



The Post Journal

Quarterly Newsletter of The American Legion Post 76, "The Spirit of Freedom"

ISSUE 30 — October — December 2019

Report from Commander:

Since I was elected there have been many items brought to my attention that I was not aware of being a part of the Office of Commander. I am not complaining, just making a statement. This will tie into my comments.

Over the past couple of years, our Past Department Commander, and Past Post Commander Forman has been pushing for a Department of Nevada Legion College. I did not get the opportunity to attend the National Legion College because the College was recruiting younger students. I did not agree but, *ya just can't win em' all*. I believe having a Legion College for Nevada is something needed and not having one is a mistake for our future needs. Many times, myself included to some extent, members run for an office and have not served in any or very few offices before being elected. This is not to preclude anyone from running or serving but having a school that teaches the basics would eliminate many hard knocks for the new Officer.

I believe the College would be for all members and should be a requirement for all offices in the Post. The Post Commander and Post Adjutant are offices that need special attention because of the errors that could be made here can effect the well being of the entire Post.

If you get the opportunity, please pass along your positive feelings to our District 2 Commander and Adjutant. That is where we must begin to get changes made.

The only way we have to make positive changes is through our members and their voices. On a lighter note, we are getting more settled into our new Post Home. I would like to again thank Dixon Keller with Humana for all of their help and support in providing us with this fantastic meeting facility. Please pass along our thanks to them at every chance you have. Until next time, stay safe and God Bless America.

Mike Shephard, Commander, The American Legion of Nevada Post 76



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JULY POST 76 GENERAL MEETING

American Legion Post 76 Spirit of Freedom had their second post meeting at the new Humana Community Center on July 21st. This location is now considered the Post Home location for Post 76. After the pledge of allegiance and other opening ceremonies, including asking guests, new members and members who had not attended for a while to stand and be acknowledged, officers gave their reports. At that time, the invited speakers were asked to address the Legionnaires.

For this month's meeting, guest speakers were Su Phelps, and Samantha Bivins.

Su Phelps is the Communications Chair of Gold Star Wives National, Owner of Veterans Reporter News and President of Society of Military Widows Chapter #34 in Las Vegas. Phelps presented a gift from Gold Star Wives, a gold star candy tray and a GSW challenge coin to Michael Shepherd, Commander of American Legion 76 for the Post 76 Color Guard performing at the Gold Star Wives of American Convention which was held at the Luxor Hotel this year.



Samantha Bivins is a local representative from Congressman Steven Horsford's office. The "Stopping the Pharmaceutical Industry from Keeping Drugs Expensive (SPIKE) Act of 2019", would require drug manufacturers to publicly justify large price increases and launch prices for high-cost drugs. Bivins described the SPIKE Act, introduced by Rep. Horsford, as a way to provide drug manufacturer price transparency and the Social Security 2100, to "improve benefits for future generations of social security". The SPIKE Act, if passed, directs the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to, at least once during such year, determine if there is a triggered SPIKE increase with respect to an applicable drug. If the Secretary determines, there is an increase, the manufacturer of the applicable drug shall submit to the Secretary the justification and reason for such a SPIKE.



Brendan Vargas (a Post 76 member) is the Regional Representative and Veterans Outreach Manager for Senator Jacky Rosen. Vargas explained the upcoming Blue Water Navy Bill. Blue Water Navy Veterans are now entitled to a presumption of service connection for conditions related to Agent Orange exposure. This extension of the presumption is a result of Public Law 116-23, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019, signed into law on June 25, 2019 by President Donald Trump.

The law takes effect January 1, 2020. The law states that Veterans aboard a vessel operating not more than 12 nautical miles seaward from the demarcation line of the waters of Vietnam and Cambodia as, between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, are presumed to have been exposed to herbicides such as Agent Orange and may be entitled to service connection for conditions related to that exposure. To be entitled to disability compensation benefits, these Veterans must have one or more of the 14 conditions associated with Agent Orange exposure.

The Post 76 Commander thanked Vargas and Bivins and gave them the HIGHLY COVETED Post 76 challenge coins. If you would like to contact either of these local representatives, contact Tom Mahon, Adjutant (see page 1).

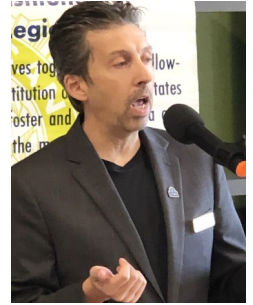
The chapter also recognized Gary Parriott, Janet Snyder and Ken Hill for representing the Revolutionary War (Parriott) and Civil War (Hill and Snyder) during the Post 76 Memorial Day ceremony at The Lakes on May 27th. They received certificates of appreciation. At the end of the meeting Ken Hill joined American Legion Post 76.



AUGUST POST 76 GENERAL MEETING

After the pledge of allegiance and other opening ceremonies, including asking guests, new members and members who had not attended for a while to stand and be acknowledged, officers gave their reports. At that time, the commander introduced William Caron, Director/CEO for the Veterans Administration Southern Nevada Healthcare System, He is a very gifted and valuable asset to not only The American Legion but to all Veterans of our great country and especially to Southern Nevada.

Mr. Caron is a fellow Veteran, having served in the United Air Force. He has had a distinguished private sector career on top of his service to the VA. He was granted a Bachelor's Degree in Physical Therapy from the University of New England in Maine, a Master's Degree in Health Care Administration from The California College of Health Sciences, and is a Fellow American College of Healthcare Executives and is a VA Certified Mentor. He is also a member of The American Legion Post 76 and is a member of the Michigan Physical Therapy licensure.



His career with the VA include, Associate Director, Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center, Iron Mountain, Michigan, Associate Director, VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System, North Las Vegas, Nevada, Director, Southern Arizona VA Health Car System, Tucson, Arizona, and now the Director of the VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System, North Las Vegas, Nevada.

Mr. Caron discussed the changes in the VA coming down the line, especially the MISSION Act. The Act Increases Veterans' access to health care. The MISSION Act strengthens VA's ability to deliver trusted, easy to access, high quality care at VA facilities, virtually through telehealth, and in your community. That means you get the care and

services you need, where and when you need them. You'll have more ways to access health care. This includes within VA's network and through approved non-VA medical providers in your community, called "community care providers." Depending on your situation—for example, if a certain type of health service isn't provided by VA—you may be able to go to a non-VA provider, using your VA coverage. For example, while the network is still under construction, the Act provides for veterans visiting contracted Quick Care and Urgent Care facilities in the valley while using their VA card, just like at the Hospital and Clinics.



Commander Shephard thanked Mr. Caron for coming and speaking to us, and presented him with the HIGHLY COVETED NV Post 76 Challenge Coin.

Next Brendan Vargas, the Local representative for Senator Jacky Rosen and a member of Post 76, briefed those present on upcoming legislation. U.S. Senator Jacky Rosen (D-NV) has joined Senator Kevin Cramer (R-ND) to introduce the Veterans Reimbursement for Emergency Ambulance Services Act (VREASA). This bipartisan legislation would authorize veterans' expenses for emergency ambulance services to non-VA facilities to be reimbursed by the VA. Emergency ambulance bills deliver huge financial burdens to our veterans. The bill, if passed, corrects unfair regulations that harm those who offered their lives for our country and ensures they are given the health care benefits they have earned.



At the conclusion, Jack Ford (Past Alternate National Executive Board Councilman and Past Department Commander) requested approach to the podium. He then called 3 yr. Director Joel Forman to present him with his Department of Nevada Past Department Commander (PDC 2018-2019) cap and pin that would have been awarded at the 2019 Department of Nevada Convention, because Cdr. Forman had not been able to attend the Department Convention.

Cdr. Forman has served this Post well as Post Commander for 4 years, District 2 Commander for 2 years, as well as Commander for the Department of Nevada 2018-2019.

Noteworthy, because of his leadership as Commander at these many levels, Post 76 grew from under 400 members to over 800 members whereas many other Posts in the Nation continued to decline.

MESSAGE FROM THE 1st VICE COMMANDER

GREETINGS ALL!

Your 1st Vice Commander here again with some exciting news since the last newsletter.

On July 30, 2019, President Trump signed the LEGION Act into law. The **LEGION Act**, or **Let's Get Everyone Involved in Opportunities for National Service** Act, expands the eligibility of membership into The American Legion. Previously, there were 7 periods of eligibility. Now, there are only 2. The first, is April 6th, 1917 to November 11th, 1918 and the second is December 7th 1941 to the present. My feeling is we should focus on recruiting from the 2nd period of eligibility, but I'm open to Veterans from the first eligibility period joining also. The other requirement of an honorable discharge remains the same.

So, what does this mean for us? Well, there are now **THOUSANDS** of newly eligible Veterans that can benefit from membership in The American Legion. Almost every Veteran you encounter now will be a potential member. While new recruiting materials may be on the way from National in the near future, it is up to us at this point to get the word out to the Veteran's community. At present, we are looking at the best way to market this new eligibility at the many recruiting events we attend. I will once again ask for any ideas you may have on this. This is new for all of us, and I know together, we can develop a plan to bring a fantastic new group of Legionnaires into our post.

Also, I wanted to take a moment to say Thanks to all the members that have been attending the monthly meetings. Our new post home seems to have a marked effect on attendance. It's a great place to meet, and it sure is great to see everyone on the 3rd Sunday of the month. I look forward to seeing you all at future meetings.

For God and Country, Tony Mascari, 1st Vice Commander



MESSAGE FROM THE 2nd VICE COMMANDER

Upcoming events of interest to Post 76 members and families as of September are:

- * Wednesday, 9 October HUMANA Senior Expo Series, 4830 W. Craig Road. Las Vegas, NV 89130
- * Wednesday, 9 October, Color Guard/Info Table, Veterans Service Fair, Dula Gym, 08:00-15:00.
- * Fri-Sat-Sun, 11-13 October, Scout Grand Camporee, BB Gun Range, Craig Ranch Park.?
- * Monday, 14 October HUMANA Senior Expo Series, 4830 W. Craig Road. Las Vegas, NV 89130
- * Fri-Sat, 18 – 19 October, FYI, Legal Assistance, VA Medical Center, check in by noon, 10:00 – 14:00.
- * Saturday, 19 October, Color Guard/Information Table, Spotlights Spectacular, Texas Station, Dallas & Houston Ballrooms, 08:00-15:00.
- * Wednesday, 23 October HUMANA Senior Expo Series, 4830 W. Craig Road. Las Vegas, NV 89130
- * Wednesday, 30 October HUMANA Senior Expo Series, 4830 W. Craig Road. Las Vegas, NV 89130
- * Saturday, 9 November, Info Table, Veterans Day BBQ & Car Show, VASNMC, 10:00-14:30.
- * Saturday, 9 & 10 November, Information Table, Veterans Expo, Galleria at Sunset, 10:00 – 16:00.
- * Monday, 11 November, Participation, John Hilgar II Charity Putting Tournament, Angle Park Golf Club 100 S. Rampart Blvd., 07:00 – 18:00.

Walter Cheatham, 2nd Vice Commander



PAST DEPARTMENT COMMANDERS MESSAGE



Post 76 does so much for our veterans and our community. Did you know we visit veterans in assisted care facilities as part of the Veterans in Care Program of the NDVS. We provide a color guard for events all over Southern Nevada, including the Las Vegas Strip. We volunteer at the V.A. Hospital and participate in events there. We help veterans who may need a ride to their doctor's appointments and to the market for food.

Many of us can no longer participate in volunteering, you may think. But there is a way that everyone can, and it is as easy as keeping your dues current. One way is to wait for a renewal notice sent by National, but did you know that your Post pays for these renewal notices? The best way is to send your check before the renewal notices are mailed. The easiest, most convenient and least expensive way is to pay online at legion.org and hit the renew tab. You only need to provide your Legion member number and your last name, and your credit card info, of course. In a matter of days you will receive your new membership card in the mail. Payments received by the **Early Bird** date of 11 October will be mailed with the **Early Bird stamp**.

Joel Forman, Past Department Commander (2018-2019)

S. NV. PATRIOT GUARD RIDERS — TWO ESCORTS — ONE DAY

Thursday morning, 22 August 2019, the Patriot Guard Riders of Southern Nevada, a group for which the Post 76's Judge Advocate, Rick Foulon, is the Assistant State Captain, performed two missions. First, they escorted 8 charter buses containing over 400 Vietnam and Cambodia veterans who were members of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, from the Westgate Hotel out to the city limits. They were on their way to Ft. Irwin, CA for a reunion. We also stood a flag line as the buses were being loaded at the Westgate.



11th ACR waiting for buses at the Westgate



Just part of the Southern Nevada Patriot Guard Riders flag line at the Westgate

ors in Germany on May 17, 1972 as it replaced the 14th ACR. Now they were guarding the famous Fulda Gap. In the event of a conventional war in Europe, the Blackhorse would serve as the covering force for V Corps. In peace time, their job was surveillance and deterrence along a 385 kilometer section of the East/West German Border. The importance of the "Fulda Gap," passages through the Rhön Mountains, was that it offers any attacker from the east the shortest route across the middle of West Germany and the ability to seize the Rhine River crossings at Mainz and Koblenz.

After escorting them to the St. Rose Parkway exit, we turned around and hopped on the 215 out to Boulder City where we stood a flag line for 7 Unaccompanied veterans.

The 11th ACR developed a reputation as an almost legendary fighting force during the Vietnam War. The Regiment, first deployed in 1966, won fourteen battle streamers, and had three of its troopers win Medals of Honor. It was during Vietnam that the Regiment was granted authorization to wear its distinctive unit patch.

The Regiment once again unfurled its col-



Back in the saddle again (but on a very different steed that Vietnam or Germany)!
At Fort Irwin visiting the Regiment as part of the reunion.

POST 76 COLOR GUARD PREFORMS AT 100TH BIRTHDAY PARTY

A local World War II veteran celebrated her 100th birthday.

On 13 July 2019, The Post 76 Color Guard was honored to be selected to present the colors at the 100th Birthday Celebration for Virginia Wells at Atria Seville on Rampart Blvd. The Color Guard consisted of Joel Forman, Andy Agan, Walter "Buzz" Cheatham, Frank Timbers, Tom Mahon, Rick Foulon, Richard Hoffer and Gary Parriott. Legionnaire and Post 76 member, Fred Wagar, Deputy Director of the NDVS was the Master of Ceremonies. It was held at Atria Seville on Rampart and Lake Mead in Summerlin.



Virginia "Ginny" Wells served in the Army as a nurse. She was stationed in Chicago at a psychiatric hospital. Wells' family said she helped soldiers returning from the South Pacific. "They just liked to be social and talk," said Wells. "They didn't want to sit around and feel sorry for themselves."

Wells along with 25 other fellow veterans were recognized for their service during Wells' birthday celebration on July 13. Wells said the secret to long life is attitude. "Don't get disturbed about somebody that says something out of line," she said. "I just look around and say, 'Oh well.'"



JOHN H. HILGAR II VETERAN'S DAY MEMORIAL CHARITY PUTTING TOURNAMENT & BIRTHDAY BASH

11 November 2019 open registration from 7 am till 6 pm. @Angel Park Golf Club. 100 S Rampart Blvd s Vegas Nv 89145

Come out for a fun time and help support the American Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors. Everyone is invited to a unique 11 hour putting contest with both 9 & 18-hole competitions. There will also be a hole-in-one contest on the 1st hole.

Suggested donation of \$20 for adults 17 and older, \$5 for children 11 thru 16 and free to everyone under 10 yrs. old. 100% of donations are used to purchase rehabilitation and recreational items for wounded military personnel. Winners will be congratulated with names added to our tournament plaques. All equipment is provided or you can bring your favorite putter. Any questions call/text John @702-376-5885 or Jani @702-376-5266

LEGION ACT IN A NUTSHELL

Thousands of honorably discharged veterans can now join the American Legion under new legislation signed President Donald Trump.

Under the new law, any honorably discharged veteran who has served since Dec. 7, 1941, may join the American Legion, meaning military veterans who served in what were previously considered periods of peacetime between wars are now eligible for membership. The Act is designed to recognize veterans who previously couldn't join, such as those who served during the Cold War.

Expanding Legion membership improves services for veterans and honors our brave service members killed or injured during periods of unrecognized war.

Start enjoying the health benefits of a smoke-free environment anywhere in, near or around any VA medical facility



VA nationwide will implement a smoke-free policy beginning in October 2019 and complete full implementation no later than January 2020.

VHA's new smoke-free policy applies to cigarettes, cigars, pipes (including electronic and e-cigarettes), and vape pens or e-cigars.

VA evaluated the current state of research on second-hand and third-hand smoke, as well as best practices in the health care industry, then modernized its policy.

The new policies for **patients, visitors, volunteers, contractors, vendors, and employees** allows VA to protect the health and well-being of VA staff, patients, and the public. It's part of VA's commitment to provide excellent health care for Veterans and their families. Click here for additional resources available to Veterans who want to quit smoking. Employees can contact their facility for resources if they want to quit smoking.

Evidence of significant medical risks

VHA's new smoke-free policy also applies to all electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) not approved by the Federal Drug Administration.

There is overwhelming evidence that smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke creates significant medical risks. There is a growing body of evidence that exposure to third-hand smoke creates additional risks to safety and direct patient care. Click here to learn more about the health risks associated with smoking from the U.S. Surgeon General.

Want to quit? Here's another great website to get you there. <https://smokefree.gov/>

VHA has these extensive resources and programs to assist Veterans in their smoke-free journey.

From: <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/64921/start-enjoying-the-health-benefits-of-a-smoke-free-environment/>

Recommended for inclusion by Jack Ford, Trustee



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UPCOMING MEETING DATES :

E Board Meeting — 10 October 2019, 4:30 pm Summerlin Trails Community Center
GENERAL MEETING — 20 October 2019, 1:30 pm at [Humana](#) 4830 W. Craig Rd. Suite 130
E Board Meeting — 14 November 2019, 4:30 pm Summerlin Trails Community Center
GENERAL MEETING — 17 November 2019, 1:30 pm at [Humana](#) 4830 W. Craig Rd. Suite 130
E Board Meeting — 12 December 2019, 4:30 pm Summerlin Trails Community Center
GENERAL MEETING — 15 December 2019, 1:30 pm at [Humana](#) 4830 W. Craig Rd. Suite 130
E Board Meeting — 9 January 2020, 4:30 pm Summerlin Trails Community Center

Important Notice

Post 76 HAS MOVED to our new
Permanent Post Home location at:
HUMANA (near the corner of
W. Craig and N. Decatur)

4830 W. Craig Road
Las Vegas, NV 89130



You have already received a notice from National to pay you dues as an **EARLY BIRD**. By paying your dues **EARLY**, you help our Post have the resources to cover expenses during the last part of the year and allow support programs that benefit both veterans and families in our area.