



THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY

STEVENS-CHUTE POST #4 and AUXILIARY BEND, OR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICAN LEGION!



COMBINED MEETING

Wednesday, Mar. 13, 2024

6 p.m.



MEETING LOCATION

**VFW POST 1643
1503 NE 4th Street, Bend**

OUR IN-PERSON MEETING PROCEDURE: Before the meeting, social time and potluck dinner starts at 6 pm, and Post and Auxiliary meetings follow about 6:30 pm. We enjoy the company of veterans and hope you'll join us. It doesn't matter where you served in the military, only that you served honorably. Families are always welcome. BYOB if you want something to drink other than water or soda. A small donation is encouraged to help defray costs of entree and supplies. Thanks!

BE THE ONE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT "BE THE ONE"

The American Legion's top priority is to reduce the rate of veteran suicide. Here are answers to common questions about the mission.

(By The American Legion, posted Wednesday, 07, February, 2024)

The American Legion launched its Be the One mission several years ago. Since then, it has steadily grown, directly leading to saving the lives of veterans on the brink of suicide, creating more awareness about the issue and pinpointing solutions.

American Legion departments, districts, and posts have thrown their support behind Be the One. American Legion Family members have hosted symposiums, conducted awareness hikes and 5Ks, and provided potentially life-saving resources to veterans in their community.

The national focus for the 2023-2024 ALA administrative year is to increase awareness about the veteran and military suicide epidemic by embracing The American Legion's Be the One mission — be the one to save one. A few experiences of people close to ALA National President Lisa

Williamson have led to this focus for our members.

On the national level, highlights include the creation of resource materials, launch of a monthly Be the One podcast in September, and the debut of a symposium at the 2023 National Convention.

But those achievements only signal the beginning. Following are some common questions and answers about Be the One.

Question: How can my post home best support Be the One?

Answer: There are many ways to lend support. Like other sanctioned American Legion initiatives, it is best to take the concept for Be the One and incorporate it into the needs of your community. For example, a large post in a populous area might want to consider a symposium or similar event where community agencies that support mental health and similar topics could present their information to veterans, their families, and others. A smaller post in a rural area might want to conduct Buddy Checks as a way to educate local veterans about Be the One and the assistance the post and other community groups can provide.

Question: Is there a preferred time to conduct a Be the One event?

Answer: The American Legion has declared the first day of each month as a

Be the One day, so that is ideal. But there is such a critical need to spread the word about preventing veteran suicide, that really any day, anytime, anywhere is a good step forward.

Question: Be the One is a great way to promote other initiatives like growing membership, supporting other causes, etc. Can we incorporate Be the One to draw attention to other priorities?

Answer: No. The American Legion's Be the One mission is the organization's highest priority, and using those words to promote another initiative would create confusion and detract from the brand.

Question: I've seen Be the One incorporated into membership drives that include Be the One panels or other activities. What's the difference?

Answer: There have been departments, districts, and post homes that have put together multi-pronged events featuring Be the One and other initiatives like a membership drive. It is completely fine to showcase Be the One as part of a larger effort that incorporates other aspects. Just be sure to use Be the One only when highlighting suicide awareness and outreach, and not for other topics.

Question: What promotional materials are available for post homes to use for their Be the One events?

Answer: There are videos, brochures, pop-up banners, wallet-sized cards, and other resources available [here](#). In the first quarter of 2024, additional resources will be added, including a toolkit.

Question: Where can I find out more about Be the One?

Answer: The Be the One webpage is regularly updated with stories, videos, resources, and more.



COMMANDER'S CORNER

Hello Everyone, and welcome to March. Hopefully since March came in like a Lion our meeting will be a little tamer.

A number of things are happening this month. The re-dedication of the Vietnam Memorial at the Deschutes Cemetery will take place on March 29th at 1PM.

Don't forget to wear some green for St. Paddy's Day. Look forward to seeing you.

Commander JW Terry

FROM THE ADJUTANT

Hello everyone! So sorry we had to cancel February's meeting. We want to always keep everyone safe. We don't make those decisions lightly. Praying that our weather will cooperate with us this month. It's been a crazy winter. Is it spring yet??

Membership renewals have slowed down a bit. Take care and let's hope the weather cooperates with us this month.

Post Adjutant Vivian Shannon

NOTES FROM THE PREZ

As National Security Chair for ALA Department of Oregon, I was honored to be invited and attend the 2024 American Legion Washington, DC conference the last week in February.

The focus on the conference was the Be The One program, as well as 13 issues for the benefit of military personnel and veterans. All the several hundred attendees had meetings on Capitol Hill with their respective members of congress, encouraging approval of bills currently in congress and support for issues not yet being considered by legislators.

I was happy to join a team with PNC Charlie Schmidt of Burns, and District 8 Cdr. Eric Stallings of North Bend. We had appoint-

***Dial 988
for Veterans Crisis Line***

ments with Sen. Jeff Merkley, and aides of Representatives Val Hoyle and Cliff Bentz, encouraging their support on these very important issues to our military families and veterans.

Posted below are the 13 issues discussed with our legislators in our grassroots effort. Please take this time to see that The American Legion is working hard to support you—our troops and veterans.

Unit President Yvonne Drury

THE AMERICAN LEGION LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR 118th CONGRESS, 2nd SESSION

The American Legion is the voice of U.S. military veterans and servicemembers. A resolution-based organization, The American Legion's positions represent the views of its nearly 1.6 million members and shape the organization's legislative priorities for the 118th Congress:

Suicide Prevention & Mental Health

Suicide remains a top issue in the veteran community. The suicide rate among veterans is nearly double that of civilian counterparts. It is imperative that we simultaneously destigmatize mental health assistance, while increasing access. The American Legion encourages Congress to robustly fund VA's suicide prevention outreach budget and peer support programs. We encourage all Americans to "Be the One" who is willing, ready, and able to have a difficult conversations about suicide and other mental health issues.

Alternative Treatments

Data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) shows that in 2021, approximately 2.8 million veterans experienced an illicit drug or alcohol use disorder, with 92.4 percent not receiving treatment. More must be done to ensure veterans have access to the effective treatments they desire. This includes expanding research and access into alternative treatments and emerging therapies.

VA Healthcare Modernization

The biggest issue in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Healthcare Modernization is the implementation of the new electronic health record modernization program (EHRM). VA has experienced difficulties as the EHRM rollout has progressed. Some issues identified were the differences in the training software compared to end-user software, along with inexperienced instruc-

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

Vivian is preparing corned beef and cabbage for St. Patrick's Day. Side suggestions for members to bring: salad or dessert.

tors providing the training to VA staff. VA made improvements on these identified issues. As the EHRM rollout is set to resume in 2024, The American Legion continues to call on Congress to provide oversight and to hold VA and other relevant parties accountable for the implementation and functioning of the EHR system.

PACT Act: Implementation & Oversight

Since the implementation of Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act, VA has screened more than 5 million veterans for toxic exposure. The average time to complete a PACT Act-related claim is 157 days. It is imperative that VA fully leverage the resources made available in the PACT Act to assist in the continued modernization of Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) information technology systems as well as the hiring of additional employees to ensure claims are adjudicated in a timely manner. The American Legion urges Congress to provide the necessary oversight and funding to ensure VA has the resources to properly implement this legislation.

Safeguard Veteran Benefits

Veterans are facing a growing threat from exploitative entities aiming to capitalize on the benefits rightfully earned through military service. These predatory actors range from claims companies charging exorbitant fees to lawyers seeking sizable portions of VA disability benefit payments. The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation to: restore criminal penalties for persons or companies that represent or charge veterans fees to file, prepare or prosecute initial VA claims without VA accreditation; and to oppose any legislation that would allow unaccredited parties to become legal representatives without completing the accreditation process. The American Legion's advocacy role remains focused on safeguarding the well-deserved benefits of those who have served.

Concurrent Receipt

There are currently 42,000 military retirees with combat-related injuries who are eligible for retirement pay from the Department of Defense (DOD) and compensation for service-connected disabilities from the VA. However, retired veterans with a disability rating below 50-percent have their VA compensation deducted from their DOD retirement pay. The American Legion strongly supports ending

this inequitable policy, where many military retirees must forfeit their retired pay to receive equal amounts of disability compensation.

Guard & Reserve GI Bill Parity

National Guard and Reserve servicemembers are being deprived of education benefits that active-duty servicemembers enjoy, despite completing the same duties. According to current law, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers only accrue GI Bill entitlement when called to active duty under federal orders. When Guard and Reserve servicemembers are activated under state orders, they do not accrue eligibility for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits like their active-duty counterparts do. The American Legion believes that every day in uniform counts and urges Congress to recognize the service of Guard and Reserve servicemembers as eligible for the GI Bill.

GI Bill for Honorable Service

To receive most VA benefits, a veteran's character of discharge or service must be "under honorable conditions." However, GI Bill education assistance benefits have a requirement that servicemembers receive an "honorable discharge." If the character of service is "general under honorable conditions," this benefit remains out of reach for these veterans. The American Legion urges Congress to correct this statutory incongruity by amending U.S. Code to allow access to VA educational assistance to veterans with general under honorable conditions discharges.

Military Quality of Life

The U.S. military's greatest resources are servicemembers and their families. Without highly qualified and committed men and women, even the most sophisticated weaponry will not provide the deterrence necessary to defend our nation. Factors contributing to quality of life include proper compensation, appropriate housing, quality healthcare, reasonably priced commissaries, and access to childcare services. The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation to expand access to affordable childcare, increase appropriations for military construction projects (including barracks and family housing), and ensuring timely access to mental healthcare.

Pay the Coast Guard

U.S. Coast Guard personnel carry out vital national security missions. Still, because the Coast Guard is under the Department of Homeland Security instead of DOD, its members are more likely to experience pay interruptions during prolonged government shutdowns. The common threat of shutdowns brings severe and unnecessary hardship on these men, women, and their families. The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation that would guarantee that Coast Guard personnel are paid in case of a shutdown.

Access to healthcare for overseas military and families

Military personnel stationed overseas in support of U.S. interests and our alliances provide a key role in deterring adversaries from a myriad of actions. However, even after the realignment of medical services in overseas and remote locations under the Defense Health Agency (DHA), major issues involving access to various types of healthcare continue. Additionally, the lack of access to certain types of care limits overseas assignments and contributes to military families being separated for extended periods of time.

Improving the military TAP

The American Legion urges Congress to direct the modernization of Transition Assistance Program (TAP) delivery using technology and performance data to ensure the DOD delivers a successful program. The creation of a mobile application, providing servicemembers with an extensive toolkit of on-demand transition-related content would improve participation and increase the benefit of transition resources available. Delivering effective transition assistance will ensure a veteran's proper reintegration from active duty to civilian life and reduce negative experiences. Improved TAP instruction will support our servicemembers in finding education, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities and send successful citizens back to our communities.

Protect the American Flag

The American Legion urges Congress to approve an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would allow Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the U.S. flag. Additionally, The American Legion urges Congress to pass the Flag Code Modernization Act of 2021 to amend the U.S. Flag Code to codify common patriotic customs and practices as described in The American Legion Resolution No. 19: Flag Code Amendment.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS

**US Naval Reserve
March 3, 1915**



**Navy Seabees
March 5, 1942**

**US Army K9 Corps
March 13, 1942**



RED SHIRT FRIDAY

(RED—Remembering Everyone Deployed)

Wear a red shirt on Fridays to show support of our service men and women

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

On March 8, International Women's Day, the ALA Foundation will *Celebrate Women of Service*. Mark your calendar and donate to the ALA Foundation in honor of a woman who inspires you.

Let's use this nationwide day of giving to commemorate our incredible community of volunteers and veterans in an effort to sustain the ALA's mission of service.

Every gift received on March 8 will benefit the ALA Foundation's Mission Endowment Fund, which financially supports ALA programs including ALA Girls Nation and co-presenting the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival!

MARCH EVENTS

March	Women's History Month
Mar 3	Navy Reserve Birthday
Mar 4	Hug a GI Day
Mar 5	Seabee Birthday
Mar 10	Post 4 & Auxiliary meetings, VFW Post , Bend, 6 p.m.
Mar 10	Daylight Saving Time begins

Mar 13	K-9 Veterans Day
Mar 15	American Legion Birthday
Mar 17	St. Patrick's Day
Mar 21	Rosie the Riveter Day
Mar 25	Medal of Honor Day
Mar 29	Vietnam Memorial re-dedication, Deschutes Memorial Gardens, 1 p.m.

OLD IRISH VERSE

(In honor of St. Patrick's Day)

May the road rise up to meet you—May the wind be always at your back, May the sun shine warm upon your face, And the rains fall soft upon the fields, And until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of His hand. Amen. *(Thanks to Bonnie Wilkins)*



Wednesday, March 13 for combined meeting

Please contact us when we can be of assistance. We are here for you!

2023-2024 Post Officers:

Cdr: 541-350-0314

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Commander J W Terry

Vice Commander Denny Shannon

Chaplain Vivian Shannon

Adjutant Vivian Shannon

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Vice President Katie Terry

Secretary Karen Banks

Treasurer Carole Jura

Chaplain Sr. Barbara Etter

Sgt-at-Arms Bonnie Wilkins

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To be removed from this email list, please email ydrury47@gmail.com with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

If you have information of interest to Veterans, please submit to Yvonne at: ydrury47@gmail.com