that spending more time outdoors and less time doing activities that require constant up-close focusing could be a strategy that may help to reduce the number of people who experience vision loss.



EVENTS & ACTIVITIES CHAIR...*JOHN SKABRY*

Greetings Comrades,

It was great to see so many Comrades, friends, and family at our 4th of July BBQ. I can't express enough how good it felt to shake off the funk of the last couple of years caused by the global situation. The Events/Activities Committee met and shared our thoughts; the feeling seemed mutual, and we look forwards to our next event.

What will that event be exactly? You tell me. Engage with your Post. Let us know your interests

and ideas. I want to make our meetings more engaging and fun to attend both online and In-person. I am pleased to say that thus far, we have fulfilled every proposal brought to motion. I intend to keep that track record going forward. We stand ready to serve the Post.

Own it!

John Skabry
Events & Activities Chair
American Legion Post THo1

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Joseph Brown

David Bums

Larry Edmonds

John Eschenbaum

Hugh Mason

David Reis

Russell Staples

Bruce Templeman





HISTORIAN...TED POTYRALA

Greeting Comrades,

I am presently in the US visiting the family.

During my stay, I had the opportunity to help put



together the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Traveling Wall. I have visited the wall in Washington DC a couple of times and found it to be an emotional experience.

Battle Creek, Michigan was the only stop in Michigan for the wall so when I see that they were looking for volunteers to assemble the wall, I jumped at the opportunity. There were several positions that needed to be filled. I chose to help assemble it which needed 35 volunteers.



I got to the site at 8:30 AM and found that there were much

more than 35 volunteers. The ages were from high school to retired. It was good to see these young kids had an interest in helping out.

A retired Marine call out for everyone to gather around. Needless to say, he had a commanding voice and everyone listened up. People were assigned to various tasks. Tent set up, carrying the many parts of the wall and setting up the wall. Once the wall frame was up, we started to bring out the panels which contain the names of those that died or are missing. Up to now, we have been there for two hours.

When it came time to carry the panels, we were instructed to carry these with reverence. Name were to be facing outwards if carrying vertically or facing up if carried horizontally. It started with one person carrying the smaller panels and as the panels became larger and heavier, two three or four people would carry them. The larger panels weigh 80 pounds. Installing the panels took around three hours. It was announced if anyone knew a family member or friend whose name is on the wall, to let them know and they would make sure you could carry their panel. I got to carry panel 59W which has the name of my boyhood best friend. After 54 years I still teared up. For none of us not knowing what to do, I was impressed by the way everyone worked together.



The wall is $\frac{3}{4}$ scale to the one in Washington. It stands 7.5 feet at the center and covers almost 375 feet end to end. There are 140 named panels containing over 58,000 names. They are listed by date of casualty. Names can and are still being added.

Ted Potyrala
1st Vice Commander
Historian
Membership Committee Chairman
America Legion Post THo1

THE DESIGNER OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL WALL

The designer of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall was a 21 year old Yale University College student, Maya Yang Lin. Born in Ohio to parents who escaped Mainland China. She beat out over 1,400 competitors.

She had very little connection with the Vietnam War but did see how it effected the country, let alone the men and women that served there. Television

had brought the war into everyone's living room. Americans for the first time were witnessing the horrors of war.

Lin wanted to commemorate the men and women who paid the price, with a modern design. She imagined two black walls that started in the earth and grew in height until they met – like a wound that is closed and healing. She didn't want the memorial to say "They have gone away for awhile" but to say "They never came back". They should be remembered.

Her design was met with controversy. Many members of the public were expecting a more complex design with marble columns and statues like the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorial. Her critics

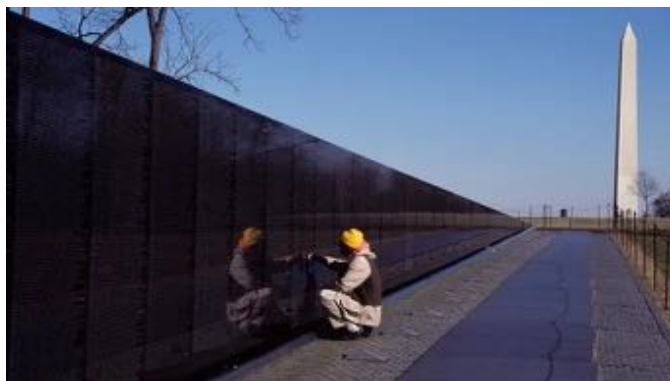
used everything from her age to ethnicity for reasons the wall should be redesigned with a white wall and a statue of soldiers or just abandoned all together. They said it was an ugly insult that portrayed the war as shameful, dishonorable and worth hiding.

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, which was in charge of the final design, brokered a deal in which



the wall would remain as designed but a statue of three soldiers was to be added. The critics may have been loud at the time but because of efforts by Jan C, Scruggs, wounded Vietnam Vet, Bob Hope, Businessmen and 275,000 Americans, \$8.4 million was donated to the memorial. Congress allocated three acres on the National Mall. Funding came from the private sector, not the government.

Lin was hurt by the controversy over her work. It took many years before she could talk publicly about it. She said "It was extremely naïve of me to think that I could produce a neutral statement that would not become politically controversial simply because it chose not to take sides". She wanted the memorial to be apolitical. She wrote "She regretted the way she has become a weapon in the fight against a memorial intended to highlight veterans.



I have been to the wall in Washington twice. My best boyhood friend's name is on that wall along with many other that you know. I found it to be a very moving experience. I stood there and thought about all the names, over 58,000, many very young, that gave their life. If

you have never visited the wall, do so if you get the chance. If you can't and the traveling wall comes near you, go see it. Even better, volunteer to help build it or watch over it. I don't think there could have been a better design.

Credit to History.com

SERVICE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

Greetings Comrades,

The Senate has passed its version of the PACT Act and it now has gone to the House of Representatives as H.R.3967 - Honoring our PACT Act of 2022.

[H.R.3967 - 117th Congress](#)

This legislation is important for veterans that have been exposed to toxins and are suffering their ill effects.

Important provisions of the PACT Act include:

1. It permits the VA to immediately provide presumptive benefits to survivors and those veterans who are terminally ill, homeless, over the age of 85, experiencing extreme financial hardship, or able to show another emergent need.
2. Requires the VA to conduct outreach to any veteran who had previously filed a claim for benefits related to toxic exposure and were denied

to ensure they are aware of the opportunity to refile.

3. Codifies the scientific framework that the VA is already using to provide benefits to toxic exposed veterans, better reflecting current practice and improving transparency.

4. Improves the VA's ability to recruit and retain staff to ensure that the VA has the capacity to expand care and benefits to toxic-exposed veterans without disrupting services or causing longer wait times for care and compensation. Contact your House Representative and urge him or her to pass this legislation promptly. Our veterans have been waiting and suffering way too long for this.

Service Officer
American Legion Post TH01

CLICK FOR POST TH01 WEBSITE

[HTTPS://AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM/](https://americanlegionthailand.com/)