



## Post NL01 Year In Review

Commander Dennis Owens

2019 is coming to a close now, what a great year to be in the American Legion, our Centennial year. NL01 participated at the birthplace of the Legion in Paris this past March with many Legionnaires from all over the world. Year 2019 was busy for our Post. We grew tremendously from about 80 members at the beginning of April to over 130 in early December, which is really a lot for a Post that is not yet three years old. As I am fond of saying, "We are making History in our Post". This year, we stood up our Legion Riders Chapter and enjoyed our first ride. For me, the



highlight of 2019 was the opening of our Post Home in September when we were graced with the Best Defense Foundation with Donnie Edwards and nine WWII Veterans who liberated the Netherlands! Together with the GOC and Dutch Veterans, we have formed a brotherhood of veterans. Us working together we are already making a difference in our Tri-Border communities. We participated in both Henri Chappelle and Margraten Memorial Day ceremonies. We remembered the B-17 crew that died in the crash in Opijnen in the Netherlands, the B-17 crash site in Waldenrath Germany and the Joker B-17 crash site in Belgium. We remembered the murdered Wereth 11 in Belgium. NL01 also paid our respects to over 30 individual graves for Veterans Day followed by a group lunch. We had a blast at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities on Schinnen with Music4Vets! Our fundraisers always comprise of fine Legionnaires having a good time bringing in need funds to help our communities. In addition, 2019 was the first year that Wreaths Across America came to our namesake Margraten. Our First Annual Thanksgiving dinner was a success and I'm looking forward to the 21<sup>st</sup> of December for our First Annual Family Christmas Dinner with the GOC and the community. NL01 is, if not the best post in the Department of France, it is definitely right up on the top! During the Department Convention in June, NL01 took three Department Officer positions, Vice Commander, Sgt at Arms and Chaplain. I am so looking forward to growing more in 2020 and having a fun and productive American Legion Year. Come on 2020!

**Post Commander**

*Dennis Owens*

**1st Vice Commander**

*Jim Brotherton*

**2nd Vice Commander**

*Joshua Steinlicht*

**Finance Officer**

*John Chandler*

**Adjutant**

*Rick Ojeda*

**Sergeant-At-Arms**

*Mark Chernek*

**Service Officer**

*Ron Macauley*

**Historian**

*William Tam*

**Judge Advocate**

*Jeff Danico*

Page 2-Post NL01 Out and About
Page 3-Veterans Day
Page 4-Thanksgiving Potluck
Page 5-Wreathes Across America
Page 6-Membership Announcements
Page 7-Training Opportunity
Page 8-October Meeting Recap
Page 9-November Meeting Recap
Page 10 Upcoming Events

# Post NL01 Out and About

## Waldenrath Memorial-14 October

Post NL01 visited the crash site of B-17 Tail Number 42-3195 from the 305th Bomb Group, shot down on 14 October 1943 on a mission to Schweinfurt, Germany. It was one of the bloodiest days of aerial combat in WWII and is remembered as "Black Thursday." Fighter escorts were unable to protect the bombers after they crossed the German border, leaving the bomber formations to face the Luftwaffe on their own. 291 bombers departed England that day. 17 crashed upon return, 121 needed repairs (and brought dead or wounded crewmen with them), an 60 were shot down resulting in over 600 Airmen lost over enemy territory. 4 crewmembers of 42-3195 perished in the crash, and 6 were taken as POWs and survived their time in captivity.



# Veterans Day



Margraten Post NL01 observed Veterans Day by paying their respects to the fallen at Henri Chappelle American Cemetery in Belgium followed by a visit to our namesake, the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten, in the Netherlands. A wreath was laid at each of the cemeteries and 30 roses were placed at graves special to our Post, including members of the Wereth 11, Medal of Honor recipient Truman Kimbro, Lt William Nellis, the three Tester brothers, Sgt John W. Farrington, Lt Carl Booth, Flight Nurse Wilma "Dolly" Vinsant, PFC Amaroso Carmelo, and graves of the Unknown. A special thanks to Andy Clevenger for researching each of the graves, allowing us to share the story of every fallen member as we placed the roses.



## Post NL01 1st Annual Thanksgiving Potluck

Post NL01 hosted our first annual Thanksgiving Potluck on Saturday, 23 November. The event was a great success, with over 60 attendees from Post NL01, our Dutch counterparts from the Geunifomeerden Ontmoetingscentrum, the community, and their families. Live musical entertainment was provided by Music 4 Vets Nederlands and guests enjoyed a 50/50 raffle and a photo booth.



# Wreaths Across America Stops at Margraten

For the first time ever, Wreaths Across America stopped at the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten on 1 December. This is only the second year the program has operated in Europe (last year they graced the Normandy American Cemetery). Post NL01 performed a Color Guard for the opening ceremony and helped with the unpacking and placement of wreaths, alongside multiple American and Dutch groups and community members. The wreaths were on display until 4 December, and once again Post NL01 stepped up to help with the clean-up.



## Why Should You Renew Your Membership!?

The American Legion is the veterans voice to our government. When I say 'veteran', it is the active duty military member who puts on that uniform every day. It is the person who served their country, whether for two years or 20+ years. It is the person who missed countless birthdays, anniversaries, that child's first sport or school play. Couldn't be there when that family member passed away.

The American Legion is that voice that tells government there has to be improvements in the VA system. It is the voice that tells courts that the war memorial honoring our fallen still matters and should not be torn down. The American Legion is that voice that says our military veteran deserves better and fights everyday to get that word out.

We cannot be that voice without you. We cannot get that word out, without your help.

Helping that veteran and giving that voice to the American Legion is simple. You don't even have to leave the comfort of your home. Just go on-line to the American Legion site, click on 'Join Us'. We cannot do this without you. Help yourself, help the veteran, renew your membership today.

Your membership is good world wide, in more than 12,000 American Legion Posts. Renewing is as easy as visiting the American Legion website. If you have any questions about how to go about continuing as a valued American Legion member please contact 1st Vice Commander Jim Brotherton.

## Become an American Legion Ambassador...

...by completing American Legion Basic Training ! This online self-paced course is available for FREE to all members. Learn about the history of the American Legion and the organization's four pillars: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. The course takes approximately two hours to complete. You can stop at anytime and pick up where you left off at a later time. Upon completion, you will receive a certificate and be eligible to wear a graduate pin on your cap. If you have recently completed the course, be sure to let a Post Executive Committee member know so you can be recognized at the next general membership meeting.

Link to Training: <https://www.legion.org/alei/basic-training>

## Help Expand our American Legion Family!

We are still looking for founding members of our local chapters of the American Legion Auxiliary (open to all spouses and female descendants of Veterans), Sons of the American Legion, and Post Honor Guard! Contact any member of the Post Executive Committee if you are interested!



From the Department of France Newsletter

News from the Department Service Officer:

Our Department Service Office is getting swamped with new Claims! We need your support. We will be offering a basic PSO training course on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2020. Anyone may attend this time. The course will give you an insight on how a PSO may help a Veteran. It will not allow you to “assist” the Veteran in filing a claim. You will learn the following:

- What forms are needed
- POC of our, current, 3 American Legion VA Reps
- What are presumptive condition
- What are secondary conditions
- Survivor Death Benefits
- Foreign Medical Program
- And so on...

At the end of the course, you will have to take a test. Upon successful completion of the test, you will awarded a certificate at the 3<sup>rd</sup> DEC the next day.

We need your support!

AMERICAN LEGION  
DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE

## Post Service Officer Training

### MARCH 20, 2020 Katterbach, Germany

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF FRANCE  
IS PRESENTING THEIR  
POST SERVICE OFFICER TRAINING COURSE.

THIS TRAINING COURSE IS TO PROVIDE  
GUIDANCE FOR THE PSO TO BE ABLE TO BETTER  
ASSIST THE VETERAN WITH THEIR  
VA BENEFIT CLAIM.

**INSTRUCTOR**

Frank Phillips: Department Service Officer

**REGISTRATION:**  
**REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED!**  
Please send an e mail to the Department Service Officer  
[Frank.Phillips2@va.gov](mailto:Frank.Phillips2@va.gov)

UPON COMPLETION OF THIS TRAINING, THE PARTICIPANTS  
WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE A TEST.  
ALL PARTICIPANTS THAT PASSED THE TEST, WILL RECIEVE A  
„TRAINED“ CERTIFICATE PRESENTED TO THEM AT THE DEC,  
THE FOLLOWING DAY.

**LOCATION**

Training Seminar  
Welcome Center, BLDG 5515, Room 316, 91522 Katterbach  
Dinner, March 20, 2020  
Gasthaus Goldener Stern, Ansbacher Str. 3, 91560 Heilsbronn

**PROGRAM**

**0730-0800**  
CHECK-IN /REGISTRATION

**0800-0900**  
PSO DUTIES / RESPONSIBILITIES  
VA POLICIES

**0900-1200**  
SMART CLAIM  
BASIC CLAIM - STEP BY STEP

**1200-1245**  
LUNCH BREAK - LEGION HOME

**1245-1345**  
FOREIGN MEDICAL PROGRAM

**1345-1500**  
CLAIM PROCESSING /TIPS

**1500-1600**  
TEST

**1830-????**  
DINNER IN HEILSBRONN  
with  
DSO, ADSO  
DPT COMMANDER

**21 March - 0900**  
DEC - KATTERBACH

**BE ON TIME!**  
We have limited time  
to complete the  
training.

Hotel rooms are available at:

www.goldner-stern-heilsbronn.de	www.hotel-windmuehle.de
SINGL: 47€ /DBL 70€ (7 miles to DEC)	DBL 70€ (9 Miles to DEC)
15 rooms blocked for us. mention „Frank“	no rooms blocked for us.

## Meeting Recap-October

The October general membership meeting took place on 18 October with 19 members and 5 guests in attendance. Commander Dennis Owens welcomed everyone to our second meeting in our new location and was happy to announce that the meeting room will officially belong to Post NL01 starting 01 January 2020. The Post has already started collecting items to hang on the walls, including a welcome letter from the mayor of Kerkrade and plaques signed by the 9 WWII veterans that attended our grand opening.

The meeting continued with Post Officer reports. 2nd Vice Commander Josh Steinlicht announced that the Post has a tentative fundraiser on 1 March bagging groceries and emphasized the importance of more members participating in all of our Post events. Finance Officer John Chandler presented the current financial reports for the post and reviewed the costs associated with the grand opening event. Service Officer Ron Macauley announced that VA Representatives would be available for one on one meetings on 6 and 7 November. Sergeant at Arms Mark Cherek spoke about the upcoming Faces of Margraten event in May 2020. Approximately 3/4 of all graves have photos, but further research is needed to find photos of the remaining members interred at the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten. He also announced that we are still looking for members of the Post to join the honor guard. There was also discussion that the American Legion Riders may be invited to participate in Roermond's Veterans Day parade in June 2020, more details will come at a later date.

Several upcoming events were discussed as part of unfinished and new business. A pancake breakfast run by the Cub Scouts to raise money for books and supplies on 9 November was announced, with the members in attendance voting and approving the use of Post funds to purchase supplies for the Cub Scouts. The First Annual Thanksgiving Potluck was also announced. The Post's plans for Veterans Day were announced to include visits to Henri Chapelle in Belgium and Margraten. Post Chaplain Scott Eidson then spoke about the Waldenrath B-17 Memorial the Post had visited earlier in the week and proposed forming a committee to act as the curator for these local sites. After discussion the proposal was withdrawn and instead a new committee to compile a list of all memorials and events was proposed and approved. Finally, dates and times for both Wreathes Across America and Bastogne were announced.

Next, new member Brett Goodwin was inducted into the American Legion and received his pin. Tom Akerboom was also presented with his pins and certificate. Sergeant-At-Arms Cherek then presented Commander Owens with a custom made walking stick. The guest speaker for the evening was Linda Smith, who spoke about her time working in the VA. She presented the Post with six maps of Europe from 1946, along with a few other maps. The meeting concluded with an agreement that in future meetings there would be a short comfort break and that a 5 Euro fine would be implemented for cell phones ringing during meetings. The meeting was adjourned and followed by a social hour and meal.



## Meeting Recap-November

The November general membership meeting took place on 15 November with 14 members and 3 guests in attendance. The meeting started with our guest speaker for the evening, Sean Kille. Sean shared the history of Wreathes Across America and how he got involved with the program overseas. He gave an overview of the program's planned visit to Margraten and how our Post could help at the event. Commander Dennis Owens presented Sean with an American Legion Centennial coin as a thank you in recognition of everything he has done to help honor fallen service members overseas.

The meeting continued with officer reports. 2nd Vice Commander Josh Steinlicht reviewed the pancake breakfast held by the Cub Scouts. They served 88 plates and raised over 600 euros in profit and donations. He also highlighted the Thanksgiving Pot Luck on 23 November, which would include a dessert auction and a 50/50 raffle. Finally, he reminded everyone of our next fundraiser on 15 March bagging groceries at the commissary and of the 5 euro fine for cell phones going off during meetings. Finance Officer John Chandler presented the current financial report, which was accepted and passed by members. Post Commander Dennis Owens spoke on behalf of the Service Officer, recapping the VA reps visiting on 6 and 7 November. VA reps will be back in January, and in February we will try to have a claims clinic to assist members of our post. Department Sergeant-At-Arms Andy Clevenger and Post Commander Owens then initiated five members; Christopher Scott, Leonel Rubio, Epaphroditus Gordon, Gabriel Arzola, and Jennifer Meade.

After a short break, the meeting continued with new business. Further discussion about the Thanksgiving Potluck was followed by a request from the Geilenkirchen Top 3 to support Thanksgiving baskets for junior enlisted. An initial motion to donate 300 euro was amended to increase the donation to 500 euro and was passed. Our Post Home provides an opportunity to raise funds for requests like this, but we need two volunteers Wednesdays to Fridays to man the Post. Commander Owens and Josh Steinlicht volunteered to man the GOC on Fridays, Rick Ojeda on Thursdays, and John Chandler on Wednesdays. Tom Akerboom volunteered to be the Post Home Manager. More volunteers are needed.

The Post announced and recognized a recently Departed Member. Honorary Member Charles Maupin passed away just days shy of his 100th birthday. The meeting wrapped up with open points of order for the membership. Jennifer Meade was presented with her Eifel Tower cap pin. Andy Clevenger presented frames and pictures of the WWII veterans that were present at our post Grand Opening, and Commander Owens thanked Andy for all that he did to support and organize the Veterans Days ceremonies at Margraten and Henri Chapelle. Finally, Cub Scout Pack 100 presented a hand-made thank you card to the Post for the support provided during the pancake breakfast, and it was announced that the Pine Wood Derby would be held at our Post on the 11th of January.



## Upcoming Events

13-15 December 2019

Bastogne, Belgium

Multiple events commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge

20 December 2019

General Membership Meeting

Doors open at 1700, Gavel at 1730

Guest speaker is Lt Col Jos Groen, author of *Three of the Last Screaming Eagles*

21 December 2019

GOC/American Legion Family Christmas Dinner

Doors open at 1300, food begins at 1400

Cost is 7 Euro per person (two drinks included), free for children under 12

11 January 2020

Cub Scouts Pinewood Derby at Post NL01

17 January 2020

General Membership Meeting

Doors open at 1700, Gavel at 1730

8 February 2020

Post Oratorical Competition

22 February 2020

Department Oratorical Competition

Volunteering is rewarding! Our Post is trying to get our home open Wednesday through Friday evenings from 17:00 to 22:00 for Legionnaires and friends to come by and have a coffee or a beer, soon a bite to eat as well. Or better yet, a conversation about your Veterans Benefits. Do you have all of them??? But to make this happen, we need a few of you to volunteer to help us out. Please contact Post Commander Dennis Owens if you wish to help us out!

