



AMERICAN LEGION

The Oxley Post

4637 Decatur Street
Philadelphia, PA 19136
215-332-2457

www.TheOxleyPost.org



September/October 2020

Commander's Message

By: Bruce Conklin

Greetings. I hope this correspondence finds you and your family well. This situation has been a huge setback for us and it has put the lights out on so many of our country's businesses. I feel that something is kneeling on the neck of our liberty. This whole thing is past Orwellian and we need to be careful not to fall into this trap of political correctness: from the language surrounding this virus, "new normal" to "unprecedented times" to our conformity being tested and manipulated at every turn. My prayer is that this turns around and that people that believe in our form of government, and the freedom that we have, learn and grow stronger from the experience.

Please look out for your fellow Legionnaires and Legion family members. please help where you can. Let us know if you have need of assistance.

I need to mention suicide awareness here as I lost someone recently. No one saw it coming, so you just never know what's happening in someone's mind or what pain or demons they are keeping buried. The Veterans Crisis Line awareness hotline is 1 800 273 8255.

Finance Officer's Message

By: Greg Aschendorf

As I'm sure you are aware, we are still prohibited from opening the canteen due to the Governor's order relating to restaurants and bars. At this point, we don't know when that will be lifted. We're current on most of our bills but we're running on fumes. Unfortunately, we have no reserve. The donations we've received from our members has been a godsend. Our most sincere appreciation and thanks go out to thank the following people for their Donations:

Dan Armstrong, Gerald Beaver, Joe Burke, Richie Carr, Joe Flynn, Mike Grieco, Darius Graziani, Joe Gunkel, Joan Hunt, William McQuinn, Robert Ortiz Jr., Ed Pekala, Will Peters, John Reilly, Ernie Sauls, Michael Snyder, Jack Tomkins, Ronald Ulary, Ed Weiler, Thomas C. Wermuth and Curtis Westlund, and others who gave some form of donation. (List may be incomplete)

We are still gladly accepting donations. In addition to checks, we can now accept credit/debit card donations. Go to our website: www.TheOxleyPost.org and click on "Donate"

Fall Poppy Drive: We're looking for somebody to lead our fall poppy drive. We'll also be needing volunteers. If you're interested or would like more information talk to Bruce or Greg.

Adjutant Report:

By: Jack Tomkins

Membership: A new year has begun for the American Legion and it's time to send in your 2021 dues. Our goal is that we get to 100% by December, so if you haven't paid yet, please take a couple minutes to send in a check for \$30. You can also pay safely and conveniently online with a credit or debit card by going to www.legion.org/membership/renewals. When paying online you can print out a 'temporary' card which is completely valid, but be advised your 'permanent' card from the post may be delayed due to national and state processing times.

As you may recall, last year Congress passed the LEGION Act which acknowledged that the United States has been in a state of war since December 7, 1941. This designation is important to the Legion as a way to honor approximately 1,600 American service members who were killed or wounded in previously undeclared periods of war. It is also significant in that it opens the door for approximately 6 million veterans to join the American Legion and avail themselves to the programs and benefits the Legion offers that they had not been previously eligible.

As an added incentive to sign up new members, our National Commander, James W. "Bill" Oxford will award a special "A Foundation for the Future" membership excellence pin to any Legionnaire who obtains three new members into The American Legion.

A new member is any eligible person joining for the 2021 membership year who was not a member of The American Legion during the 2020 membership year.

Each member listed must be eligible for membership in The American Legion. Only one pin will be awarded per individual. Upon receipt, national membership staff will confirm the names and mail the pin directly to the person who earned it.



For your convenience and to get the most recent information for our records, please fill out and return with your dues. Please call me at 215-280-2033 if you have any questions. **Please mail your 2021 payments to the post in c/o Adjutant Jack Tomkins.** As always, if you have a hardship and are unable to pay, please contact me or any post officer.

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2021 Dues Remittance

Please fill out the information below and make check or money order for \$30 payable to the William D. Oxley Post #133 and mail to the post at 4637 Decatur St, Phila., PA 19136

NAME _____ 2020 Legion Card Number _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE: _____ HOME CELL

CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ EMAIL _____

BRANCH OF SERVICE _____ YEARS OF SERVICE _____

That Other Virus

By: James W. "Bill" Oxford
National Commander

There is a virus in America that could cause more long-term destruction than COVID-19. Just as the novel coronavirus can quickly devastate a healthy body this other virus threatens lives, neighborhoods and infrastructures. No person or place is truly safe. It can embed itself inside a peaceful protest and turn it into a nightmare of violent rioting and retribution. It turns Americans against Americans. This virus is called anarchy.

Perhaps no one should be more concerned about this virus than those who justly fight for civil rights and equality. Their cause has been hijacked. George Floyd and Breonna Taylor receive only occasional mentions on the evening news while footage of statue-toppling, tear gas and batons dominates. One network's description of a live event will usually have the opposite perspective of another network. Division is a symptom of this virus and its cancer has reached a stage unseen since the Civil War. The patient is quickly approaching stage 4.

At our 1962 National Convention, American Legion delegates defined "Americanism" in such an eloquent manner that we still adhere to it. It stated that the essence of Americanism is class, religious and racial tolerance. Written as if it were a vaccine against our current anarchy virus, it further states "law and order are essential to the preservation of Americanism while lawlessness and violence are distinctly un-American."

That's worth repeating. "Lawlessness and violence are distinctly un-American." Peaceful protests against racism are just, admirable and constitutionally protected. It's ok if protests make people feel uncomfortable. A good protest is supposed to do that. But many people feel unsafe. This is what distinguishes protestors from anarchists and rioters.

Whether generated from the extreme left or the extreme right, the cracked skulls and burning buildings don't care. They are damaged, sometimes permanently.

We're Here to Help!

The purpose of the American Legion is to be of service to veterans who are in need. If you find yourself in a position where you are in need of assistance please don't hesitate to reach out. We can help with problems in getting your VA benefits to a ride to the doctor's office. We can also help you get a handicap placard or license plate for your car or getting a "Veteran Designation" on your state issued driver's license or non-driver ID. Contact our Service Officer **Mike Vokes** at 267-968-4124 for assistance.

Instead of fighting this virus like good scientists, public officials are failing us. People are being killed while local, state and federal agencies fight over jurisdiction. Add partisan politics to the growing list of symptoms.

Most police officers are brave and honorable. Some are not and those who abuse their positions should be held accountable. In the fog of a riot, it is sometimes difficult for officers to distinguish between a peaceful protestor and a violent anarchist. Again, police officers who commit crimes should be prosecuted. Same with a brick-throwing anarchist.

Federal agents are charged with enforcing federal law and protecting federal property. State and local law enforcement officers have parallel responsibilities in their respective areas. Mayors, governors and the federal government must work as one when it comes to public safety. Agencies at every level must collaborate. People are dying. The enemy is not each other. It's the violent anarchist. Unity is the cure.

Chaplain's Corner **By: Bob Cummings**

When This is Over

By: Laura Kelly Fanucci

When this is over,
may we never again take for granted
a handshake with a stranger
conversations with neighbors
a crowded theater
Friday night out
the taste of Communion
a routine checkup
the school rush each morning
coffee with a friend
the stadium roaring
each deep breath
a boring Tuesday
life itself.

When this ends,
may we find that we have become
more like the people we wanted to be,
we were called to be,

UPCOMING EVENTS

COVID-19 UPDATE

Per Governor Wolf's order, up to 25 members may currently gather indoors for meetings. Usually, this will not be a problem for our scheduled meetings. Masks and Social Distancing will be enforced. If you wish to attend a meeting but don't feel comfortable coming out to the post, we will be setting up a "Zoom" call in. If you'd like to participate call Bob Cummings at 267-471-9607 for more information.

IMPORTANT DATE CHANGE! Due to the Labor Day Holiday our Family Meeting/Board Meeting/ SAL Meeting have been moved back one week to September 14.

Monday, September 14th 7 PM Oxley Family Meeting. All Regular, Auxiliary and Sons are invited. This is an information sharing and event planning meeting. **8PM:** Sons of the American Legion Meeting. **8PM:** Legion Board Meeting.

TENTATIVE Friday, September 11th 9AM: The Walter A Mason Post #152 will be hosting its 19th Annual Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Engine 28 Firehouse at Belgrade and Ontario Sts. in Port Richmond. If you'd like to go and need a ride, call Bob Cummings at 267-471-9607.

Friday, September 18th US Air Force Birthday

Friday, September 18th POW/MIA Recognition Day

Monday, September 21st 8PM: American Legion Regular Meeting

October 13th US Navy Birthday

Monday, October 5th 7 PM: Oxley Family Meeting. All Regular, Auxiliary and Sons are invited. This is an information sharing and event planning meeting. **8PM:** Sons of the American Legion Meeting. **8PM:** Legion Board Meeting

Monday, October 19th 8PM: American Legion Regular Meeting

Sick Call: Please keep the following members in your prayers: **Paul Palmer, Jake Pielacha.**

Happy Birthday: Happy Birthday to the following Oxley Family Members:

Bill Prella 9/2; Mickey Hunt 9/11; Frank Suplick 9/20; Frank Sperduto 10/8; Bill Castillo 10/20; Donald Devlin 10/22; Thomas Fallon 10/31

Happy Belated Birthday to George Busch 6/18 & Paul Christian 8/19

Post Everlasting: Please keep Jerry Hueber's family in your prayers. Jerry passed away in March – his service will be conducted September 12.

Congrats

Mike Kennedy & Teresa Lange

On their Engagement!

NEWS FROM THE S.A.L



The Sons of the American Legion meets on the **first Monday** of the month at 8PM (after the Family Meeting). Please make an effort to attend. **IMPORTANT NOTE, Our September meeting will be held on the 14th due to Labor Day.** Our dues of \$25 (unchanged from last year) are now due. You can drop them off at the post, or mail them in. Please clearly mark on the envelope Attn: Bill Wasylenko, SAL Adjutant.

Due to the Covid-19, the Department of Veterans Affairs has suspended debt collections to the end of 2020.

If you owe VA money due to a benefit debt, call **1-800-827-0648** to suspend your repayment terms. If it's a healthcare debt, call **1-866-400-1238**.

PLEASE GIVE BLOOD



Due to the Covid-19, the need for blood has never been greater. Please make a commitment to donate an hour to donate the gift of life! There is a convenient blood donation center at Rhawn and Dungan Streets that is open 7 days a week or go to www.redcross.org/give-blood.html or call 1-800-RED-CROSS to schedule an appointment. After you've donated, please call Bill Castillo at 267-974-8808 to let us know you've made the donation.

POST OFFICERS

Due to the pandemic, and following the National Board's lead, The Department of Pennsylvania passed Resolution 1119, stating that all Officers elected in 2020 will continue to serve through 2021. Our Post Officers are:

Commander: Bruce Conklin

Sr. Vice Commander: Butch Williams

Adjutant: Jack Tomkins

Sergeant at Arms: Jim Flynn

Service Officer: Mike Vokes

Jr. Vice Commander: Bill Castillo

Finance Officer: Greg Aschendorf

Judge Advocate: Jake Pielacha

Chaplain: Bob Cummings

Board of Directors

Joe Arrison

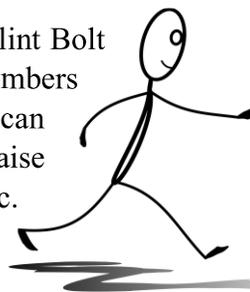
George Bush

Brian Conklin

Ed Conlon

100 Miles for Hope

Our National Commander, James W "Bill" Oxford, along with SAL National Commander Clint Bolt and National Auxiliary President Nicole Clapp have issued a challenge to all Legion Family members to walk, run, bike or motorcycle 100 miles between now and Veterans Day to benefit the American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation. The "100 Miles for Hope" Campaign will help raise money for the V&CF Fund while encouraging members to stay active during the pandemic. Originally announced to begin on August 3, the challenge would have represented 100 miles in 100 days. By the time you are reading this, we're somewhat behind and it would take a little over 1.5 miles/day to meet the challenge. The cost to register for the event is \$30 which includes a tee shirt and a certificate of completion. For more information go to www.legion.org/100miles.



US Space Force

On December 20, 2019, with the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act, the United States established the sixth branch the Armed Forces – the US Space Force (USSF). Space Force is now the newest armed service since the creation of the Air Force in 1947.



The Space Force was established within the Department of the Air Force and operates under the leadership of the Secretary of the Air Force. General John W. “Jay” Raymond was selected as the first Chief of Space Operations and serves as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Military members of the Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) have now been reassigned to the USSF but temporarily remain in the Air Force while the Space Force formalizes its infrastructure over the next year. Eventually, the Department of Defense expects to consolidate space missions from across the Armed Forces into the USSF.

Please mark your calendar: On the Space Force’s first birthday (December 20) the Post will hang the Space Force flag in our canteen. Details to follow.

POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY – SEPTEMBER 18, 2020

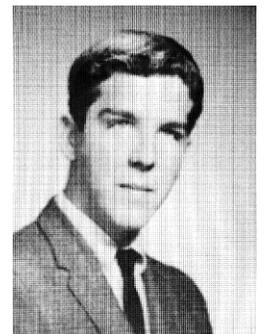
On the third Friday of September, we pause to remember the U.S. servicemembers who never came home, either living or dead. We honor our that were either prisoners of war or still missing in action.

POW/MIA Recognition Day is one of six in which Congress has mandated the flying of the POW/MIA Flag; the others days are Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day and Veterans Day.

According to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, (as of August 7, 2020) approximately 82,000 Americans who fought in those wars are still missing, including: approximately 72,583 from World War II, 7,579 from the Korean War, 1,586 from Vietnam, 126 from the Cold War and 6 from conflicts since 1991.

The DPAA said about 75 percent of those missing Americans are somewhere in the Asia-Pacific. More than 41,000 have been presumed lost at sea. Efforts to find those men, identify them and bring them home are constant. For example, so far this year, the DPAA has identified the remains of 92 servicemen.

Staff Sergeant Madison Alexander Strohlein MISSING IN ACTION, June 22, 1971 Quang Nam Province, Vietnam



Madison “Skip” Strohlein, a 1966 graduate of Cheltenham High School and student at Temple University, entered the U.S. Army and served with U.S. Army Republic of Vietnam (USARV TAG) Task Force Advisory Element TF-1AE (formerly MACV-SOG). At 3AM on a dark and stormy June 22, 1971, he and three other U.S. soldiers performed a HALO (high altitude, low opening) parachute jump from 19,000 feet behind enemy lines into Quang Nam province (approx. 40 miles NW of Kham Duc and 5 miles east of the Laotian border) to conduct a reconnaissance mission. The men became separated during their jump and were unable to link up on the ground. Sergeant Strohlein was injured during the jump and stuck in a tree. He radioed to request a medical evacuation, but radio contact with him was lost before rescuers could reach him. When contact was lost, enemy forces were moving near his position. When a search team managed to reach the area the next day, they found SGT Strohlein's weapon and signs of a firefight, but could not locate him. He remains unaccounted for and it is believed he was taken prisoner by the Vietnamese. Following the incident, Strohlein was promoted to Staff Sergeant. According to the DOD POW/MIA Accounting Agency, his case is listed as “Active Pursuit”, which means there is ‘sufficient information to justify research, investigation or recovery operations in the field...(and) are the priority for operational planning and allocation of resources.’ Strohlein was declared presumed dead on October 24, 1974. His name appears on the Wall on Panel 3W, line 86.