



AMERICAN LEGION

The Oxley Post

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



March/April 2019

Happy 100th Birthday to the American Legion!



March 15, 1919 is the when the first American Legion caucus, held by members of the American Expeditionary Force, convened in Paris to establish a new veterans association which would become known as the American Legion.

Commander's Message

By: Bruce Conklin

We're almost finished with winter and I'm very happy that we did not have any serious shoveling to do! Really looking forward to a great spring. We had a very successful Night at the Races last month and I'd like to thank everyone who came out to support the post and especially **Tom and Krista Cheeseman** who really put a lot of work into making it a success! I would like to thank **Jack McAndrew** for doing some much needed masonry work to the exterior of our post! **Greg Aschendorf** continues to do an outstanding job as House Chairman and Finance Officer. Please help him in any way you can. Thank you to all who have helped out on the work days. I appreciate the support that **Jack Tomkins** and **Bob Cummings** are providing on a regular basis. **Mike O'Leary** is doing a great job on the Friday darts and renewing interest of darts players to come to our post for events. Also I want to thank **Bob and Kay Brooks** for their efforts with darts. I would like to thank our newsletter sponsors for their support! And finally, thanks to everyone who comes out and supports our post activities. Memorial Day is coming, we will have a bus to the Bridesburg parade and the ceremonies at the cemeteries and our post. I am hoping that as many will participate here as possible. More information on that in the May edition.

Adjutant Report:

By: Jack Tomkins

Membership: All members, please check your membership card to make sure it says 2019. **If it's 2018, you are PAST DUE!** Effective February 1st your canteen privileges are suspended until you get current. **Please mail payments in c/o Post Adjutant Jack Tomkins.** You can also renew your membership conveniently and safely online with a credit/debit card. To pay online visit www.legion.org/membership/renewals . If you have a hardship and are unable to pay, please contact a post officer. Headquarters now requires all members to provide their **Phone Number, Gender, Date of Birth, Email and Branch of Service** when renewing their memberships. So, if paying your dues by mail, please include this information along with your check.

Please give a warm Oxley
Family Welcome to the
following new members

David Lauck
Bill Clark

Labor Local Wants to Know if you Need a Lift?



Local 5 of the International Union of Elevator Constructors has instituted a charitable endeavor on behalf of veterans called “A LIFT FOR A VET”. The program’s mission is to buy and install elevators, home lifts, stair lifts or wheelchair lifts in the residence of disabled U.S. military service veterans from any era. Many of our older vets have lost independence in their daily routine because they find it difficult to navigate stairs. A LIFT FOR A VET can help those veterans continue to lead independent lives with the installation of a stair lift. The purchase, installation and maintenance of the system A LIFT FOR A VET is *free of charge to the Veteran*. A LIFT FOR A VET relies solely on donations to fund their efforts. For more information call our Service Officer, Mike Vokes at 267-968-4124.

We’re Here to Help!

The Oxley Post family is continuing an initiative begun last year that matches up our members who are in need of assistance with those who might be able to help. Some possible examples would include rides to the doctor, snow shoveling etc. (although we will try to accommodate any request). Do you need help getting a handicap placard or license plate? Do you want 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.

Friday Night “Flights”

Every Friday we host Friday Night “luck of the draw” dart tournaments. All skill levels are welcome and you’ll have a partner that is selected at random. We play “501 single-on/double off”. Registration begins at 7:30 - darts at 8-ish.



Collecting Soda (and Beer) Pull Tabs

We are collecting aluminum can tabs for Children’s Hospital. Please drop off at the Post.

VA to open clinic in the Northeast

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is in the process of setting up a community healthcare clinic in Northeast Philadelphia.

By **Jack Tomczuk**, *Northeast Times*, January 25, 2019

Veterans who live in Northeast Philadelphia may soon have a healthcare option closer to home. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has begun the process of establishing its first location in the Northeast. A spokesman for the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center told the *Northeast Times* that officials in Washington recently approved the new clinic.

“We’re excited,” Philadelphia VA spokesman Jonathan Hodges said. “It’s a long time coming from what I’m told.”

Officials have not yet decided on a location for the community-based outpatient clinic, Hodges said. He said the center will be a primary care facility that also provides specialty care referrals to the main hospital in University City. Currently, the VA’s closest community clinic is in Horsham. The agency also operates the “Northeast Philadelphia Vet Center,” which, oddly enough, is in Olney. Another Vet Center is located in Bristol.

“We have always recognized the need for a VA location in the Northeast especially as we work to ensure we can give veterans care not only when they want it but where they want it,” Hodges said in an email. Hodges said he expects the VA will narrow down a list of potential locations for the new clinic in the spring or early summer. The Philadelphia office is also considering partnering with the University of Pennsylvania on the project, he said.

Source: Tomczuk, Jack. “VA to Open Clinic in the Northeast.” www.northeasttimes.com, Newspaper Media Group, 25 Jan. 2019, northeasttimes.com/2019/01/25/va-to-open-clinic-in-the-northeast/.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, Mar. 10, 2AM: Daylight Saving Time Begins – Move Your Clocks ahead 1 hour and change the batteries in your smoke detectors.

Monday, Mar. 11, 8 PM: S.A.L. Meeting

Thursday, Mar 14, 7:30: Legion Family Meeting followed by AL Board and General Meeting

Friday, Mar 15: The American Legion celebrates 100 years of service!

Saturday, Mar. 16, 10 AM: Work Day at the Post. There are always things to do. *Please* come out and give a hand for an hour. No special skills necessary. For more information, contact **Greg Aschendorf** at 215-970-8035.

Sunday, Mar. 17, St. Patrick's Day

March Madness: Mar. 19 – 31. NCAA Final Four: Apr. 6, Championship Apr 8

Saturday, Mar 23, 8 PM. Country Music Night at the Oxley Post with DJ Jen. No Cover. More details below

Tuesday, Mar. 26. Legion Birthday Dinner, Fran Lee Caterer \$30 RSVP by 3/15

Monday, Apr 8, S.A.L. General Meeting

Wednesday, Apr. 10, 7PM 5th District Joint Meeting with S.A.L. and Auxiliary

Thursday, Apr. 11, 7:30 Legion Family Meeting followed by AL Board and General Meeting

Friday, Apr 19 Passover

Saturday, Apr 20, 10 AM: Work Day at the Club. Please come give a hand!

Sunday, Apr. 21 Easter

Saturday, May 4, Oxley Post hosts the area's largest-ever Veteran Service Day in the area. See Below for Details

Our most sincere Thanks go out
to our new advertisers:

Walter J. Meyers Funeral Home, PC
Maureen's Flowers
Bill Castillo

Please make an effort to support all our advertisers and let them know you heard about them through the Oxley Post!

Sick Call: Please keep the following members in your prayers: **Paul Palmer**. If you know of someone who should be included on the sick list, please contact Jack Tomkins at 215-280-2033.

Post Everlasting: Sadly, we must announce the passing of Pete Pytrysson on January 22. Commander Bruce Conklin led an honor guard delegation to St. Bernard's Church.

Happy Birthday: Please join us in wishing a Happy Birthday to the following Oxley Family Members.

Charles Cherrick 3/5; Jack Tomkins 3/8; Ronald Ciuffetelli 4/10; Elaine Renzi 4/30

(If your birthday isn't listed, its probably because you haven't filled out a member information form. Stop by the Post and pick one up or give us a call and we'll mail it to you.)

Happy 43rd Anniversary to **Butch and Noreen Williams!** Wow!



Country Music Night at the Oxley Post

Come on out to the Post on Saturday, March 23 from 8 till midnight when D.J. Jen will be rockin' the room with Country Music! No cover. Just come out and have fun. There are rumors going around that Bruce Conklin will be leading us in the "Cotton Eye Joe"! Can't miss that!



1918 poster promoting the newly enacted National Daylight Saving Time. (Produced by the United Cigar Stores Company, at the time America's largest cigar store chain with over 3,000 stores nationwide.)

Wall of Faces – Spread the Word

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) has undertaken a project to gather pictures of everyone whose name is memorialized on the wall in an effort to preserve their legacy for generations to come. You can see the collection at <http://www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces/> The PA Department of Veterans Affairs (DMVA) is trying to help get photos of everyone who died from Pennsylvania. The following 11 men are the last casualties from Pennsylvania that have yet to be honored. If you served with any of these heroes or know them from the neighborhood and have a photo let us know and we'll help put you in touch with the VVMF. You can also help by spreading the word to your friends, family and coworkers. Let's help honor these men and make sure they are not forgotten to history!

Name	Birth Date	Hometown	Branch of Service	Casualty Date	Rank
WILLIAM G COREY	6/13/1944	WILLIAMSPORT	ARMY	1-Sep-63	PFC
JOHN K HARGRAVE	4/28/1947	GLENSIDE	ARMY	1-Apr-67	PFC
JIMMIE L MCMORRIS	9/12/1944	NORRISTOWN	ARMY	15-Nov-67	PFC
VESTIE T DRIGGERS	9/26/1944	PHILADELPHIA	ARMY	29-Nov-68	SP4
WILLIE DURANT	2/20/1949	PHILADELPHIA	ARMY	17-Jan-68	PFC
MATTHEW N HARRIS JR	4/1/1931	PHILADELPHIA	AIR FORCE	28-May-65	MSGT
EUGENE J MARTIN	6/13/1925	PHILADELPHIA	NAVY	12-Dec-65	BM3
TERRY S SMALL	7/2/1949	PHILADELPHIA	MARINE CORPS	4-Sep-69	PFC
JOSEPH J STOJINSKI JR	3/1/1944	PHILADELPHIA	ARMY	20-Oct-70	SP5
WILLIE J WASHINGTON JR	7/8/1949	PHILADELPHIA	MARINE CORPS	18-Nov-68	PFC
KERRY L WILLIAMS	7/2/1947	PHILADELPHIA	MARINE CORPS	5-Mar-66	PFC

In each edition we'll select two heroes and relay what we know about them from a *Philadelphia Daily News* Supplement titled "Six Hundred and Thirty One" October 26, 1987. See Page 6.

March is Red Cross Month

**BE A HERO...
IT'S IN YOUR
BLOOD!**

In 1943 President Franklin D. Roosevelt designated the month of March as "Red Cross Month". Every president since then has followed his lead. Red Cross Month is a celebration of supporters, who are the face of the Red Cross in their communities and bring hope to people facing emergencies.

A blood donation is one of the greatest gifts that a person can give. It is a selfless act that can save up to three lives! This year, instead of a having a traditional blood drive at our post, **we are asking all our Oxley Family members to make an appointment and donate at a date and time convenient to them.** We have set up a "Sleeves Up" campaign page in coordination with the Red Cross to help track donations.

Here's what we're asking:

- Make a pledge: On [Google](#) type: *Sleeves Up Red Cross*. When you get to the page click on *Pledge Your Support* then scroll down to the Oxley Post Page and pledge to make a donation. Or,
- Call 1-800-RED-CROSS to make an appointment.
- After you've donated, please call Bill Castillo at 267-974-8808 to let us know you've made the donation.
- Send an email or text to your friends and family and ask that they pledge to donate.

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 to schedule an appointment

We've set a very achievable goal of 25 pints for 2019. Please help save a life – or three!

We're also looking for all members who have donated a *lifetime total* of more than 1 gallon (8 pints) of blood. If you have, please let Bob Cummings know (267-471-9607). If you're not sure, contact the Red Cross

**Thank you to our
January & February
donors!**

**Wes Schlueter
Butch Williams
Bob Cummings**



Sons of the American Legion Host Superbowl Party at Delaware Valley Veterans Home

By Wes Schlueter, S.A.L

For the twelfth year in a row, the 5th District Sons of the American Legion hosted our annual Super Bowl Party at the Delaware Valley Veterans Home. In attendance were approximately 40 residents and some of their family members. The Lincoln High School JROTC presented the colors for the National Anthem. Legion family members did the cooking and along with the JROTC personally served each resident. Each resident received a USA ball cap. There was plenty of conversations and gratitude for their service. A great time was had by all! Thanks to all the volunteers that made this possible.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Inaugural Oxley Post Veteran Service Day

On Saturday, May 4 from 10 AM – 3 PM, we'll be hosting the first ever Veteran Service Fair at the Post. Our objective is to have elected officials and experts available from various veteran service organizations to provide free assistance and information to anyone who has served in any branch of our armed services. We'll have trained service officers that will provide information about veterans' benefits, VA home loans, DD214 recovery, service-connected disability claims and all entitlements a veteran and his or her spouse are entitled to. In addition, we're inviting representatives to talk about educational and job-training opportunities and benefits as well as health screenings. More information will be forthcoming in the May edition.

Remembering Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Iraq War: March 2003

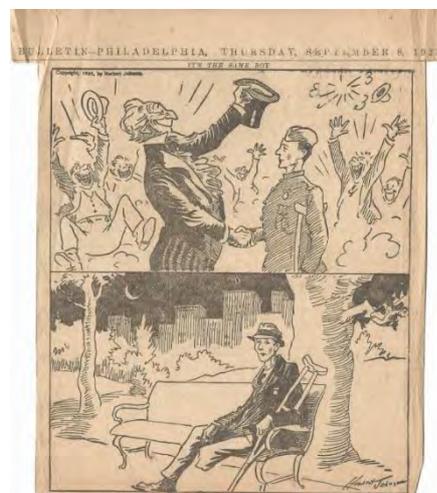
In the aftermath of 9/11, President George W. Bush claimed that Iraqi government led by Saddam Hussein was providing material support to Al-Qaeda and was continuing its production of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in violation of numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions. As such, the administration made the disarmament of Iraq a top foreign policy initiative. In November 2002, the UN passed a resolution requiring Iraq to readmit arms inspectors and to comply fully with all previous UN resolutions. By 2003, the US and their British allies along with 22 other allied nations were convinced that the Iraqis were still thwarting the arms inspectors. Despite French and German insistence to allow more time for sanctions and diplomacy to work, President Bush gave Hussein 48 hours for him and his sons to leave Iraq.

When that deadline passed, on March 20, 2003, Bush ordered an attack on Iraq with the intention of ousting Saddam Hussein regime. The invasion was code named "Operation Iraqi Freedom." US forces faced relatively light resistance in the south predominantly from paramilitary and irregular fighters. By April 4th, US troops took control of the Baghdad airport and by April 9th, the same day British forces took Al Basra, US

soldiers took control of Baghdad. From the north, US Special Forces, along with Kurdish 'peshmerga' allies seized Kirkuk on April 10th and Mosul on April 11th. Saddam's hometown of Tikrit fell on April 13th. On May 1st, President Bush declared an end to major combat operations.

Restoring law and order to the country became a much harder mission to accomplish than ousting the Ba'ath Party regime. A large-scale insurgency engulfed the country – mostly along sectarian lines bringing the country to the brink of civil war.

While the first phase of combat posted 150 US fatalities, the death toll rose to 1,000 by November 2004 and over 3,000 by early 2007. In January 2007, President Bush announced a controversial plan to add 20,000 troops to the fight in what became known as "the surge." Although US Forces took heavy casualties, the plan worked and resistance ebbed. In February 2009, newly-elected President Barak Obama announced combat forces would be withdrawn by August 2010 and the remaining troops would pull out by the end of 2011. According to the Department of Defense, there were a total of 4,424 soldiers killed and 31,952 were wounded in action.



This cartoon titled "It's the same Boy" by Herbert Johnson was published in the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* on September 8, 1921. As American Legion members it's our job to prevent this from happening!

Chaplain's Corner

By: Bob Cummings

During this time of turmoil, I think it's worthwhile to reflect on the words of President Ronald Reagan as he focused his weekly radio address on the observance of the Easter and Passover holidays in April 1983. The following is excerpted from that address.

"This week, as American families draw together in worship, we join with millions upon millions of others around the world also celebrating the traditions of their faiths. During these days, at least, regardless of nationality, religion, or race, we are united by faith in God, and the barriers between us seem less significant."

"Observing the rites of Passover and Easter, we're linked in time to the ancient origins of our values and to the unborn generations who will still celebrate them long after we're gone. As Paul explained in his Epistle to the Ephesians, 'He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. So then you were no longer strangers and aliens, but you were fellow citizens of God's household.'"

"This is a time of hope and peace, when our spirits are filled and lifted. It's a time when we give thanks for our blessings - chief among them, freedom, peace, and the promise of eternal life."

"This week Jewish families and friends have been celebrating Passover, a tradition rich in symbolism and meaning. Its observance reminds all of us that the struggle for freedom and the battle against oppression waged by Jews since ancient times is one shared by people everywhere. And Christians have been commemorating the last momentous days leading to the crucifixion of Jesus 1,950 years ago." "Tomorrow, as morning spreads around the planet, we'll celebrate the triumph of life over death, the Resurrection of Jesus. Both observances tell of sacrifice and pain but also of hope and triumph."

...

"In this Easter season when so many of our young men and women in the Armed Forces are stationed so very far from their homes, I can't resist recounting at least one example of their sacrifice and heroism. Every day I receive reports that would make you very proud, and today I'd like to share just one with you."

"While the San Diego-based U.S.S. Hoel was steaming toward Melbourne, Australia, on Ash Wednesday, its crew heard of terrible brush fires sweeping two Australian States. More than 70 people were killed and the destruction was great. Well, the crew of this American ship raised \$4,000 from their pockets to help, but they felt that it wasn't enough. So, leaving only a skeleton crew aboard, the 100 American sailors gave up a day's shore leave, rolled up their sleeves, and set to work rebuilding a ruined community on the opposite end of the Earth. Just Americans being Americans, but something for all of us to be proud of."

"Stories like these -- of men and women around the world who love God and freedom -- bear a message of world hope and brotherhood like the rites of Passover and Easter that we celebrate this weekend."

President Ronald Reagan
Easter & Passover Message
April 2, 1983

Source: Reagan, Ronald. Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum "Radio Address to the Nation on the Observance of Easter and Passover" (as edited) April 2, 1983 <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/research/speeches/40283a>

Wall of Faces (Continued from Page 4)

Vestie T. Driggers: Driggers played trumpet in a professional band for several years before entering the Army in November 1967. The specialist 4, a light weapons infantryman, was assigned to Company B of the 2nd Battalion 502nd Infantry, 101st Airborne Division. He died in Vietnam on November 29, 1968 at age 24.

Willie Durant: North Wilton St., West Phila., Durant left West Philly High in January 1967 for a career in the Army. The 18 year old PFC, an assistant machine gunner with Company A of the 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division, died in Vietnam on Jan 17, 1968. He was survived by his parents, five sisters and three brothers.