

# THE AMERICAN LEGION AT UBON RATCHATHANI, THAILAND



BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBIN OLDS

POST NUMBER TH01

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

Post Location: Peppers Restaurant and Bakery



July 2024

POST EMAIL: [COMMANDER@AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM](mailto:COMMANDER@AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM)

VOL. 7, ISSUE 07

## Inside this issue:

- Post Commander
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, Membership Awards 2024
- Adjutants Corner
- Agent Orange and the PACT-Act
- Meet with US ambassador to Thailand
- Ubun Membership drive
- Fireworks Safety
- History:
- WWII D-Day Normandy Remembrance

## 2024 POST TH01 OFFICERS

Commander – Rob Davis

<mailto:Commander@americanlegionthailand.com>

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander & Historian – Ted Potyrala

<mailto:1vice@americanlegionthailand.com>

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander – John Skabry

<mailto:2vice@americanlegionthailand.com>

Adjutant & Finance Officer – Jeff Ludwig

<mailto:adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com>

Service Officer – Larry Haynie

<mailto:larryjoedog@yahoo.com>

Sergeant-At-Arms – Sal Salzarulo

<mailto:salzy48@hotmail.com>

Judge Advocate – Paul Ben-Yehuda

<mailto:renegademarine@icloud.com>

Chaplain – Vacant

Public Affairs Officer & IT Dir.– Chris Lampert

<mailto:comms@americanlegionthailand.com>

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Member-at-Large – Wayne Wright

<mailto:waywright@outlook.com>

Member-at-Large – Ernest(William) Knowlton

<mailto:ewilliamknowlton65@gmail.com>

Member-at-Large – Douglas Palzer

<mailto:dpalzer@rojana.org>

## Calendar for July

4 July Independence Day



25 July National Hire a Veteran Day

28 July World War I

## **Post Commander Rob Davis**

A word from the Commander..

July 4th, 1776, the signing of the Declaration of Independence, set a lot of things in motion that would change the look of America. By signing the Declaration our forefathers put a price on their head and England was ready to take whatever action they could against them. The American Revolution had already begun but became more intense with the signing of the Declaration. The Revolutionary War went on for 8 years with the Continental Army being led by General George Washington.

I would say that most all of us know all this, but hey it's a great story. This is the event that started our country and the various branches of the Armed Forces that we have all served in at one time. July 4th was always a good time while I served. I would always do something with my fellow Airman on this day, which normally meant a BBQ, alcohol, and of course fireworks. It seems like military people LOVE to blow things up.

We didn't have a post 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration this year. I dropped the ball on this and did not properly plan for it. Your Activities Committee is already working on events for September and November. But this is July, so enjoy our Countries history. Whatever you are doing this year, don't do it alone. Spend some time with friends and/or family. Enjoy some good food, whether it's hot dogs or Pad Krapow. Send us some good pics, and have a Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July!



## Membership Chair

By Ted Potyrala

It's that time again to begin the membership drive for 2025. Seems like only yesterday we finished 2024. The membership drive is not only for signing up new members but also getting current members to renew.

So why does the membership drive start so early? Our department sets membership goals such as 100% renewals by a certain date, Over 100% renewals by a certain date and how many new members sign up. For year 2024, we did very well receiving the following Awards:

- A monetary award for reaching 100% of the Department goal
- A National Honor Ribbon award for reaching 100% by December 31 (our 3<sup>rd</sup>)
- A 100% pin for the Commander and Adjutant
- A silver pin for the Membership Chair

We closed out 2024 with 91 members. Not bad at all considering where we are located.

The membership committee for 2025 currently consists of:

- Ted Potyrala, Chairman <mailto:1vice@americanlegionthailand.com>
- Jeff Ludwig <mailto:adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com>
- Larry Edmonds (US) <mailto:ldedmonds@aol.com>
- Ernest Knowlton <mailto:ewilliamknowlton65@gmail.com>
- Mike Cook <mailto:mcook4464@gmail.com>
- Wayne Wright <mailto:waywright@outlook.com>

We are always looking for volunteers for the committee. In reality, we are all recruiters. The membership committee comes up with a program that gets us to where we want to be. Anyone with suggestions should contact one of the committee members or join the committee. It's a very simple process to sign up a new member. Get their name and contact information and pass it on to the committee or to the Adjutant. The Adjutant really does all the work of vetting them, sending them information about the post, and processing them into Post.

You will get credit if they join. American Legion National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer will award his national commander "Be the One" dog tag coin to any Legionnaire who obtains two new members into The American Legion.



For current members, I ask you to renew as soon as you can. Starting in August we will be contacting you reminding you to renew. The easiest way to renew is online at [mylegion.org/renew](http://mylegion.org/renew). A credit card is all you need. Just be sure the mailing address matches your card. If it doesn't you can change the address to the mailing address card. This will not affect the address that's on record. If you really want to put an end to being asked to renew, you can do a Paid Up for Life (PUFL) although depending on your age, that can be expensive. Everyone will receive an email with instructions on how to pay to our financial institution.

Members are our life blood. Without you we do not exist.



## **Adjutants Corner**

by Jeff Ludwig

Two hundred and thirty seven years ago a group of visionaries penned the Constitution starting the great experiment where individual rights and freedoms trump government rights.

We as veterans took an oath to defend the Constitution and our way of life from threats both foreign and domestic.

July 4, Independence Day is a good time to reaffirm our commitment to the United States of America, The American Legion, The Department of France, and Brig Gen Robin Olds Post TH01-- our Post. You can do this by taking an active role in helping our Post fulfill the obligations listed in the 4 Pillars of the American Legion. In case you have forgotten, the 4 pillars are:

- I. Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
- II. National Security
- III. Americanism
- IV. Children & Youth

Each of these pillars encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our nation's veterans, its service members, their families, the youth of America, and ordinary citizens. These programs make a difference in hundreds of thousands of lives each year. The programs, and the people who take the time to perform them, allow The American Legion and our Post TH01 to make a difference. I urge you to take an active part in your Post. You can make a difference.

### **Reminder:**

As part of The American Legion "**Be the One**" mission to end veteran suicide, they have joined forces with Columbia University to develop training for those who want to learn more about interacting and responding with veterans who may be in crisis. You can "Be the One" by taking the training.



### **UPCOMING ONLINE SESSIONS**

**July 11, 2024, July 18, 2024, July 25, 2024, 2:30 pm - 4:00 pm Eastern**

**[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)**



**POST SERVICE OFFICER...LARRY HAYNIE**

---

Sawadee Fellow Veterans;

I have written before about the PACT ACT and the "Presumptive Conditions" that many fellow veterans are now experiencing. However, all veterans need to be aware that their current medical problems, may be a result of their exposure to Agent Orange in both Vietnam and Thailand.

The Veterans Administration (VA) informs veterans that Agent Orange (AO) defoliant use was discontinued in both Vietnam and Thailand in the early 70's. However, the VA does not inform veterans that the very toxic chemical "Dioxin" in Agent Orange, can remain at 50% active for about 9 to 15 years, even after defoliation operations stopped.

Many Vietnam or Thailand veterans who now experience medical problems, may have current or chronic illnesses that could be attributed to their Agent Orange exposure many, many years ago, while serving in Southeast Asia. Medical conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, various types of cancer, and other medical issues, may be a result of Agent Orange exposure and not just because a veteran's health is declining due to old age or lifestyle.

As Post Service Officer, I can provide advice or assistance in helping veterans achieve the highest disability rating possible, especially if you believe you have a service-connected medical issue, or you have a medical condition you believe could be a PACT ACT Presumptive Condition.

Larry Haynie

Post Service Officer

TH01-Ubon, Thailand

## Events:

### Meet with US Ambassador to Thailand the Honorable Robert F. Godec .

On Thursday, June 27 we had the pleasure of meeting with Ambassador Godec. He came over with his American Citizens Services Outreach team to meet American Citizens in the Ubon, Isan area. Ambassador Godec first talked about the state of relations with Thailand and American citizens living in Thailand. He talked about the American Embassy in Bangkok and its various roles and programs. He stated that the Embassy in Thailand is the largest US Embassy in the world. He went on to list some of the programs that are operated out of the Embassy including areas of education, business, and health research studies.



After his presentation he opened the floor to questions for him. One of the first topics to come up was the taxation of foreign income. Thai Taxation Treaty would require negotiations from both parties. He pledged to do his best to look at the interest of Americans. Ambassador Godec thanked Embassy volunteers John Skabry and Wayne Wright for the great work they are doing in the ISAN area supporting the Embassy.



We pledged the support of our American Legion Post TH01 in helping not only veterans in the Isan area but any Americans in need. We urged the Ambassador and his staff look towards us for assistance when an American is need of assistance and it is outside the boundary of the Embassy and the State Department. We pledge to do our best to help fellow veterans and American citizens here in Thailand.



## Membership Drive:

In conjunction with the Embassy Outreach we held a membership drive. We set up a booth in the outer room where we handout literature and applications. We asked visitor to spread the



word that we have an American Legion Post in Ubon and that we welcome veterans to join our Post. The only requirement is that they had to of served at least one day of federal active duty in the United States Armed Forces since

December 7, 1941, and have been honorably discharged or are still serving.



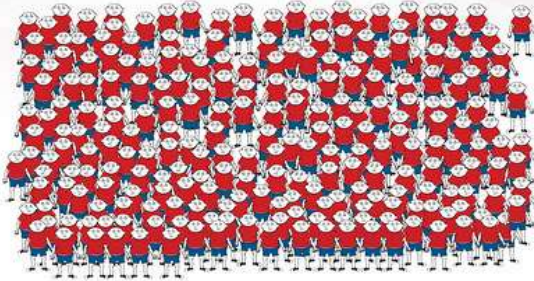


## Safety Message: July

By Jeff Ludwig

# Fireworks Injuries

**230** people on average go to the emergency room every day with fireworks-related injuries in the month around the July 4th holiday.

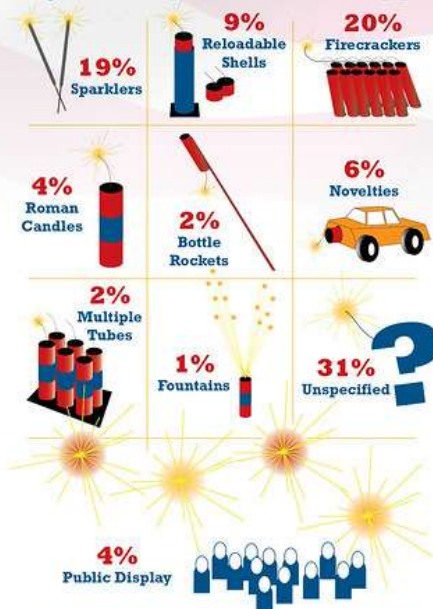


## Fireworks Safety Tips

- ★ Never allow **children** to play with or ignite fireworks.
- ★ **Never** try to **re-light** or **pick up** fireworks that have not ignited fully.
- ★ Keep a **bucket of water** or a **garden hose** handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- ★ Make sure fireworks are **legal** in your area before buying or using them.
- ★ Light fireworks **one at a time**, then **move back** quickly.
- ★ More Fireworks Safety Tips – [www.cpsc.gov/fireworks](http://www.cpsc.gov/fireworks)

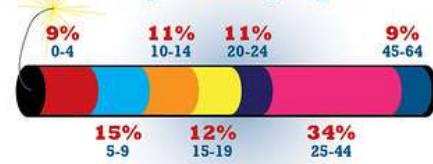
Source: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 2013 Fireworks Annual Report

## Injuries by Fireworks Type\*



\*These percents do not account for how many products are used.

## Injuries by Age



NSN 14-8

[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author



## History

by Ted Potyrala

Today I was watching the 80th. Anniversary of the Normandy Invasion. I wish I would have seen it before I wrote my history article for June's newsletter.



It was a humbling experience to watch. The ceremony was held at Omaha beach in Normandy. There were speeches given by President Biden, French President Macron, King Charles, England Prime Minister Sunak and many more. Someone spoke before President Biden, but I didn't get his name, gave a speech about how when America goes to war, when it's over we go home. We don't stay and take the country over. He also mentioned how America and its allies stood up to Hitler. Everyone knew what the casualties could be but they did their job knowing the chances were they would be killed. 73,000 US members participated in the invasion. 2,501 paid with their life. Over 5,000 were wounded. Today there is less than 1% remaining alive; 131 die each day.

There were 150 US Veterans in attendance. 24 were veterans of the landing. The oldest being 102. I watched as President Macron gave the Legion of Honor to 11 US Veterans each one individually



followed by President

Biden having a short discussion with each of them and giving a presidential coin. Many were in wheelchairs but when it came for them to receive their medal many struggled to stand and did their best to stand straight at attention. After 80 years they still struggled to talk about what they experienced. President Biden recognized 6 of the veterans and told what they did at Normandy. They were the "Greatest Generation" and if you were able to have a discussion with one who would open up about his experience, you were lucky. Walter Stitt

who fought in tanks and will turn 100 in July said, "There are things worth fighting for, although I wish there was another way to do it than to try to kill each other." Well said.

At the closing, there was a 21-gun salute along with 21 canons each firing a round. Sonnerie aux morts and Taps were played. A missing man fly-bye was flown by F-35s.

Sadly, next year there will be less veterans. As time passes by, we tend to forget the different battles Americans fought. You don't see much about the Revolutionary War, The Civil War, Spanish American War and many more. WWII eliminated Hitler who was the cause of so many deaths and destruction. Let us hope this is taught in our schools for a long, long time. They aren't called the "Greatest Generation" for nothing. They went and did their job and came home and most never talked about what they did.

## *Chaplain's Prayer*

*God bless America, land that I love  
Stand beside her and guide her  
Through the night with the light from  
above*

*From the mountains to the prairies  
To the oceans white with foam  
God bless America, my home sweet home*

*God bless America, land that I love  
Stand beside her and guide her  
Through the night with the light from above*

*From the mountains to the prairies  
To the oceans white with foam  
God bless America, my home sweet home*

*From the mountains to the prairies  
To the oceans white with foam  
God bless America, my home sweet home  
God bless America, my home sweet home*



## July Birthdays:

- Bob Beckner
- Hal Cohen
- Mike Cook
- Phil Jones
- Bobby Kane
- Dan Kelly
- Joe McCormick
- Byron Petrides
- Bobby Rositer
- Steve Wolf



---

**[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 (AS OF 15/03/24)**

**\$1.00 USD to 36.57 THB**

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