



# SMOKE



# SIGNALS

**Billy Caldwell**  
**Post 806**  
**Chicago, Illinois**

2016 Edition – Issue 2

April / May / June 2016

## **Commander's Message**

**Dale Tippett (773) 259 - 4300**

### **Spring!**

The season is changing. If you're like me you look forward to spring and then on to Independence Day. When the 4th of July arrives I am amazed at how it seems that time is on fast forward to the holidays again! What I am saying is, is that time is fleeting. That is why I write with a sense of urgency to request your participation in our Post life beyond just paying your dues. We have business to transact at Billy Caldwell and are unable to do so without your participation. Before another season passes please make this one count.

Soon a letter will be mailed to you for your approval of a change to our by-laws to reduce the size of the executive committee and to give the executive committee authorization to act on behalf of Billy Caldwell Post 806 to transact business including the sale of the Post home at 5116 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago. I am asking you to please indicate, "yes", to approve the changes and return the pre-paid post card immediately. Thank you for your service and continued support of our mission.

## **SENIOR VICE – COMMANDER**

**Peter Hirt (708) 828 - 7383**

Congratulations Billy Caldwell Post 806 Legionnaires! We have reached and exceeded Department Commander Paul Gardner's goal of 105%! Most important, we have a lot of new members who have joined our Post.

There are still some of our members that have not renewed their 2016 membership as yet. What happened to you? Where are you? Did you die? Why didn't you tell us?

Check your mailing label, if it has (2016) next to your name, you've renewed and we thank you. But, if the space next to your name is blank ... won't you please send in your dues today?

## **President's Message**

**Mary Collado (847) 294-6517**

Greetings to everyone and a big welcome to spring!

We attended Patriotic Conference in March. We had wonderful speakers. One of the speakers was an Iraqi war veteran who lost his sight in Iraq. He showed us that he does not let his lack of vision stop him from enjoying life to the fullest. This young man climbs mountains and rows a kayak down rivers and rapids. We were quite impressed with this young man. Most of us would not do this even with our sight!

Our National President, Sharon Conatser from Illinois was also in attendance. She spoke about the importance of membership in order to keep our organization alive. Our membership has been on a steady decline and if we don't stop it, our organization will not be around within the next decade. President Sharon's theme is "Keeping the Promise". Who will keep the promise to care for our veterans in the future?

If you have not sent in your dues, please do so. Our dues are now \$25 for seniors and still \$3.50 for Juniors. If you are having difficulties paying your dues, please let us know. Even if you are not active, your dues go to supporting our programs. Ask people you know if they are eligible and tell them about all the great things we do for our veterans and the community.

Hope everyone has a wonderful spring. Wear your Auxiliary emblems with pride and share our mission with others!

### **Mailing & Correspondence Address**

**American Legion Post 806**

**P.O. Box 1322**

**Park Ridge, IL 60068**

**Or Call Post Adjutant**

**Al Coughlin at (773) 852 - 5561**

## The Legion's role in the voting process

Among the freedoms many Americans enjoy is the right to vote for our elected officials. This year, of course, is generating intense interest because a new president will be elected. Additionally, voters will elect every single member of the U.S. House of Representatives and one-third of the U.S. Senate. Right now we are entering a critical and exciting juncture as the two major political parties begin to hold primaries and caucuses to determine the front-runner for their nominations. Strong opinions can be found everywhere. Unfortunately, so too can some mis-truths. Many political groups were created specifically to spin facts, distort reality and twist words to propel their candidates into office. The American Legion, as a nonpartisan organization, assumes a role of neutrality amid the storm of political rhetoric and images.

As individuals, we are free like anyone to vote as we wish and support the candidates we think best. But as Legionnaires, we have a **duty to participate in the election process** and encourage others to exercise one of the most important freedoms we, and those who served in uniform before us, fought to protect: the freedom to vote.

On the local level, an American Legion post can take on a greater role in its community by organizing and hosting a political forum or debate among candidates. Remember that any such event must be open to all who are running for a particular office, and the Legion cannot promote any one candidate. When posts are using their facilities for such events, they should remove the emblem and Legion flag to avoid the impression of endorsement for any candidate. (Note that renting out hall space to a political campaign is still fair game, as long as it is not presented as an American Legion sponsored event.) Here are some reminders from the Legion's **Get Out the Vote** brochure:

1. When hosting a voter registration drive, information and applications must be offered and available to all eligible voters.
2. Legionnaires may express partisan views, but they must do so when they are not wearing the Legion cap or other Legion attire, and without a direct connection to an American Legion post.
3. American Legion posts may coordinate forums or debates. However, posts cannot endorse or oppose a candidate, or coordinate activities with a candidate without giving his/her opponent the same opportunity.

Following these guidelines will keep the Legion above the fray without sacrificing any member's right to participate in the democratic process. It is my hope that each of you do participate in the election process individually, and posts take the lead in their communities by arranging fair debates or "meet the candidates" forums to help all of our citizens fulfill a right too often taken for granted.

**Duty. Honor. Country.**

**Dale Barnett / National Commander**



Memorial

Day

MAY 30th, 2016

**The thundering line of battle stands,  
and in the air death moans and sings,  
But day shall clasp him with strong hands,  
and night shall fold him in soft wings.**

**-Julian Grenfell (killed in action - 1915)**

### Did you serve at Camp Lejeune sometime between 1953-1987?

WATER SOURCES AT THE BASE WERE CONTAMINATED WITH INDUSTRIAL SOLVENTS THAT ARE LINKED WITH CERTAIN HEALTH CONDITIONS.

ALTHOUGH THE REGULATIONS WILL TAKE MANY MONTHS TO BE WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED, **THE AMERICAN LEGION** IS URGING ALL VETERANS WHO HAVE HEALTH CONDITIONS AND CERTAIN SURVIVING SPOUSES WHOSE SPOUSE MAY HAVE DIED FROM A HEALTH CONDITION THAT MAY BE RELATED TO SERVING AT CAMP LEJEUNE TO FILE THEIR CLAIMS NOW! PLEASE CONTACT YOUR VETERAN'S SERVICE OFFICE NOW TO GET THE PROCESS STARTED. **THE AMERICAN LEGION** WOULD BE HAPPY TO ASSIST YOU IN THAT PROCESS.

**OUR OFFICE WALK IN HOURS ARE**

**MONDAY THRU THURSDAY**

**9:00 TO 12:00 AND 1:00 TO 3:00**

**WE ARE LOCATED AT THE**

**Veterans Administration Regional Office**

**Jesse Brown VA Center**

**2122 W. Taylor St. Room 106**

**Chicago, IL. 60612 Or call us at 312-980-4266**

### Very Important Notice !!!

As indicated by Commander Tippet in his message, Legion members will be receiving a letter in the mail shortly. This letter will contain important information concerning changes to our Post by-laws and also the future of our Post Home building.

We ask that you please review the letter and return your response card as soon as possible, prior to the due date indicated. Your response card will be in the form of a pre-paid, return addressed post card. It will contain your name, boxes for your vote concerning the issues and a place for your signature. Please indicate your choices, sign your card and drop it in the mail. Your prompt attention to this matter will be greatly appreciated!



**The Four Chaplains**, also sometimes referred to as the "Immortal Chaplains" or the "Dorchester Chaplains", were four United States Army chaplains who gave their lives to save other civilian and military personnel as the troop ship *SS Dorchester* sank on February 3, 1943, during World War II. They helped other soldiers board lifeboats and gave up their own life jackets when the supply ran out. The chaplains joined arms, said prayers, and sang hymns as they went down with the ship.

The relatively new chaplains all held the rank of first lieutenant. They included Methodist minister the Reverend George L. Fox, Reform Rabbi Alexander D. Goode (Ph.D.), Roman Catholic priest the Reverend John P. Washington, and Reformed Church in America minister the Reverend Clark V. Poling. Their backgrounds, personalities, and denominations were different, although Goode, Poling and Washington had all served as leaders in the Boy Scouts of America. They met at the Army Chaplains School at Harvard University, where they prepared for assignments in the European theater, sailing on board *Dorchester* to report to their new assignments.

The *Dorchester* had been a 5,649 ton civilian cruise ship. The ship was converted for military service in World War II as a War Shipping Administration troop transport allocated to United States Army requirements. Designed for 314 civilian passengers and 90 crew, she was converted to be able to carry slightly more than 900 military passengers and crew.

The torpedo knocked out the *Dorchester's* electrical system, leaving the ship dark. Panic set in among the men on board, many of them trapped below decks. The chaplains sought to calm the men and organize an orderly evacuation of the ship, and helped guide wounded men to safety. As life jackets were passed out to the men, the supply ran out before each man had one. The chaplains removed their own life jackets and gave them to others. They helped as many men as they could into lifeboats, and then linked arms and, saying prayers and singing hymns, went down with the ship.

**As I swam away from the ship, I looked back. The flares had lighted everything. The bow came up high and she slid under. The last thing I saw, the Four Chaplains were up there praying for the safety of the men. They had done everything they could. I did not see them again. They themselves did not have a chance without their life jackets.**

— *Grady Clark, survivor*

According to some reports, survivors could hear different languages mixed in the prayers of the chaplains, including Jewish prayers in Hebrew and Catholic prayers in Latin. Only 230 of the 904 men aboard the ship were rescued. Life jackets offered little protection from hypothermia, which killed most men in the water.



## Chaplain & Service Officer

Dale Tippett (773) 259 - 4300

Our Post and Unit have actively participated in volunteering at the VA facilities in the area. I have helped out at the Jesse Brown VA, formally the West Side VA, for many years along with our late members Ed and Edith Waytula and Bernie Schwab. The included photos are from a recent visit that I made where I brought in some lap robes which were made and donated by a friend. Just another way to bring some cheer into the lives of our hospitalized brother and sister veterans.

On 8 February, in cooperation with Edison Park Post 541 and their Chaplain, Pastor Pfefer and I, members from Post 541 and Billy Caldwell Post 806 led a "Four Chaplains Remembrance Service" at Norwood Crossing in Chicago. The residents were moved by the solemn ceremony and each one was presented with a poppy.

Please read the article to the left for more information concerning the "Four Chaplains"

**Due to privacy laws remember to contact me in the event of a death or hospitalization of a member.**

Cmdr. Dale at Jesse Brown VA with other Legion Auxiliary members from other Posts and Units.

(From left) Anna May, Janet, Cmdr. Dale and Rosaland, fellow Jesse Brown VA volunteers.





(from left) National Vice Commander Dave Gough, Pete Hirt, Jim Kostka, Al Coughlin, Al Pizarro and Department of Illinois Senior Vice Cheri Stanton. Presentation of Caravan Participation Certificate.



In January, members from our Post and Auxiliary went "on the road" to meet up with the American Legion Family Membership Caravan. Our group made two of the stops in the First Division, lunch at the Post in Argo – Summitt and dinner at Evanston Post #42. Membership cards were turned in at the Argo Summitt stop from our Legion, Auxiliary and S.A.L. Where else could you have a National Vice Commander come almost to your doorstep, and talk about the American Legion and how important it is to be a member, and also visit with our Illinois legion leadership the whole family was there; Auxiliary, Sons, AL Riders, NEC, and Legion. The State Commander, State Auxiliary President and S.A.L. State Commander and others in our state American Legion Family staff. State Adjutant and Past National Commander Marty Conatser along with Lead Membership Secretary Dee Dalton rounded out the group. Membership is our life blood...we need to keep our organization going. We have to make Congress listen to us to help the Veterans of the past, present, and future.



(from left) Detachment Senior Vice Phil Shipley, Al Coughlin, Jim Kostka and Detachment of Illinois S.A.L. Commander Bill Geary. Al and Jim receiving the participation and 100% Award Certificates on behalf of the Billy Caldwell Sons of the American Legion Squadron