



Manuel Schneidmiller Post 154, Inc.

Rathdrum Idaho

Newsletter

Volume 6 Issue #

Month 2020

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Post 154 Mission Statement

The American Legion Post 154 is a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness to support Veterans and the Community at large. We are committed to mentoring and sponsorship of youth programs, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting a strong national security, and continued devotion to our fellow service members, veterans, and their families in our communities. Our success depends entirely on active membership, participation and volunteerism. This organization belongs to the people it serves and the community in which it thrives.

Commander:

Anyone who has been a member of The American Legion for some time, or has recruited someone to join, can quickly list a few good reasons to become part of the nation's largest organization of wartime veterans – and to renew. When someone asks you why you belong to the Legion you can say:

The reasons may be national in scope, such as:

- ☑ Strengthens the veteran voice in Washington for a more effective VA health-care system.
- ☑ Keeps the GI Bill updated and relevant for new generations.
- ☑ Provides substantial veteran oversight of congressional committees and agencies.

The reasons may be specific to an American Legion department, such as:

- ☑ Adds to the network of like-minded Legion Family members in my state.
- ☑ Ensures support, resources and training for American Legion department service officers who assist others who served.
- ☑ Builds future leaders through American Legion Boys State and other youth programs.

They may, of course, be local, such as:

- ☑ Young people in my community need Legion mentoring through Scouts, fostering good will by supporting the largest Easter Egg hunt in our county, teaching Halloween safety during the Rathdrum Trunk and Treat, and other programs.
- ☑ Community memorials to those who served before must never be forgotten.
- ☑ Supporting the community's veterans with an annual Veteran's Recognition Day during Veteran's Day

And, they may be individual, such as:

- ☑ Camaraderie with fellow veterans and patriotic Americans.
- ☑ The Legion helps me understand my VA benefits.
- ☑ The discount programs are valuable.

The Flag Retirement Ceremony was great. Thank you to all that worked hard putting it together.

As we enter the 2021 membership year it is my honor to be serving as your commander. We accomplished our goal of over 100% again in 2020, I know we can do it again in 2021. We not only need to retain current members and gain new ones; we need to get more of our members actively involved in our activities. Let's get those renewals in as soon as you can so we can focus on new goals for our post.

Once again thanks for making our Post the best in Idaho!

God bless our country, our families and our men and women serving. – Dee Sasse, Commander



1st Vice-Commander:

MEMBERSHIP CONTINUOUS YEARS AWARDS

During the July meeting, we will honor our qualified members, for their continuous years, with a patch and certificate. Those with 5, 10, 15, 20, etc. will be recognized. Please try to get to a meeting soon, so we can get the awards to you. We will also have them available for future meetings and the summer picnic on Saturday, August 22nd.

The cost of mailing is prohibitive, we will not mail any certificates at this time.

Thank you all. - Bill Kinder, 1st Vice Commander, Membership Chairman

Finance Officer:

During the month of June, we received a \$500 donation from a member (THANK YOU!) and \$50 from donations to our Flag Box and our Flag retirement. We also received \$52 from the sale of two flags by Bill and Helen Kinder.

Members who attended our June member meeting donated a total of \$55 to our Boys and Girls State programs and the Veterans Home. THANK YOU. Our expenses were minimal, with only \$40.42 for operations and engraving. We received a very large flag order from the City of Rathdrum and advanced \$1,011.77 to purchase the flags from American Legion Flag and Emblem. We provided the City with excellent quality flags and reduced their costs below the competitive bid. We expect to net about \$200 over our costs from this transaction. You can see some of the flags purchased flying over the railroad overpass in Rathdrum. Looks wonderful! Great job by Bryan, Helen and Bill Kinder on securing this great relationship and this sale of flags to the City.

We had one CD with Idaho Central Credit Union. To give you an idea of the impact of falling interest rates – prior to maturity, this CD was earning about 2.50%. The one-year renewal interest rate was 0.55%. Great time to be a borrower!! – Len Crosby, Finance Officer



Legislative Chairman:

VA Begins to Reopen Selected Medical Centers: On May 18, VA reopened 20 medical centers as part of a three-phase timeline. The Spokane VA medical center was not one of those opened, but the Boise VA medical was opened. Boise VA currently has 14 cases of COVID – 19 with one active.

The speed of the phases will depend upon the VA medical center’s ability to minimize and control exposure to COVID-19. Even though these VA medical centers are not fully open, certain non-emergency in-person appointments and some elective procedures may be permitted. Physical distancing, mandatory face masks, screening processes, and other rigorous safety measures remain in place for now. Telework, telemedicine, phone consults, and wellness checks will continue whenever possible. VA continues to strongly suggest that a veteran contact their local VA medical center before arriving at a facility.

Legislation Introduced to Preserve 48-Hour Claims Review: Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) has introduced Am. Legion - supported S. 3761, the [Veterans Claim Transparency Act](#). This important legislation would reinstate VA’s former policy of permitting VSOs to review claims decisions within the 48-hours preceding promulgation to ensure all claims were properly evaluated and are error-free prior to a veteran receiving notification of a ratings decision. The 48-hour review period is an essential feature of the VA claims process, and functions as an independent quality review check on claims decisions before final ratings are sent to veterans.

GAO Report Finds Women More Likely to Leave the Military Than Men: The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report, on retention of female service members. The report was in response to congressional concern over recruitment and retention of female service members. The report found that women were 28% more likely to separate from the military than men, and that female enlisted promotion rates are lower than their male counterparts. GAO found that there are six main reasons women leave the military: work schedules, organizational culture, family planning, dependent care, deployments, and sexual assault. The authors of the report noted that it was not just sexual assault, but the way the military handled the assault that contributed to some women leaving service. The report found that while the services have female recruitment and retention listed as priorities, they have failed to develop plans that include goals, performance measures, and timeframes to guide their efforts. DOD concurred with the

Legislation Introduced to Expand Survivors' Benefits: Rep. TJ Cox (D-CA) introduced H.R. 6933, the [Caring for Survivors Act of 2020](#). This important legislation would increase Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payments to surviving spouses of Veterans to an amount equal to 55 percent of the permanent and total disability monthly compensation rate paid to the Veteran when they were alive, and would make survivors eligible for DIC after a veteran has consistently held a permanent and total disability rating for five years. This idea was suggested by a report produced jointly by the American Legion, VFW, Disabled American Veterans, and Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Memorial Services Have Resumed at VA National Cemeteries: All but two VA national cemeteries have resumed memorial services. Burials and visitations continued during the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the memorial services with military honors had been paused for over two months. These services have resumed with a set of measures in place to ensure the safety of all who attend, including limiting the number of individuals at the ceremonies, requiring face masks, practicing physical distancing, and asking sick individuals to stay home. Families who were unable to have these ceremonies since the start of the pandemic will have a VA representative reach out to them to reschedule.

TRICARE Dental Program Increasing Annual Maximum: United Concordia, the TRICARE Dental Program contractor, announced it will be raising every enrollee's annual maximum an additional \$300. For the contract year that runs from May 1, 2020, to April 30, 2021, the annual maximum will be \$1,800. The change is automatic. Enrollees do not need to take any action for this to apply.

- Len Crosby, Legislative Chairman



Service Officer:

Board of Veterans' Appeals Response to COVID-19

The Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board) is making changes to keep Veterans safe from exposure to COVID-19 while continuing its mission of providing hearings and deciding appeals.

1. We ask Veterans to work with their representatives to elect a virtual hearing or to reschedule hearings. Veterans who prefer to wait for travel board, video or central office hearings to resume will receive top priority in hearing rescheduling.

The Board temporarily suspended all in-person (travel board, video and Central Office) hearings. Virtual hearings remain available. The Board continues to assess the situation in partnership with Veterans Service Organizations and representatives and will resume in-person hearings as soon as possible.

[Click here](#) for information on virtual hearings.

2. The Board will consider Advance on Docket (AOD) motions on appeals for Veterans impacted by COVID-19; [Click here](#) to find out how to file for AOD and what documentation is required.
3. During this National emergency, the Board will now accept typed signatures on AMA Notices of Disagreement (NOD) [VA Form 10182](#), in lieu of a wet signature.
4. VA's current regulations provide flexibility for VA to extend filing deadlines for good cause on a case by case basis. The Board understands that each Veteran/appellant has unique circumstances and the current situation may create challenges for many in meeting some deadlines, therefore the Board will consider requests to extend timelines for good cause. The Veteran or representative can file an extension request in advance or explain it at the time of filing the notice of disagreement or substantive appeal. – Ruth Aresvik, Service Officer

Chaplain's Pew:

A PRAYER FOR HUMANKIND

O God our Healer, show your compassion for the whole human family that is in turmoil and burdened with illness and with fear.

Come to our aid as the coronavirus spreads globally, heal those who are sick, support and protect their families and friends from being infected.

Grant us your spirit of love and self-discipline so that we may come together, working to control and eliminate the coronavirus. Make us vigilant, attentive, and proactive in the eradication of all diseases that create suffering and often result in death for many people.

Heal our self-centeredness and indifference that makes us worry only when the virus threatens us, open ways beyond timidity and fear that too easily ignore our neighbor.

Strengthen and encourage those in public health services and in the medical profession: care-givers, nurses, attendants, doctors, all who commit themselves to caring for the sick and their families.

Inspire, give insight and hope to all researchers focused on developing a vaccine.

Sustain all workers and business owners who suffer loss of livelihood due to shut-downs, quarantines, closed borders, and other restriction.

Protect and guard all those who must travel.

Guide the leaders of the nations that they speak the truth, halt the spread of misinformation and act with justice so that all your family may know healing.

Heal our world, heal our bodies, strengthen our hearts and our minds, and in the midst of turmoil, give us hope and peace.

Hold in your gentle embrace all who have died and who will die this day.

Comfort their loved ones in their despair.

Remember all your family, the entire human race, and all your creation, in your love. AMEN

- Helen Kinder, Chaplain



Training Officer:

Welcome to AL Post 154 training. The American Legion places considerable importance on education – the history, structure, and mission of the legion, and its programs and projects to assist veterans their families, children and youth, and the community. Each month I intend to publish an educational article covering information on one of these topics.

The first in the series begins on page 14. It contains a brief history of our organization and a concise listing of some of what the American Legion has done throughout its history to benefit the populations it serves. Please take a few minutes to read through this interesting and enlightening article.

Next month's article will be about the Legion's "Basic Training". If you have questions regarding the history, structure, or programs of the American Legion in general or Post 154 specifically, or suggestions for training topics you'd like to see, you can contact me through the Post email at rathdrum154@gmail.com. Happy reading! – Jean Bledsoe, Training Officer



Faces of AGENT ORANGE



Betty Mekdeci by Jim Belshaw

If there is a moment that represents the long battle Betty Mekdeci fought to shine a light on the origins of birth defects, it might be when a court's representative wrote to her about an Agent Orange project she proposed. She was told it was far beyond her ability. It was simply too big. "Awesome," the letter said. She could not possibly do it. "That made me so angry," she said. "You just didn't tell me that I couldn't do something. It made me really mad." She had been engaged in the fight for birth defect information for some years. She was the co-founder and executive director of Birth Defect Research for Children, Inc. She had been in courtrooms, going up against high powered opposing attorneys and, in some cases, even her own attorneys. She didn't do well in those court cases. Then someone told her she wouldn't do well on her own, either. "I had been thinking a lot about birth defect research globally, why we couldn't learn anything, why typical studies didn't work, and how the major causes of birth defects had been discovered. They had all been discovered by cluster identification or what we call an Alert Practitioner, who is someone who starts seeing a number of unusual birth defects. Then they look into the background of these cases and find a common factor." She set out to create her own Alert Practitioner, one involving thousands of people, people who were desperate to learn about birth defects. Birth Defect Research for Children is a non-profit organization providing parents with information about birth defects and support services for children. The BDRC sponsors the National Birth Defect Registry, a research project that studies the links between birth defects and a number of causes, among them exposure to Agent Orange, an issue of particular note to Vietnam veterans. Her interest in birth defects began in 1975, when her son was born with birth defects. Eventually, she would link those defects to a drug she had been prescribed (along with many other women) – Bendectin. Her efforts would lead to the removal of Bendectin from the world market. The initial search for information began with Betty and her mother. In 1982, she and her husband, Mike, founded the Association of Birth Defect Children, now called Birth Defect Research for Children. "We decided to start the organization because there was nothing for families with children who had birth defects, and it was very difficult for families to get information," she said. "I don't even remember how in the world I had the audacity to even suggest it. [Read the complete story here.](#)

“Are You a Victim?”

Veteran’s win leaves glimmer of hope for others who served in Thailand

[8 ON YOUR SIDE](#) by: [Steve Andrews](#) Posted: Jun 25, 2020 / 05:08 PM EDT / Updated: Jun 25, 2020 / 07:17 PM EDT

TAMPA, Fla. (WFLA) — Veterans like 73-year-old Dan Tolly, exposed to herbicides while serving in Thailand



during the Vietnam War, face a knockdown drag out when they apply for VA benefits.

Air Force Veteran Dan Tolly

After a years-long struggle, Dan got quite the surprise this weekend in his mailbox. The Department of Veterans Affairs finally approved his claim that his heart disease and cancer were caused by exposure to the herbicide Agent Orange while he served at Ubon Air Force Base. Not only was he awarded disability benefits for life, he got a check from the VA retroactive to 2016.

“I’ve never seen a check like that,” Dan said. “I looked at the amount and it was more numbers than I expected.”

Like Dan, [tens of thousands of Americans served in Thailand](#) during the war. 8 On Your Side [profiled Dan’s case in a series of reports](#) in September 2019. We forwarded Dan’s records to the VA and asked that it review Dan’s case further.

For years, the military denied it sprayed Agent Orange in Thailand. Of late, the VA has awarded disability benefits for herbicide exposure to personnel who could prove they worked on base perimeters, where the military now concedes it used tactical herbicides.

Dan assembled missiles for F-4 Phantoms. The shop was about 100 feet from the perimeter.

“I walked through the perimeter gate everyday – back and forth, going to work,” Dan said.

“That stuff was mixed with petroleum, so anybody walking across that perimeter would pick it up on their shoes, carry it into the mess halls, the barracks,” explained John Wells, the director of litigation for Military Veterans Advocacy.



Dan Tolly sitting on missile parts at Ubon Air Force Base,

“You’d hop in the barracks with your boots on and walk around the barracks in your bare feet,” Dan remembered. “So you have no idea what you’re walking in.”

Years later, Dan developed soft-tissue sarcoma in his foot. He eventually lost his leg to the disease.

[Agent Orange is linked to several illnesses](#), including heart disease, leukemia, cancers and Parkinson’s Disease.

Dan filed for disability and health care benefits in

2016, claiming his illnesses were tied to Agent Orange exposure. After [repeated rejections](#), Dan hired an out-of-state law firm to handle his case. Lawyers, he says, resubmitted his documents.

After months of hearing nothing, he was surprised to find what he did in the mailbox.

According to Dan, two other friends who worked in the same missile shop at the same time that he did were also recently awarded benefits.

“When we were over there, we never heard of any of this Agent Orange or herbicides or anything like that,” Dan explained. “Then coming back later, we found out the rest of the story.”

Meanwhile, according to its website, the VA is currently reviewing its policy on Agent Orange exposure in Thailand, leaving Dan hopeful the door is now open for other veterans.



July 1st, is the start of the Legion's Early Renewal for 2021. It's hard to believe another year has gone by and yes, my push for early renewals is beginning once again. Please keep in mind, that the sooner we get our dues in, National will stop sending us the notices and if we get them all in early, National can save money on postage and processing. You should be receiving your first notices this month. Soooo!!! Get them in, please!!!

I recommend using the online renewal system, that way you do not have to spend any funds for postage. Go to legion.org. click [renewals](#). Have your membership card and credit card ready. for this transaction.

I am also asking, that if you have not signed up for My.legion.com do it while you are renewing. It only takes a couple of minutes.



MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE 2020

We need to build our membership! I propose that every member of post 154, sign up at least one (1) new member for 2021. In order to qualify for National awards, new members must not have been members in 2020.

Any member signing up three (3) or more new members are eligible to receive the National Commander's membership incentive lapel/ hat pin.

You will have from July 1st to December 31st to recruit your new members. Bring them to one of our meetings and I will help you to sign them up. We have applications, so don't be afraid to get involved.

Dues remain at \$45.00 per year, checks made out to American Legion Post 154. Please do not have new members join on-line as National places them into Post 85 (Post in the clouds) and it is time consuming to get them into our post. Thank you and good luck.

Please contact me for assistance: Bill Kinder 1st Vice Commander
208-661-6850 or wakinder74@gmail.com



FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONY A SUCCESS!

This year's Flag retirement event was the best we've had since the start of Post 154 in 2015. Our original date for the program, June 13th was a stormy day and we had to postpone the event until Saturday, June 20th. The day began with a few sprinkles in the morning and it was decided that we should "get 'er done" anyway.

We had 335 flags to retire. This is the most we have ever retired in one session. Our flag box on Main Street was emptied three different times, and on Friday the 19th, the flags were hanging out of the insertion slot. Wow, 99 flags!!!

The program began with the Honor Guard led by Todd Halvorson, Hal Donahue, Bob Kernan, Len Crosby presenting the "Colors". This was followed by our Service Officer, Ruth Aresvik and Boy Scouts from Troop 201 and Cub Scouts from Pack 216, presenting flags for retirement to the "Guardians of the Flame". Jeff Broadhead and Michael Montee. Our Chaplain, Helen Kinder led us in a prayer and this was followed by Bugler Paula Atwood, playing "To the Colors"

We had a crowd of about 50 people attend the ceremony and heard many positive comments from them. We were very pleased with the program. - Submitted by: Bill Kinder, 1st Vice Commander



Post 154 Honor Guard:

For those of you not aware, our Post has an Honor Guard. They march in parades, present the colors at ceremonies, and most importantly, provide a rifle salute to honor Veterans at their funerals. Starting this month there will be an account of the honors and hours given by the men and women in our Honor Guard. However, more members are always needed to serve in this capacity. If you are interested in participating in this very fulfilling activity, contact Harold Markiewitz at 208-691-3039.

Note that opportunities for the Honor Guard are still limited due to the covid-19 restrictions. June 20th – Flag Retirement Ceremony – 9 members attended or participated in this Post 154 program.



Mark Your Calendar:

July 4th - Independence Day

July 9th - Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting

July 11th - National Cheer Up the Lonely Day

July 17th - Setup Booth for Rathdrum Days @ 4pm and Decorate Float @ 6pm

July 18th - Rathdrum Days Parade @ 10 am start time

July 22nd – National Penuche Fudge Day – see recipe on page 13

July 23rd - Post 154 Membership Meeting

July 25th - National Hire a Veteran Day

August 22nd – Post 154 Annual Picnic – see detail on page 18

As always with the covid-19 pandemic, watch for postponements and cancellations of meetings and events.

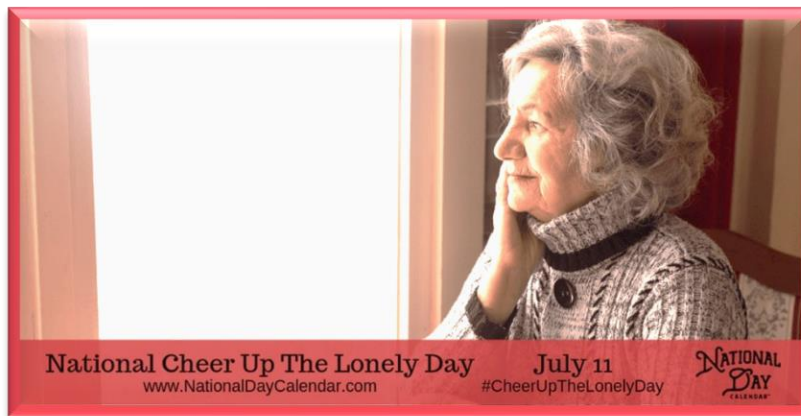
A Healthier You:



Quercetin Is a Natural Way to Relieve Spring Allergies

The flavonoids quercetin and luteolin can dampen mast cell response to allergic triggers and ease symptoms from spring allergies. Spring brings warmer days, butterflies, blooming flowers and—pollen. If your spring allergies are bothersome, you might be looking for a natural approach to alleviate itchy eyes, sneezing, headaches, and congestion. Several readers recommend quercetin, based on their own experience. [Read this article](#)

And for your health and the health of those around you, please wear a mask. This is not so much to protect you (although a good mask helps), as it is to protect those close to you. And hope that they wear one too! Here's a thought: If masks weren't effective, medical personnel wouldn't wear them.



If you know someone who is lonely or going through a difficult time, be a bright spot in their life with a little extra thoughtfulness today. Especially those whose health forces them to isolate during corona virus peaks.

Bits & Pieces

- **Boys and Girls State & Post Falls Veterans Home** – A suggested \$1 donation is collected from those that would like to donate at each membership meeting. 75% of funds goes to Boys and Girls State and 25% to the Falls Veterans Home.
- **[Get going with the VA's MOVE! Coach.](#)** MOVE!® Coach is a weight loss app for Veterans, service members, their families, and others who want to lose weight. This 19-week program guides the participants to achieve success with weight loss through education, and use of tools, in an easy and convenient way. Participants can monitor, track, and receive feedback regarding their progress with weight, diet, and exercise goals. Click the link to get there.
- **Senators introduce bill** to expand VA benefits for thousands of 'forgotten' Vietnam Veterans. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **Exercises for a Healthy Back**
Most people will have back pain at some time in their lives. But you don't always need the help of a doctor to fix it. Sometimes exercise is all that you need to relieve the pain. Watch and learn exercises to keep your back feeling good. See the instructions below. [Click here to watch the video.](#) And to see all the videos available in the VA Video Library, [click here.](#)

Exercises for a Healthy Back

Back pain is a common complaint, especially for people older than 40. But, you can tame or prevent back pain by practicing good form and by doing exercises to strengthen your back two or three times a week. But before you get started, you should talk with your health care provider to make sure these exercises are right for you. When you do these or any type of back exercises, make sure you: Use a rug or mat to lie on. Wear loose, comfortable clothing. And, take off your shoes. You should not feel any pain while doing these exercises. If you do, stop the exercise right away and call your health care provider.

Knee-to-Chest Stretch

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Put your feet flat on the floor and a pillow under your head. Slowly lift one knee to your chest while keeping your other foot on the floor. Hold for five seconds. Keep breathing slowly and evenly then release. Switch legs and repeat the exercise 10 times with each leg.

Bridge

Lie on your back with both knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Your heels should be close to your bottom. Put your arms on the floor at your sides. Hold your belly in tight. Then slowly lift your hips into the air squeezing your buttocks together. Do NOT turn your head. Keep your chin tucked and look toward your belly. Hold for five seconds. Keep breathing slowly and evenly, then release. Repeat this exercise 10 times and work your way up to two sets.

Crunches

Lie on your back with both knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Fold your arms across your chest. Tilt your pelvis so that your lower back is on the floor. Tighten your belly muscles and use the muscles in your belly to lift your head and shoulders straight up. Stop when your shoulder blades come off the floor. Then slowly roll back down. Don't hold your breath. Keep breathing slowly and evenly during the exercise. Repeat this exercise 10 times and work your way up to three sets.

Press Up

Lie on your belly with your palms on the floor near your shoulders. Look forward. Press down on your hands and gently raise your upper chest off the floor. Hold this position for 10 seconds. Keep breathing slowly and evenly. Repeat this exercise 10 times and work your way up to two sets.

Practicing Good Form

Moving your body correctly can help you protect your back throughout your day. Here are some tips for using good form for some common, everyday movements:

Sitting

Sit in chairs that support your back. Use a low-back support, if needed. Keep your knees a little higher than your hips. If necessary, use a low stool to raise your feet, so they are resting on a solid surface.

Standing

Bend your knees slightly and tighten the muscles in the front of your thigh to take stress off your lower back and knees. Wear shoes that support your feet. If you stand for long periods, shift most of your weight to one leg at a time. Switch legs often.

Lying Down

When lying on your side, bend your knees and place a pillow between them. If you lie on your back, put a pillow under your knees. Avoid lying on your belly.

Lifting

When lifting an object from below your waist, stand with your feet wide and a slight bend at the hips and knees. Squat down and grab the object. Tighten your belly as you lift and keep your back flat. Keep heavy items close to your body, and don't carry them on one side all the time. Don't hold your breath.

Things to Remember

Regular exercise and good form can help you prevent back pain.

Keep breathing slowly and evenly during exercise. Don't hold your breath.

Talk to your health care provider before starting a new exercise program.



Here's a bit of deliciousness for you this month. Enjoy! Your fudge loving editor, Jean

Penuche Fudge

Makes 2 pounds (81 pieces)

Ingredients

1 teaspoon plus 1/4 cup butter, divided
2 cups packed brown sugar
1 cup sugar
3/4 cup 2% milk
2 tablespoons light corn syrup
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup chopped walnuts



Directions

Line a 9-in. square pan with foil; grease foil with 1 teaspoon butter.

In a large heavy saucepan, combine sugars, milk, corn syrup and salt. Bring to a rapid boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Cook, without stirring, until a candy thermometer reads 234° (soft-ball stage). Remove from heat. Add vanilla and remaining butter to pan (do not stir).

Cool, without stirring, to 110°, about 40 minutes. Beat with a spoon until fudge just begins to thicken. Add walnuts; continue beating until fudge becomes very thick and just begins to lose its sheen (about 10 minutes total). Immediately spread into prepared pan. Cool.

Using foil, lift fudge out of pan. Remove foil; cut fudge into 1-in. squares. Store between layers of waxed paper in airtight containers.



THE AMERICAN LEGION

A BRIEF HISTORY

The American Legion was founded March 15-17, 1919, by members of the American Expeditionary Forces still stationed in Europe awaiting passage home from World War I. Their experiences in what was called the "war to end all wars" would shape an enduring agenda for what became the nation's largest organization of veterans.

Many of the Legion's founders had voluntarily drilled in civilian military camps before the United States entered the war. Trained in the "Preparedness Movement," several future Legion founders were commissioned as officers in the war and discovered firsthand the nation's deficiencies in defense, citizenship, and education. Soon after the war's end, they also realized how poorly prepared the United States was to assist

a wave of disabled and unemployed veterans who faced uncertain futures in their communities, states, and the nation. The American Legion's emergence and rise to prominence was based on a mission to strengthen the nation through programs, services and advocacy that helped millions throughout the organization's first century.

The American Legion built its legacy with a vision to make the nation prouder, stronger, smarter, and more respectful of those who have sacrificed some, or all, in defense of the nation. Following are some The American Legion's achievements during its first century.

VETERANS



- ③ Formed a network of service officers in 1919 that now exceeds 3,500 to help disabled veterans, free of charge, file for government benefits
- ③ Successfully campaigned to put all veterans services under one federal authority, the Veterans Bureau in 1921, predecessor to the Veterans Administration in 1930 and the Department of Veterans Affairs in 1989
- ③ Assisted millions of veterans in pursuit of rewarding careers; by June 1922 had already placed more than 500,000 veterans in permanent jobs and 200,000 more in temporary positions

NATIONAL SECURITY

- ③ Successfully lobbied Congress to protect [veterans](#) benefits, VA hospitals, training programs and services on the federal budget chopping block over the decades
- ③ Developed programs and advanced research into what became post-traumatic stress disorder as early as 1921, when it was mischaracterized as "shell shock"
- ③ Produced studies that led to official diagnosis of PTSD in 1980 and proved that service-connected exposure to Agent Orange and atomic radiation caused diseases that demanded government accountability
- ③ Lobbied persistently for a better-funded and more efficient national system of defense
- ③ Called for the establishment of a separate service branch for aeronautics as early as 1919, which helped give birth to the U.S. Air Force in 1947
- ③ Pushed Congress for "universal military training" for decades, culminating in the Reserve Forces Act of 1955
- ③ Conducted thousands of troop-support programs, including deployment ceremonies, welcome-home [events](#) and provision of needed items in theater
- ③ Established and staffed thousands of local first response units and civil patrols during World War II
- ③ Provided financial and volunteer aid for military parents through American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance and Family Support Network programs established during the Gulf War
- ③ Began [The](#) American Legion Blood Donor Program in 1942, and became the largest organizational blood donor to the Red Cross in the nation
- ③ Re-established the Blue Star Banner program to recognize military families with deployed loved ones after 9/11

- ③ Achieved Veterans Preference Hiring for federal jobs
- ③ Drafted, presented, [promoted](#) and pushed to passage the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, the original GI Bill that transformed U.S. economy and culture in the second half of the 20th century
- ③ Worked to improve the GI Bill for post-9/11 veterans, including the 2017 Harry W. [Colmery](#) Veterans Educational Assistance Act, the "Forever GI Bill"



- ③ Launched a program to provide comfort items for U.S. military personnel recovering from wounds in DoD hospitals or transition units, ultimately named Operation Comfort Warriors in 2008; has distributed millions of dollars of goods, games, books, music, recreational equipment and event passes for troops and their families
- ③ Provided emergency grants for members of the U.S. Coast Guard who had pay delays due to the January 2019 federal government shutdown
- ③ Fought to protect military retirement benefits and TRICARE insurance
- ③ Stood as a national leader in the recovery and repatriation of all U.S. POWs and MIAs
- ③ Passed and reaffirmed national resolutions, beginning in 2005, supporting the troops *and their mission* in the global war on terrorism

AMERICANISM

- ③ Actively promoted responsible U.S. citizenship and patriotic awareness beginning in 1919
- ③ By January 1920, began providing U.S. citizenship and naturalization programs for immigrants, with support from Congress
- ③ Led flag conferences in 1923 and 1924 that established the first standard rules for treatment and respect of the U.S. flag, adopted in 1942 as U.S. Flag Code
- ③ Established official retirement ceremonies for worn-out U.S. flags, most often a joint activity with Boy Scouts of America units
- ③ Began American Legion Boys State in Illinois in 1935 to counter communist inspired youth camps in the United States and to teach the way government operates in a democracy, a program that went national in 1946 and ultimately became American Legion Boys Nation
- ③ Strongly advocated for active participation in the voting process, conducting thousands of candidate forums and a national Get Out the Vote program
- ③ Assembled the Citizens Flag Alliance after the controversial 1989 Supreme Court ruling defining deliberate flag desecration as free speech and began a campaign to seek a constitutional amendment to return to the states the right to pass laws to protect the flag.

CHILDREN & YOUTH



- ③ Urged American Legion support for Boy Scouts of America as the organization's first youth program supported by resolution, in November 1919
- ③ Established an enduring relationship in 1921 with the National Education Association "to cooperate in securing for America a program of education adequate to meet the needs of the 20th century ... which will make all, native or foreign-born, good American citizens."
- ③ Launched American Legion Baseball in 1925 to promote citizenship through sportsmanship, a program that would grow to field thousands of teams over the century
- ③ Developed and operated marksmanship competitions that became the national American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program in 1991
- ③ Sponsored thousands of Junior ROTC programs across the country and at American schools overseas
- ③ Created and operated a National Oratorical Contest beginning in 1938, continuing today, that requires high school-age orators to speak on the U.S. Constitution
- ③ Established a national network of child-support field representatives in the 1920s and operated orphanages throughout the country to assist kids who needed stable homes and mentorship
- ③ Formed the Child Welfare Foundation in 1954 to provide grants to support organizations and agencies that assist young people facing challenges not of their making
- ③ Provided thousands of scholarships for high school students seeking college educations
- ③ Launched an ongoing program in 1926 that recognizes with School Award Medals young people for their character, service and citizenship.
- ③ Was chosen by Samsung Corp. in 1995 to administer a \$5 million fund to provide scholarships for Boys State or Girls State participants who are descendants of U.S. wartime veterans
- ③ Established an American Legion Legacy Scholarship in 2001 that provides college funds for children of military personnel killed or 50 percent or more disabled

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- ③ Immediately established civil defense as a function of The American Legion and began a century of support in communities wracked by disasters, from mining accidents to tornados, wildfires and hurricanes
- ③ Launched a Community and Civic Betterment Bureau in 1923 to help municipalities build and improve parks, playgrounds, health-care facilities, swimming pools, schools and theaters throughout the United States
- ③ Served meals, provided housing for refugees and searched for survivors of the massive Mississippi and Ohio River floods of 1927 and 1937
- ③ Sponsored soup kitchens at American Legion posts to help destitute citizens during the Depression throughout the country
- ③ Helped establish state highway patrols, and supported them, as they emerged across the country
- ③ Established the National Emergency Fund in 1989 to formalize The American Legion's long program to provide disaster relief
- ③ Delivered millions of dollars in National Emergency Fund grants for relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina, Wilma and Rita on the Gulf Coast, and the flooding that followed in New Orleans
- ③ Conducted dozens of natural disaster relief efforts, following Superstorm Sandy, Hurricanes Irene, Michael, Maria and others, wildfires in California, devastating flooding in the Midwest and other crises

HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

- ③ Took a lead role in 1920 to formally observe Memorial Day at the graves of U.S. military personnel laid to rest in some 2,400 temporary cemeteries in Europe
- ③ Was actively involved in the development of the American Battle Monuments Commission in 1923
- ③ Backed legislation in 1920 to install the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, dedicated Nov. 11, 1921
- ③ Helped dedicate the towering Liberty Memorial in Kansas City during the third national convention, in 1921
- ③ Raised funds in 1926 to help build the Ossuary at Verdun, France, to remember the cost of World War I
- ③ Pushed for 24-hour guarding for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in 1937 and purchased lights for the shrine in 1969
- ③ Raised over \$1.2 million, most by any organization, to build the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, dedicated in a Legion-sponsored 1982 "Salute to Vietnam Veterans"
- ③ Passed a resolution in 1985 to open every official American Legion meeting with a prayer for all American POW/MIAs
- ③ Raised funds and provided marketing support for the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.
- ③ Raised more than \$3 million for the construction of the National World War II Memorial, dedicated in 2004
- ③ Pledged funds to help construct a National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C.



- ③ Conducted thousands of local memorial services a year at funerals, special events and ceremonies honoring those who served their country and lost their lives
- ③ Argued in court, including the U.S. Supreme Court in 2019, to protect veterans and military memorials from removal due to religious symbolism in their design



The American Legion
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(317) 630-1200

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**MANUEL SCHNEIDMILLER
AMERICAN LEGION POST 154
RATHDRUM, IDAHO**

Dear Post 154 Member,

You and your family are cordially invited to the Manuel Schneidmiller American Legion Post 154 Summer Potluck Picnic to be held Saturday, August 22, 2020 from 1:00 – 4:00 PM at Rathdrum's beautiful City Park, 15456 N. Latah Street (corner of Highway 53 and Latah Street) Please join us to socialize and celebrate our accomplishments of the past year.

The Post is providing: Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Water, Cups, Plates, Napkins and Plastic utensils.

Please bring your favorite specialty dish to share, be it a main dish, salad or dessert.

**** PLEASE NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ****

**** IF YOU PREFER SODA, PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN ****

**** DOGS ARE NOT ALLOWED AT THIS PARK ****

Please RSVP by Monday, August 17th, and direct questions to John or Sue Fevold at (208)916-5148, (208)916-5149, or email: schoolmarm66@hotmail.com

Please bring your grand-children as there will be fun and games for everyone.

Also, if you know a veteran who is not already a member of the American Legion, please invite them to attend.

NOTE: We will have access to the kitchen, refrigerator, sheltered area, picnic tables, and indoor restrooms. Feel free to bring your favorite picnic chair.

Sincerely,

Bill Kinder

Bill Kinder
1st Vice Commander
American Legion Post 154