



Savoy American Legion Post
1492

Volume 2, Issue 5

May 1, 2011

Editor: Don Wiggins

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The Post News is published for the members and friends of American Legion Post 1492, Savoy, Illinois.

Copies are mailed at the beginning of each month. For those who prefer to receive their copy by email (saving us printing and mailing costs), just send an email to: dhwiggins@comcast.net.

You can also view the newsletter on-line by going to the post's website (legionpost1492.org) and clicking on the tab marked *Newsletter*.



"It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced."

President Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg, November 19, 1863

The POST NEWS

Volunteer Drivers Needed

Tom Cagle, Champaign Coordinator for the VA transport van, is seeking volunteer drivers. The service is provided to area veterans who need a ride from the Champaign/Urbana area to the VA facility in Danville. The van normally runs on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, departing VFW Post 5520 in Champaign at 7:15 AM and returning around 1:15 PM.

They currently run only on Friday because they have only one driver.

Volunteers (men or women) do not have to be veterans, however they must:

- Have a valid drivers license;
- Have proof of insurance;
- Pass a background check;
- Pass a physical at the VA.



If you can help, contact:
Tom Cagle
lsdjtc@frontier.com
217-377-1513

April Meeting Summary

The April meeting of American Legion Post 1492 was held on Thursday, April 14th, at the Old Orchard Lanes in Savoy.

Because only a few members attended, and since our usual meeting room hadn't been reserved for us, we decided to just make it an informal time of comradeship and discussion.

Several topics were discussed, including the upcoming election, which will be held during our May meeting. Proposed candidates are being contacted by Commander Ron Karr and others, though all members will be free to nominate someone at the May meet-

ing.

Harvey Hodges updated the group on the Post's finances and we discussed creating a building fund for the eventual procurement of a permanent home for the Post.

Harvey and Tom Watson discussed their attendance (along with Bo D. Henry) at the Eagle Scout recognition dinner.

Kent Kraus and Don Wiggins discussed the ROTC Awards Day presentations.

Don presented information about the American Legion Extension Institute, a four-volume correspondence course that is designed to provide to all Legionnaires a complete course on the his-

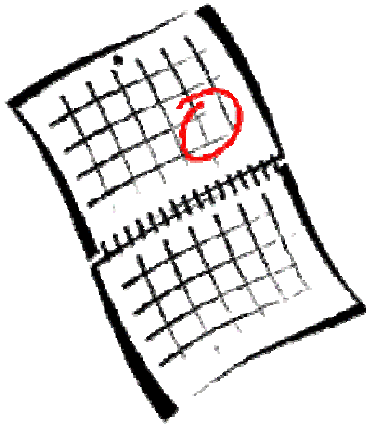
torical background of The American Legion, its programs, policies, development, progress and future goals.

Successfully completing the course earns the member a certificate signed by the National Commander and a mortarboard cap patch.

The course is available for just \$6.95 from either the Flag & Emblem website or their catalog.

Darrell Gerald discussed the status of the upcoming Poppy Day distribution. More details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

All members are encouraged to attend the May meeting for election of officers.



2011 Calendar of Events

May 2: Final Renewal Notices Mailed
 May 8: Mother's Day
 May 12: Post Meeting @ 6:30 PM
 May 21: Armed Forces Day
 May 27/28: Poppy distribution
 May 28: Post social gathering at the Smiths' home immediately following poppy distributions (approximately 12:30 PM). More details forthcoming.

May 30: Memorial Day
 Jun 12: Post Meeting @ 6:30 PM
 Jun 14: Flag Day
 Jun 19: Father's Day
 Jul 4: Independence Day
 Jul 14: Post Meeting @ 6:30 PM
 Aug 11: Post Meeting @ 6:30 PM
 Sep 5: Labor Day

Sep 8: Post Meeting @ 6:30 PM
 Oct 10: Labor Day
 Oct 13: Post Meeting @ 6:30 PM
 Oct 31: Halloween
 Nov 10: Post Meeting @ 6:30 PM
 Nov 11: Veterans Day
 Nov 24: Thanksgiving
 Dec 5: Post Meeting @ 6:30 PM
 Dec 25: Christmas

Women Veterans Memorial Groundbreaking



Two Thomson Organization leaders, Luanne Bruckner, state Regent for the Illinois Daughter of the American Revolution and Department of Illinois American Legion Commander Richard Groharing along with several city, county and state dignitaries, including U.S. Congressman John Shimkus, State Senator John Jones and State Representative Cavalitos took part in the historic groundbreaking for the women's veterans memorial at Mt. Vernon. The mayor of Mt. Vernon, Mary Jane Chelsey, told the crowd that the placing

of this monument in Mt. Vernon was a treasure for the community and the city was happy to assist in its erection. Commander Groharing reminded the crowd that although there has been a draft for men, never have women been drafted. "Women were always the volunteer soldier," "And this tribute is long overdue." "Finally we acknowledge the material support of the American Legion through the special project of its Commander Groharing who will provide funds for the pedestal on which the

statue will proudly stand," said Luanne Bruckner. Funds for the construction of the memorial have been raised through the State Regent's Project of the Illinois DAR and the base is being provided by the American Legion. The statue honors all women veterans from the Revolutionary War to today's soldiers. Donations for Commander Groharing's special project are still needed. Donations should be mailed to American Legion Department of IL 2720 E. Lincoln St. Bloomington, IL 61704.

Poppy Day Volunteers Still Needed!



Please don't forget our annual poppy distribution campaign. We need as many volunteers as possible. This is an easy and fun way for you to help raise cash for veterans causes.

This year's Savoy distribution points will be at the entrances to Schnucks and Walmart. We hope to have a table in Tolono again this year as well. Dates are May 27th and 28th, 8:00 AM to

1:00 PM or 4:00 PM to 9:00 PM, depending on location. If you can help for an hour or two, please call project coordinator Darrel Gerald at 217-377-7772 today!



...that each year legionnaires from all of our State Departments meet in Washington D.C. for a conference? For three days they are furnished with a wealth of information from various areas of the Department of Veterans Affairs as well as other government agencies. This year we heard from VA Secretary Shinseki, our National Commander and many more. In addition, for the three days prior to this conference your accredited service officers from all over the country held their semi-annual refresher training. Here they learned what was new at the VA and how to better process and represent veterans with their claims. I had the opportunity to attend both events and here are some of the highlights:

1. The VA National Call Center (1-800-827-1000) handled 27 million calls last fiscal year.
2. On the average there are 32,000 suicides a year and each day 18 veterans take their life. A large segment of these are from middle aged male vets nearing retirement.
3. Under the various Agent Orange disabilities over 13 Billion has been paid so far. If you served in Vietnam and currently have diabetes, coronary artery disease or

one of many cancers, please contact our office immediately to file a claim.

4. Between the time a veteran files a notice-of-disagreement (appeal) and the decision is made by the Board of Veterans Appeals it is now taking 590 days. So much for reducing the backload.
5. The Purple Heart may soon be awarded to those servicemen and women who were injured by an Improved Explosive Device. Senior military leaders at the Pentagon are considering individual service proposals to change the guidelines for awarding the medal to troops who sustain mild traumatic brain injuries or concussions.
6. Vet Centers will soon be able to treat and counsel active duty personnel. The regulations are now being prepared.
7. There is serious consideration going on in Congress to increase the TriCare premiums and have them go up each year based on future inflation.
8. Our National Commander, Jimmie Foster, was once a service officer like myself and he will spend 244 out of his 365 days as Commander, on the road travelling.
9. Women will soon be allowed to serve on subma-

rines. Seventy percent of Army career fields are now open to women and Army physical training tests will soon be gender neutral. There are all female Marine engagement teams in Afghanistan.

10. By just showing your VA hospital ID card most Home Depots and Lowes will give you a discount up to 10%.

11. There were 111,000 burials in VA cemeteries last year and 46% were cremated remains. On their website you can find where many veterans are buried, even if it's in a private cemetery. I looked up my father and sure enough, his private cemetery is listed.

12. The Post 9/11 G.I. Bill will now cover flight, trade, OJT and online degrees.

These are only some of the highlights. You can find out more and view videos at www.legion.org. As always if you should have any questions about the above information please feel free to contact me at the phone number or e-mail address shown above.

Raymond P. Toczek
Legion Service Officer
312-980-4264
Raymond.Toczek@va.gov

Did You Know?

Haven't Renewed Your Membership Yet?

If you haven't gotten around to renewing your membership yet, please do so right away. Your membership is important not only to our

local post but also to the state and national organizations. Each year, our membership numbers are reported to Congress, which

directly affects our influence with regard to legislation. Please show your support for all veterans by renewing today!



**Savoy American Legion Post
1492**

P.O. Box 471
Savoy, Illinois 61874
<http://legionpost1492.org>
E-mail admin@legionpost1492.org



Savoy American Legion Post 1492 meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM, unless otherwise posted. Meetings are presently being held at the Old Orchard Lanes, 901 North Dunlap Avenue in Savoy. To get to our meeting room, enter the lounge near the front cash register and proceed to the glassed-in room to your right. Meetings generally last no more than an hour, leaving plenty of time to meet and greet fellow veterans. We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting!

We thank these fine businesses for their support of our post.

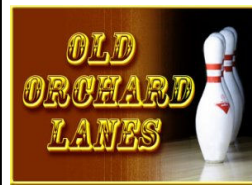


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We are very grateful to the management of Old Orchard Lanes, 901 North Dunlap Avenue in Savoy for allowing us to hold our monthly meetings at their facility.

In addition to bowling lanes, they have a pro shop, an excellent snack bar and a relaxing lounge where you can watch your favorite teams on their big screen plasma televisions.

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Savoy Post 1492 Spring for Cash Raffle

Last month we distributed tickets for the *Spring for Cash Raffle*. If you decide to participate in this raffle, tickets are \$5.00 apiece or all five for \$20.00. Prizes are as follows:

- First Prize: \$500.00
- Second Prize: \$250.00
- Third Prize: \$50.00

At this point, there have been insufficient tickets sold to cover the cost of this raffle, so if you have not yet turned in your tickets, please do so right away. On the positive side, this means that the odds of winning are increased. If you need additional tickets, call Tom Watson at 351-7684.

Drawing will be held at the conclusion of our Post's meeting at Old Orchard Lanes in Savoy on May 12, 2011. You need not be present to win.

All purchased tickets may be brought to the May meeting. They may also be mailed to: American Legion Post 1492, P.O. Box 471, Savoy, IL 61874, but be sure they're mailed in plenty of time for the raffle.

**RECRUIT A MEMBER...
GET A PIN!**



Most of us know at least one eligible veteran who is not a member of The American Legion. Why not invite that person to join our organization? You'll not only expand our membership, but your friend will become a part of the nation's largest veterans organization.

To receive a 2011 Membership Recruiter pin, you just have to recruit one new member. A "new" member is one who has not been a member of The American Legion for at least two years.

To receive your pin, just have your friend fill out one of the forms to your right.

Mail the form, along with the \$25.00 annual membership fee for each new member to:

Kent Kraus
Savoy Post 1492
P.O. Box 471
Savoy, IL 61874

The American Legion Membership Application

(Name) _____ (Phone) _____

(Mailing Address) _____ (Date) _____

(City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip) _____ (Post #) _____

(E-Mail) _____ (Dues) _____

Please check appropriate eligibility dates and branch of service below

<input type="checkbox"/> Aug 2, 1990 - cessation of hostilities as determined by U.S. Government	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Army
<input type="checkbox"/> Dec 20, 1989 - Jan 31, 1990	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Navy
<input type="checkbox"/> Aug 24, 1982 - July 31, 1984	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Air Force
<input type="checkbox"/> Feb 28, 1961 - May 7, 1975	<input type="checkbox"/> U. S. Marines
<input type="checkbox"/> June 25, 1950 - Jan 31, 1955	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Coast Guard
<input type="checkbox"/> Dec 7, 1941 - Dec 31, 1946	<input type="checkbox"/> Merchant Marines 12/7/41 - 8/15/45 (only eligibility)
<input type="checkbox"/> April 6, 1917 - Nov 11, 1918	

I certify that I served at least one day of active military duty during the dates marked above and was honorably discharged or am still serving honorably.

(Signature of applicant) _____ (Name of recruiter) _____

Receipt of Dues
(Please Print)

From _____ for 20 _____ Post # _____

Recruiter's Name _____

Recruiter's Signature _____

Recruiter's Phone # _____

The American Legion Membership Application

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(E-Mail) _____ (Dues) _____

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