



# Bolingbrook Legionnaire



American Legion Post #1288

P.O. Box 1133 • Bolingbrook, IL 60440

An Award Winning Post Newsletter

May 2003

Volume 6, Number 5

On the Web: <http://members.aol.com/ilam1288>

## POPPY DAYS AROUND CORNER

Bolingbrook Poppy Days are set for May 9 and 10. Post 1288 will again join with VFW Post 5917 to distribute Poppies on the second Friday and Saturday in May. This is an important fund raiser for the post as it is the only one which provides funds for posts' use in local programs and projects that benefit veterans' activities.

**If you do not participate in any other post activity, your help with this effort would be most appreciated. A volunteer slip is included on page 3. Please fill it out and bring it to the May meeting or mail it in to the post.**

In order to accommodate our busy schedules the collection times will start on the following schedule. The length of participation is requested to be at least two hours, more if possible. Let's meet:

- Friday, May 9 – Dunkin' Donuts – IL 53 & Beaconridge**  
6:00 a.m. for 6:30 rush hour collections (I-55 & Weber, I-55 and IL. 53, etc.)
- Friday and Saturday, May 9 and 10 – Dunkin' D's**  
8: 30 a.m. for 9:00 streets and stores collections.  
12:30 p.m. for 1:00 streets and stores collections.  
3:30 p.m. for 4:00 rush hour streets and stores collections  
6:30 p.m. for 7:00 – 9:00 night stores collections

## MEMBERSHIP STATUS

We are up to 111 renewals and new post members. We reached our last year's total of 110. Thank you to all who have renewed and joined. There are still about 18 members who have not yet renewed. Please do not let your membership lapse and lose your years of continuous membership. Please send in your \$25.00 renewal to the Post at P.O. Box 1133. We, and the Nation, continue to need your support.

### Post Officers

Commander	Mel Hansen	630.739.4439
Sr. Vice Cmndr	Leroy Greiman	630.378.0051
Jr. Vice Cmndr	Phil Carpenter	630.378.1439
Adjutant	Joe Rojek	630.759.6450
Finance Officer	Wayne Macejak	630.378.6223
Service Officer	Wayne Macejak	630.378.6223
Chaplain	Wayne Ward	630.759.4470
Sgt.-at-Arms	Frank Zwettler	630.759.1575
Historian	Bettye Carter	630.378.1433

## POST DISPLAY AT VILLAGE HALL

The Bolingbrook Historic Preservation Commission offered Post 1288 the chance to display information about the Post and the American Legion in one of its 7 display cases in Village Hall. The display was set up April 23<sup>rd</sup> and will remain for at least a month and perhaps as long as 3 months.

The display is located in the middle entrance portion of Village Hall just outside the glass door entrance to the Village Clerk's service area (Village vehicle stickers, pet tags, etc.). It is a glass tower about 2 ft. square and contains five shelves. Our display features information about the Post and Legion programs.

Check it out.

## HOW THE LEGION BEGAN

Ever wonder how the Legion came into being? Read the first hand account of the 1919 Paris Caucus beginning on page 3. Our Post has a connection to that location. One of our members is married to a member of Paris Post 1.

## COMING EVENTS

- Friday, May 2: Bolingbrook H.S. ROTC Awards Night
- Monday, May 5: 7:30 p.m.: Post Meeting, Levy Center, 251 Canterbury Lane.
- Friday and Saturday, May 9 and 10: Poppy Days in Bolingbrook..
- Sunday, May 11: Mother's Day – Fly your American Flag.
- Thursday, May 15: Peace Officers Memorial Day – Fly your American Flag at half-staff.
- Friday, May 16, 8:00p.m.: County Meeting: Crete 1291 – Post Everlasting, Election of Officers
- Monday, May 26, Memorial Day Observance, 9:00: Boardman Cemetery, 9:45: Hill Crest Cemetery, 11:00: Village Veterans Memorial 375 W. Briarcliff.
- Monday, June 2, 7:30 p.m.: Post Meeting Levy Center, 251 Canterbury Lane – **Election of Officers**
- Monday, June 9, 7:30 p.m.: VAC Meeting, 128 N. Scott, Joliet.
- Friday, June 20, County Meeting: Frankfort-Mokena Post 2000. Location to be announced.

Post #1288 meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the Month in the Levy Senior Center, 251 Canterbury Lane at 7:30 p.m.

American Legion Motto: *Get Involved*

## LEGION LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Wayne Macejak and Bettye Carter will be attending the 11<sup>th</sup> District Legion Leadership Seminar on May 10<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. till 2:30 p.m. at Elburn Post #630. The Post 1288 will pay their \$5.00 registration.

## 11<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT RAFFLE TICKETS

The 11<sup>th</sup> District raffle tickets to support the Hospitality Room at the Department convention (July 8 – 12 in Peoria this year) are still available. The Post 1288 has a number of tickets at \$5.00 each for a chance on a \$500.00 raffle. The tickets will be available at the May post meetings while they last.

## CORRECTION

Last month's article on the Legion Dental Insurance Program contained a misprint for the phone number. It should read 800.522.1857. Please accept our apology for any inconvenience this may have caused.

## POST SPONSORS BOYS STATE DELEGATE

Post 1288 will sponsor a youth to Boys State again this year. At the April meeting the Post voted to expend \$205 to sponsor a young man completing his junior year. The delegate will be selected by Bolingbrook High School staff on the basis of demonstrated leadership potential, academic consideration and character. The name of the young man will be announced at the High School awards program on May 20<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in learning more about what Boy's State is and does, check out the web site at: <http://www.eiu.edu/~boysstate/>

**Legion stuff.** All sorts of cool Legion stuff can be ordered from Emblem Sales. Call 1.888.624.4466 for a Legion Catalog, or visit the on-line catalog at [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org) and click on Emblem Sales.

## POT OF GOLD

If Alfredo Punzalan had been in attendance at our April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, he would have won the Pot of Gold, currently is worth \$78.25. Each meeting, those in attendance contribute a quarter to the Pot of Gold. At the end of the meeting a member's name is drawn. If the member is at the meeting, he/she wins.

**POW-MIA**  
**Never Forgotten**

## THANK YOU

Thanks to Wayne Macejak and Eldon Laffoon who represented Post 1288 at the April 22<sup>nd</sup> Village meeting. They assisted in the Village's recognition of May 9-10 as Poppy Days here in Bolingbrook and distributed Poppies.

Thanks to Wayne Macejak and Joe Rojek for representing the Post at the May 1 Support the Troops rally at Bolingbrook Performing Arts Center behind Village Hall.

Thanks to Mel Hansen for representing the Post at the Village Prayer Breakfast May 1 at Joyful Spirit's new church.

## WELCOME TO POST 1288

Welcome to the Legion and Post 1288 Rick Hazen

## POST RECOGNIZES STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Our Legion Post will again honor the achievements of outstanding students at Bolingbrook and Romeoville High School.

The Post will provide each of Bolingbrook's Air Force Jr. ROTC program and Romeoville's Marine Corps Jr. ROTC program with the American Legion ROTC Military Excellence Medal and the ROTC Scholastic Excellence Medal. Selections are made by the ROTC staff.

The Military Excellence Medal is presented annually to one third- or fourth-year cadet (in a 4-year program) based on the cadet's general military excellence. Each cadet must rank in the top 25% of their Jr. ROTC class and demonstrate outstanding qualities in military leadership, discipline, character, and citizenship.

The Scholastic Excellence Medal is presented annually to one third- or fourth-year cadet (in a 4-year program) based on the cadet's overall scholastic achievements. The cadet must rank in the top 10% of the high school class, the top 25% of the ROTC class, demonstrate leadership qualities and actively participate in student activities.

The Post also provides Scholastic Achievement Medals to Bolingbrook High School graduating Seniors. Gold medals are awarded to each academic 1<sup>st</sup> place boy and girl. Silver Medals are awarded to the 2<sup>nd</sup> place boy and girl.

## The Paris Caucus, March 15 – 17, 1919

by J. Edward Radley.

Reprinted from *The Prairie Stater Illinois American Legion News*, February 1981 Vol. VIII, No. 4

*1981 Editor's note: National Past President J Edward Radley has continued his active role in the American Legion since his presence at the Paris Caucus.*

The Armistice of November 11, 1918, brought restlessness and discontent to the men of the AEF, most of them enlisted and drafted men. The war was won and their job of winning the war was done. They wanted to go home but they could not realize the magnitude of the task involved in transporting the millions in the AEF back to the U.S. The morale of the soldiers was so low that army discipline was crumbling and falling into chaos.

General Headquarters of the A.E.F decided to take steps to eliminate the crumbling morale and ordered 20 non-regular army officers, mostly lieutenant colonels, to a meeting in Paris. They reported on Feb. 15, 1919 and met at No. 4 Avenue Gabriel. A very comprehensive study was given to the problem and a number of recommendations were drafted to better the life of the soldiers and bolster the sagging army morale.

The meeting lasted until nearly midnight and it was decided that they should direct their organization work to creating an organization of discharged soldiers that would reflect the opinion of these ex-soldiers and work for their betterment in peacetime. They realized that it would be difficult to have a caucus in France as delegates would be subject to



Only known photo of the Paris Caucus of the Legion as it met in the Cirque de Paris on March 17, 1919.

military rules and regulations but they decided that a meeting in Paris, France would add tradition and a later meeting would be held in the U.S. free of military domination to complete the organization.

On March 11, 1919, a small group of these organizers met at the Inter-Allied Officers Club in Paris, France, and made final arrangements for the caucus. The caucus was called to order at 2:55 p.m. at the American Club, 9 Gabriel Ave., Paris, on March 15, 1919. The late hour was necessary to give army privates more time to travel. The

officers, who had money and got U.S. Travel Orders, made up 90% of the delegates. The lowly private either got dubious Travel Orders or "thumbed" his way. He had little left of his monthly \$30.00 base pay, after paying for his War Risk Insurance (he paid for insurance on his life) and sending an allotment home. General Headquarters U.S. Army, permitted delegates to leave their posts - but did not officially sanction or disapprove the caucus. It must be noted that the caucus procedures were contrary to military law. Generals and privates, on

Yes, I will help Post 1288 with Poppy Days for 2003! I can help with the following shifts:

**Friday, May 9 – meet at Dunkin' Donuts – IL 53 & Beaconridge**

- 6:00 a.m. for 6:30 – 8:15 rush hour collections (I-55 & Weber, I-55 and IL. 53, etc.)

**Fri. – Sat. May 9 – 10 meet at Dunkin' Donuts – IL 53 & Beaconridge**

- 8: 30 a.m. for 9:00 - Noonish streets and stores collections.  
  12:30 p.m. for 1:00 – 3:00 streets and stores collections.  
  3:30 p.m. for 4:00 – 6:00 rush hour streets and stores collections  
  6:30 p.m. for 7:00 – 9:00 night stores collections  
 I cannot make it out to help, but here is a contribution to help the Post's program.

Name:

Return at Post meeting  
 May 5 or mail to the  
 Post at P.O. Box 1133,  
 Bolingbrook, IL 60440

the floor, deliberately shed their rank and debated as equals. Each man was already regarding himself as a civilian, free of military rank and status, and enjoyed the "no rank" rule.

Major E. F. Wood served as temporary chairman in the place of Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. who had been returned to the US. He explained the Feb. 15, 1919 meeting and the steps that had preceded the Paris Caucus. Lt. Col. Bennett C. Clark was named as presiding chairman and he made an impassioned plea that the organization serve to protect the U.S. against future dangers, from within and without, and the urgent 'need to preserve American patriotism as wartime soldiers knew it.

No meeting was arranged for Saturday, March 16, 1919, but soldiers kept pouring in until more than 1100 officers and men were in attendance. No one kept count! 487 registered who had Travel Orders – all Regular soldiers, but many soldiers came from leave areas attracted by the fun and sport in Paris. The closing session, on Sunday, March 17, 1919 was moved to the Cirque de Paris, an amusement hall that had been taken over by the Y.M.C.A. that provided greater seating capacity for the caucus. The first order of business was to appoint a committee of five to call on President Woodrow Wilson to invite him to address the caucus. President Wilson was in Paris attending the negotiating sessions of the Inter-Allied War Council discussing peace treaties. He did not go to the caucus!

The committees read their reports, which had been prepared the previous

day, and they were taken up in order: Five names were suggested: "Legion of the Great War", "Veterans of the Great War"; "The Legion"; "Society of the Great War" and "American Legion". The name "American Legion" was adopted upon motion of Maj. M. K. Gordon, Madisonville, Ky. The Committee on Constitution gave its report that included plans for the proposed organization and outlined eligibility requirements. The opening paragraph of the report contained the fundamental principles, re-worded and refined, at the St. Louis caucus; that became the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion and remains unchanged to this date.

The Committee on Permanent Organization recommended that the officers be designated as: President, Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and a Board of Directors. This reflected the intention to create a civilian organization conforming to the precedent established in the parliamentary proceedings of the caucus that had banned military titles and military rank among the delegates.

The Committee on Convention recommended that a later convention be held in the U.S. with delegates to be chosen from the different military units of the U.S. Army that had served in the World War. The caucus disapproved this report and passed a substitute motion that representation be based on the "place of residence" not on military unit service.

Differences were growing by the hour and many delegates demanded that unsettled matters should be left to the later caucus to be held in the United States. Routine business was transacted

and a motion was adopted that the reports of the Committee on Convention and Committee on Permanent Organization be referred to a new committee of 15 to be appointed by the chairman.

After a recess to 3:30 p.m. the new report was adopted that an Executive Committee be named "to go back home" and organize groups of veterans in every community then have another caucus with a broader base; that the Executive Cmte. members should be named from every state of the Union.

Compliant to this direction a 50-man Executive Cmte. was named from officers and enlisted men of the delegations present who had registered at the caucus.

A deficit had occurred in the expenses of the caucus and regular officers agreed to pay an assessment of twenty francs each that realized 3320 francs and paid the debt. The several committees and the Y.M.C.A. were commended and thanked.

Nothing that was done nor any of the business that was transacted at the caucus was final. Everything was temporary and in preparation for the caucus to be held in the United States only seven weeks away.

In retrospect, it is remarkable that a large, unwieldy and contentious group of soldiers took a groping idea and transformed it into a nationwide organization. It conceived the idea of The American Legion in Paris and the birth of the organization followed at the second caucus in St. Louis. where the permanent organization came-into being.