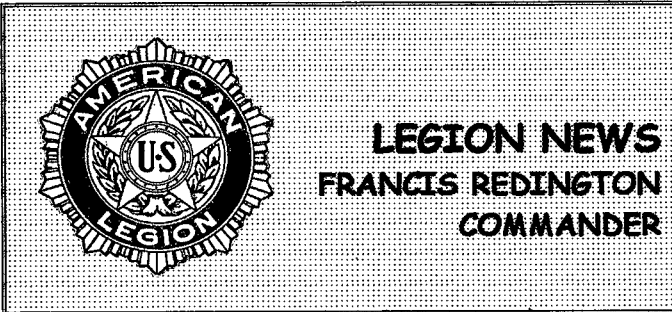


CENTENNIAL POST 209

THE AMERICAN LEGION

DECEMBER 1999



Our Early Bird Dinner was very good, in fact, the best ever. If you weren't there, you missed a very good dinner and excellent entertainment. The entertainment was the Senior Center Line Dancers. They showed us the dance routines they perform for Senior Centers and other groups on request. They were very good and their dancing interesting. They were the perfect end to the dinner. Thank you very much, ladies.

We were visited by the District 7 officers: District Commander Herb Davis, Finance Officer Edmund White, Service Officer Neal Thomas, Oratorical Officer Harry MacFadden and Post 38 Commander Ernest Champigny. All the District Officers gave reports for their office which were interesting and informative. The District Commander reported that membership is coming along but we should not let up in our efforts to reach out goals. Ann reported that we are at the 2/3rds mark of

our 308 membership quota. This is a sign we are moving in the right direction and need to work harder to get all the veterans we can into our Post to enable us to help more. It is very important that we remember all the homeless veterans as the Holidays get closer. If you know of a needy veteran family, please let us know so we can help them. Many children are in these families affected, as well as the adults.

I hope your Thanksgiving was happy and wish you good health throughout the Holiday Season.

Keep Ruth Hornik in your thoughts and prayers as she continues to improve from her surgery on November 15th. God Bless You, Ruth.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

ADJUTANT ANNOTATIONS - Ann Foster

As Commander Redington said we are two-thirds of the way to our goal of 308 for the Legion year 2000. We are still getting memberships in the mail and that is very good. Please keep up the good work. Just remember we have to take you off the mailing list by the end of January, if you have not paid, so go ahead and get that check in now and you won't have to worry about missing your Legion magazine, The Colorado Legionnaire, and this newsletter. With an election year coming up, you should want to keep up with issues of concern to veterans. Your membership is one way to do that.

Dear Abby has recently kicked off the 15th year of bringing goodwill and cheer to the members of the Armed Forces. Through her column she solicits patriotic Americans to send cards and letters to service members stationed overseas during the holiday season. This project is called Operation DEAR ABBY.

There are four addresses for the 1999 holiday season. These mail hubs receive the mail and distribute it on a fair share basis to all services across the board.

To send mail to a specific area, address it to the closest geographic hub, which distributes the mail to all services in the area that it supports. In order for the system to cover the widest

possible area, the addresses must remain generic. These addresses are only open until January 15. To ensure mail is received within the required time window and falls within the Department of Defense security guidelines, mail is limited to First Class letter mail 13 ounces of less only.

The addresses are as follows:

Any Service Member
OPERATION DEAR ABBY
APO AE 09135
(Serves Europe/Southwest Asia)

Any Service Member
OPERATION DEAR ABBY
FPO AE 09646
(Serves Mediterranean Basin)

Any Service Member
OPERATION DEAR ABBY
APO AP 96285
(Serves Far East)

Any Service Member
OPERATION DEAR ABBY
FPO AP 96385
(Serves Pacific Basin)

Please consider boosting the morale of our active duty troops far away from home by sending them a card!

Department Mid-Year Conference will be 28 - 30 January 2000 at the Holiday Inn just off Garden of the Gods Road right here. This is a golden chance to expand your knowledge of The American Legion. Plan now to attend!

**Don't Forget
the Annual
Christmas
Party**

**18 Dec 99
Dinner served
at 7:00 P.M.**

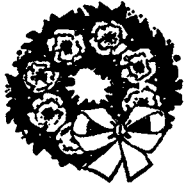


**VFW Post 4051- 430 E Pikes
Peak Avenue**

There will be a musical entertainment for your dancing and listening pleasure. It is the same duo who played last year. Dancing will begin after the meal.

RSVP to either Harry Johnson at 596-9261 or Larry Johnson 590-1369 by 12 December 1999

SEE YOU THERE



CHRISTMAS PARTY - DECEMBER 18

Menu for Christmas Party is sliced smoked turkey with apple bread dressing, country sliced baked ham with cranberry fruit glaze, corn and broccoli casserole with two cheeses, whipped potatoes with gravy, fresh fruit salad, Black Forest cake, iced tea, lemonade and coffee. Cost \$9.00 per person, We will have the Gold Rush duo for your listening and dancing pleasure. Cocktails at 6:00 P.M., Dinner 7:00 P.M.

RSVP BY DECEMBER 12

**HARRY JOHNSON - 596-9261
COMMANDER REDDINGTON - 471-4925**



A Christmas Poem Twas the Night Before Christmas

'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS,
HE LIVED ALL ALONE,
IN A ONE BEDROOM HOUSE MADE OF
PLASTER AND STONE.
I HAD COME DOWN THE CHIMNEY
WITH PRESENTS TO GIVE,
AND TO SEE JUST WHO
IN THIS HOME DID LIVE.
I LOOKED ALL ABOUT,
A STRANGE SIGHT DID I SEE,
NO TINSEL, NO PRESENTS
NOT EVEN A TREE.
NO STOCKING BY MANTLE,
JUST BOOTS FILLED WITH SAND,
ON THE WALL HUNG PICTURES
OF FAR DISTANT LANDS.
WITH MEDALS AND BADGES, AWARDS OF ALL KINDS,
A SOBER THOUGHT
CAME THROUGH MY MIND.
FOR THIS HOUSE WAS DIFFERENT,
IT WAS DARK AND DREARY,
I FOUND THE HOME OF A SOLDIER,
ONCE I COULD SEE CLEARLY,
THE SOLDIER LAY SLEEPING,
SILENT, ALONE,
CURLED UP ON THE FLOOR
IN THIS ONE BEDROOM HOME.
THE FACE WAS GENTLE,
THE ROOM IN SUCH DISORDER,
NOT HOW I PICTURED
A UNITED STATES SOLDIER.
WAS THIS THE HERO OF WHOM
I'D JUST READ?
CURLED UP ON A PONCHO,
THE FLOOR FOR A BED?
I REALIZED THE FAMILIES
THAT I SAW THIS NIGHT,
OWED THEIR LIVES TO THESE SOLDIERS
WHO WERE WILLING TO FIGHT.
SOON ROUND THE WORLD.
THE CHILDREN WOULD PLAY,
AND GROWNUPS WOULD CELEBRATE
A BRIGHT CHRISTMAS DAY.
THEY ALL ENJOYED FREEDOM
EACH MONTH OF THE YEAR.
BECAUSE OF THE SOLDIERS,
LIKE THE ONE LYING HERE.
I COULDN'T HELP WONDER
HOW MANY LAY ALONE.
ON A COLD CHRISTMAS EVE
IN A LAND FAR FROM HOME.

THE VERY THOUGHT
BROUGHT A TEAR TO MY EYE,
I DROPPED TO MY KNEES
AND STARTED TO CRY.
THE SOLDIER AWAKENED
AND I HEARD A ROUGH VOICE,
"SANTA DON'T CRY,
THIS LIFE IS MY CHOICE:
I FIGHT FOR FREEDOM,
I DON'T ASK FOR MORE,
MY LIFE IS MY GOD,
MY COUNTRY, MY CORPS."
THE SOLDIER ROLLED OVER
AND DRIFTED TO SLEEP,
I COULDN'T CONTROL IT,
I CONTINUED TO WEEP.
I KEPT WATCH FOR HOURS,
SO SILENT AND STILL
AND WE BOTH SHIVERED
FROM THE COLD NIGHT'S CHILL.
I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE
ON THAT COLD, DARK, NIGHT,
THIS GUARDIAN OF HONOR
SO WILLING TO FIGHT.
THEN THE SOLDIER ROLLED OVER,
WITH A VOICE SOFT AND PURE,
WHISPERED, "CARRY ON SANTA,
IT'S CHRISTMAS DAY, ALL IS SECURE."
ONE LOOK AT MY WATCH,
AND I KNEW HE WAS RIGHT.
"MERRY CHRISTMAS MY FRIEND,
AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT"

This poem was written by a Marine stationed in Okinawa Japan.
The following is his request. I think it is reasonable.

Please would you do me the kind favor of sending this to as many
people as you can?

Christmas will be coming soon and some credit is due to our US
service men and women for our being able to celebrate these
festivities.

Let's try in this small way to pay a tiny bit of what we owe. Make
people stop and think of our heroes, living and dead, who sacrificed
themselves for us.