



Manuel Schneidmiller Post 154, Inc. Rathdrum Idaho Newsletter

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all my Legion Family, I hope this note finds you and your family well and looking forward to the holidays. I know I am. Each year at this time, we must always keep in our hearts a prayer for every soldier and sailor that is not able to be with their families. As you know, it is very difficult to be away but at the same time very rewarding to serve this wonderful country of ours. Also, please say to everyone you know "Thank You" and "I Love You" because each year that passes could bring changes that would not enable you to say these words to your loved ones and friends.

I hope to see all of you at the annual Post Christmas Party at the Lions Club on December 9th. The party will start just after 6 p.m. It is Pot Luck and it will be a great time.

I want to say thank you to all the Christmas Party Committee for all of their hard work. You have done an excellent job.

God Bless you and our Country. Have a great December, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! - Commander Dee Sasse



Adjutant:

Your membership is very important Post 154. Dues are \$40 per year and of that \$7.50 remains with our Post and the balance goes to the Idaho Department and National to fund their operations and to continue advocating for veterans and veteran's benefits at the state and national level. Early membership renewal for 2017 has been underway since July 1st. Dues cover the calendar year from January 1 through December 31 of each year. We appreciate your membership, thank you.

Be sure to check out your membership discounts and benefits here:

<https://www.legion.org/benefits> also sign up for FREE Accident Insurance at

Sign up for Accidental Death Protection at <https://www.thelit.com/no-cost-legioncare>

- Bryan Bledsoe, Adjutant

The American Legion supports Trump on flag issue, calls for constitutional protection.

(WASHINGTON) November 29, 2016 American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt praises President-elect Donald Trump for his support of the American flag. In a tweet, Mr. Trump said, "Nobody should be allowed to burn the American flag - if they do, there must be consequences - perhaps loss of citizenship or year in jail!"

As the leader of the nation's largest veterans service organization, Schmidt said, "Our brothers and sisters in arms have shed blood, even paid the ultimate sacrifice, in defense of our nation. The American flag represents their sacrifice and our nation's way of freedom. No one should tolerate desecration of the American flag."

The American Legion strongly advocates for a constitutional ban on flag burning, and calls on the new commander in chief to support such a ban with the following wording, "Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States."

There is strong support for such a law. Every U.S. state has passed memorializing resolutions to ratify a constitutional amendment prohibiting flag desecration. Additionally, the House of Representatives has passed an amendment six times by supermajorities, only to see it fall short in the Senate – by just one vote the last time it reached the floor.

"It's time to protect Old Glory from being burned or otherwise desecrated by protesters," Schmidt said. "We are not against civil protest or demonstrations. However, these protesters are not burning a piece of cloth. They are desecrating the sacrifice and honor of all past, present and future service members and their family members, who have given so much to this great nation."

The American Legion is the largest wartime veterans service organization with 2.2 million members in more than 13,000 posts in communities across America. The Legion, established by an act of Congress in 1919, was instrumental in getting the original GI Bill through Congress and the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs. *Press release from the American Legion on November 29th* – Submitted by Bryan Bledsoe, Adjutant



2nd Vice-Commander:

As we approach the end of our second full year of operation as a Post, I want to ask you to reflect on our accomplishments and the great work that our members have done to achieve those accomplishments. A successful Post is like the old three-legged stool that our grandfathers had in the barn to use when milking a cow. Some of you may remember this. That stool was much more stable than a normal four-legged stool, and could easily accommodate an unstable surface, because the legs were angled slightly outward and set in a perfect triangle.

A successful American Legion Post is like that stool. The three characteristics of a successful Post are (1) Good visibility within the Community; (2) Interesting Programs for its members and (3) Strong leadership which insures that the Post accomplishes its mission, follows its bylaws and promotes the principles of the American Legion. The "seat" of the stool is Communication. Good communication insures that the members are aware of Post programs and achievements and urged to participate in those programs. Good communication insures that the good work that the Post is doing in the Community is communicated to the media and to Community officials. Finally, Good Communication assist the Post in growing its membership. I urge each of you to reflect on our achievements over the past year, and to consider how we can improve the three legs and the seat of our Post's three-legged stool. - Len Crosby, 2nd Vice Commander



Finance Officer:

November and December are always challenging months for the Finance Officer because we need to review our past year's operating budget and put together a new operating budget for the Post. We need to set up and prepare for a review of our Post's books by the Audit Committee. And we need to insure all our Post's financial records are updated so we can be prepared for filing our tax return.

So, if your generally grumpy Finance Officer seems more grumpy than normal, you will know why!

Thank you to the members who volunteered for the Budget and Audit Committees. I appreciate your oversight and your advice. Also, thank you to each member who took the time to respond to my request for budget projections for 2017, and who made suggestions on ways to fund those expenses. We need not only great ideas but GREATLY IMPROVED PARTICIPATION by our general membership in our fundraising activities. Our officers put a lot of time and energy into coming up with good ideas on how to fund our Post's operations, but if our membership fails to provide the man and woman power to take full advantage of those fundraising activities, we are failing ourselves. - Len Crosby, Finance Officer



Legislative Chairman:

We are on the cusp of new leadership in Washington. Although little will be accomplished between now and year end (the "Lame Duck" session filled with Congressional holidays), we need to look carefully at who President-elect Trump recommends for key positions in his administration. Of special importance is the head of the Veterans Administration and the Departments of State and Defense. We also need to watch carefully who the new President appoints to the position of Secretary of the Treasury and who he appoints to fill vacancies in the Federal Reserve. These positions are important because they impact monetary policy, interest rates and our personal income tax rates. We now have (for the first time in many years) one political party in charge of the Administrative and Legislative branches of our Federal Government. Our hope is that they can develop and pass good legislation which improves our Country and stabilizes our finances.

Also, please remember that our State Legislature starts its 2017 Legislative Session in January. Keep your hand on your wallet and lock up your daughters!

- Len Crosby, Legislative Officer



Chaplain's Pew:



SING WE JOYOUS ALL TOGETHER
'So we will not "spend" Christmas
nor "observe" Christmas.
We will "keep" Christmas--
keep it as it is...
In all the liveliness
of its ancient traditions.'
Peter Marshall

As citizens of the United States of America, we have the right to believe or not believe in Christ and Christmas. While I personally believe that Christ is the true reason for our Christmas holiday celebrations, you are truly free to choose what you will believe.

Hold fast and keep true to your traditions and beliefs, whatever they are... and do not let political correctness or other outside pressures change a single thing for you.

For me, I will say aloud the words MERRY CHRISTMAS to all I meet...and, 'MAY GOD BLESS US.' Your Chaplain sitting in the pews,
- Paula Atwood, Chaplain



For Your Health:

How Do Drug Companies Spit in the Face of Capitalism?

Have drug companies circumvented capitalism? Prices for some supposedly competing products have gone up in tandem in recent years. What's going on?

The free market system is supposed to encourage competition. One of the key tenets of capitalism is that prices of products are determined primarily by a competitive marketplace. If company A sells a mousetrap for \$5 and company B can make a similar mousetrap that works equally well for less and sell it for \$4, then company B would, in theory, capture the market for mousetraps. That's the way it's supposed to work. The theory seems to break down when it comes to the pharmaceutical industry.

The Insulin Investigation: Price Collusion?

Two Congressmen have asked the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission to look into why insulin prices from different companies have been rising in lockstep. For example, in 2001 the insulin Novolog had a list price of \$39.75. So did its competitor Humalog. In 2002, on January 16th, both drugs went up to \$41.74. In July they rose to \$45.08. In December prices for both brands went to \$49.14. Some people might wonder how these prices could have risen in tandem down to the penny for so long. If the free market were working as intended, there should have been price competition between these competitors. Even after more than a decade, in November 2015, prices were still extremely close. Novalog's price rose to \$236.70 while Humalog's price went to \$237.00. Theoretically, these companies are in competition but the parallel pricing has Senator Bernie Sanders and Representative Elijah Cummings concerned about possible collusion.

Shadow Pricing?

Bloomberg News (May 6, 2015) reported on something called "shadow pricing." Here is a report that describes a practice that should not exist under true capitalism:

(cont. below)

“On May 30 last year, the price for a vial of the blockbuster diabetes medication Lantus went up by 16.1 percent. On the next day, Lantus’s direct competitor, Levemir, also registered a price increase — of 16.1 percent.

“The pattern repeated itself six months later when Lantus, from French drugmaker Sanofi, was marked up 11.9 percent, and Levemir, made by Novo Nordisk A/S, matched again exactly.

“In 13 instances since 2009, prices of Lantus and Levemir — which dominate the global market for long-acting injectable insulin with \$11 billion in combined sales — have gone up in tandem in the U.S., according to SSR Health, a market researcher in Montclair, New Jersey.”

What Has Happened to Competition?

We were all taught that under capitalism rivals are supposed to challenge each other on quality, innovation and price. That’s why the makers of computers, smart phones and other electronic equipment are constantly trying to edge out the competition. When it comes to buying a car, people arm wrestle the salesman to get the best deal possible. Consumers are constantly searching for gas stations that charge a little less for a gallon of gas.

The pharmaceutical industry may not be colluding on prices, but they do not seem to be competing either. Prices of brand name insulin products have gone up dramatically in recent years to the point where many people with diabetes have had a hard time paying for their life-saving vials. By the way, the patent on insulin expired over 70 years ago and yet there is virtually no generic competition for some of the most popular insulin products on the market.

Through the Looking Glass:

The pharma industry has responded to charges of price collusion by stating that list prices do not reflect actual cost to payers. Companies insist that they set their prices independently of the competition. They get away with that argument because there is a totally opaque pricing system that involves rebates and reimbursements, which are almost never disclosed. This is an Alice-in-Wonderland world where it is virtually impossible to figure out what anyone pays for anything.

If you find this more than a little aggravating, you are likely to want to read our recently revised [Guide to Saving Money on Medicine](#). This 20-page downloadable PDF booklet will demonstrate how prices for brand name drugs have skyrocketed over the last few decades. You will learn about systemic problems with generic drugs and how to use such medications wisely. You will also discover some secrets about buying medicines from Canada. Here is a [link to this downloadable guide](#).

Reprinted from The People’s Pharmacy - Joe Graedon November 10, 2016



Mark Your Calendar:

December 7th - Pearl Harbor Day

December 9th – Post 154 Christmas Party and *short* Executive/Membership Meeting – see details page 7

December 15th – End of Operation Iraqi Freedom (2011)

December 17th - National Wreaths Across America Day - See details in “Bits & Pieces” below

December 20th – Panama/Operation Just Cause

December 25th – Christmas & Hanukkah

December 28th – CANCELLED Post 154 Monthly Membership Meeting

December 31st – New Year’s Eve



Bits & Pieces

1. **National Wreaths Across America Day** – December 17th – 9AM sharp at Pinegrove Cemetery, 6693 ID-53, Rathdrum. Program about 30 minutes followed by laying of wreaths on veterans' graves. For more information on the Wreaths Across America, go here: <http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/>
2. **Christmas Trees!!**
Once again Cedar Mountain Farm in Athol is offering FREE Christmas Trees to our local military families. Those interested need to contact Al or Dorothy Kyle at 208.638.0572 or txt at 208.661.9063 to make arrangements.
** If you have your own saw they ask that you please bring it with you!



Veterans' Recognition Event:

The Veterans Recognition event was designed to honor all veterans in Kootenai County, in particular, the oldest and youngest and the WWII veterans. Despite foul weather and a late start, the event was a big success.

The oldest recognized veteran in the county was Earl Hyde, Jr. age 98 who served as an Army Lieutenant in the 45th infantry division in Europe. The youngest veteran was Eric Kennard, age 22 who served on the submarine USS Columbus in the Western and Southern Pacific. These veterans were introduced and received a basket of gifts.

Rathdrum Mayor Vic Holmes proclaimed the month of November, 2016, Veterans' Recognition Month. Each WWII veteran in attendance was awarded a Medal of Sacrifice for their bravery and their willingness to fight for our way of life. Several also received Quilts of Valor, awarded by Jerene Kindley, the QOV Coordinator for North Idaho.

These presentations were an emotional part of the program for the recipients as well as the audience. Members of the 143 & 154 Honor Guard are continuing to present Medals of Sacrifice to WWII veterans who were unable to attend or weren't found in time. If you know of a Kootenai County WWII veteran who hasn't received a medal, we have a few more to award. Email the name and contact information to rathdrum154@gmail.com.

The festivities continued with door prizes being drawn and all but a small handful of veterans walked out with something contributed by local businesses and individuals.

The afternoon concluded with cake and ice cream.

Huge thanks go out to our Post 154 members, NW Guardian Riders, and the City of Rathdrum, who sponsored the event. In addition, special thanks go to the Honor Guards of Posts 143 & 154 & Rathdrum Police, Lakeland Senior High principal Trent Derrick, Rathdrum Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts, and members of the Patriot Guard and the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association for their part in making this event so successful.

Editor's Note: John & Sue Fevold sent me the following story about one of the medal recipients.

Yesterday John and I stopped at Super 1 in Hayden. As we were leaving, John struck up a conversation with a 71-year-old Navy vet whose 92-year-old father was one of the WW II vets honored at the Recognition Ceremony. His eyes teared as he told us that his father died last Monday, [one week after the recognition event] and that he had his father's medal proudly hanging in his office.





American Legion Post 154 Christmas Party

You and your family are cordially invited to attend the Second Annual Manuel Schneidmiller American Legion Post 154 Pot Luck Christmas Party to be held Friday December 9, 2016 from 6:00 – 8:00 PM at the Rathdrum Lions Club, 16114 N. Meyer Road. Last year, many post members and their families participated in this gala, please join us again this year to celebrate the holidays and socialize with friends. If you know a veteran who is not already a member of the American Legion, please invite them to attend.

A Toys for Tots bin will be available for donations of unwrapped toys.

The Post will provide coffee, tea, water, plates, napkins and eating utensils. Please bring your favorite holiday dish to share. Suggestions might include: hot dishes, desserts, vegetables, salads, and potatoes.

Please RSVP by December 5th and direct questions to John or Sue Fevold at 208-916-5148, 208-916-5149 or email: schoolmarm66@hotmail.com