

Welcome to the American Legion  
**FIRST DIVISION**  
Newsletter



Commander  
Gigi Callaway

First Division is Online  
at

<http://www.ilfirstdivision.org>

**Newsletter for September 2019**

### **First Division Commander Gigi Callaway**

First, I would like to thank all of you that attended or participated in the installation. There was a good display of camaraderie which was evident that day and a good time was had by all. A personal Thank you goes out to the Kendal and Elizabeth Bishop for stepping up that day, it truly made a difference.

The month finished with many of us attending the National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana as we embarked on the 101<sup>st</sup> Legion year. Our Past Commander Joe Lampert, Fifth District Commander Dee Dearbone, Department of Illinois Membership Director Chad Woodburn and many more made their way to Florida for the start of this year's Legacy Run. Some may have followed their journey on Facebook which appeared to be very memorable. Additionally, our past Department Commander, Cheri Stanton, became the National Director for the Women Legionnaires' Honor Society. The National Convention is always very informative, and I will share the valuable details at our 1<sup>st</sup> Division meeting this month. (September 4<sup>th</sup>, details provided herein.)

It is September and by now all certified posts have received this year's membership cards from department headquarters. Our first order of business is that every District schedule a revitalization. District Commanders, district officers and their membership team should by this time scheduled, or are finalizing, a date for their individual district which will occur prior to Veterans Day this November.

Additionally, our meet and greet which includes highlighting (one of the many children and youth programs) our introduction to the community of the Oratorical Contest. Districts should have this scheduled by November too. The districts or post may choose to begin planning a community Veterans Day observance. (Ensure you are putting membership applications in the hands of those attending your events.) Get it going! Remember, in September, post may have events that include: National Disaster Preparedness Month; Patriot Day, Sept. 11; celebrate the anniversary of Congress' charter of The American Legion on Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>; or perhaps with an event including civic leaders. Sept. 17 is Constitution Day (also an ideal time for a citizenship program – like oratorical); and remembering the third Friday of the month is National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

We are only as strong as our weakest link. If you are in a leadership role; let's begin with bringing up the posts that are already behind in membership. Let's show them how it done and make it happen this year!

Warm regards, *Gigi Callaway*

### **First Division Sr. Vice Commander Al Pizarro**

Division Members,

I hope you are all well. As of 8/13/19 there are **21 Posts** in the First Division that are **Not Certified!! That is Entirely Too Many Non-Certified Posts!!!!**

The following District Senior Vice Commanders, Please contact me via e-mail only ([pzodad2@gmail.com](mailto:pzodad2@gmail.com)) as soon as you have recieved this newsletter;

District 2 (8 N-C)

District 3 (1 N-C)

District 4 (3 N-C)

District 5 (6 N-C)

District 9 (3 N-C)

Our Division finished in First Place last year! We Can Do So Again this year!! In order to do so again, Your Post Must Be Certified!!!! Let's charge forward with the same momentum this year that carried us to First place last year!!!

Commander Gigi, Jr. Vice Tom and I would like to have All Posts at 75% in membership by Late October/Early November. We want to Help You get Your Respective Posts Certified so that they have the opportunity to reach 75%!!!! Please E-Mail Me A.S.A.P so We can discuss ways to assist You, Your District and Your Posts!!!! Thank You For All You Do!!!!

Respectfully, *Al Pizarro*

The chief of staff of the US Air Force decided that he would personally intervene in the recruiting crisis affecting all of our armed services. He directed a nearby Air Force base that will be opened and that all eligible young men and women be invited.

As he and his staff were standing near a brand new F-15 Fighter, a pair of twin brothers who looked like they had just stepped off a Marine Corps recruiting poster walked up to them. The chief of staff walked up to them, stuck out his hand and introduced himself.

He looked at the first young man and asked, "Son, what skills can you bring to the Air Force?"

The young man looks at him and says, "I'm a pilot!"

The general gets all excited, turns to his aide and says, "Get him in today, all the paper work done, everything, do it!"

The aide hustles the young man off. The general looks at the second young man and asked, "What skills to you bring to the Air Force?"

The young man says, "I chop wood!"

"Son," the general replies, "we don't need wood choppers in the Air Force, what do you know how to do?"

"I chop wood!"

"Young man," huffs the general, "you are not listening to me, we don't need wood choppers, this is the 20th century!"

"Well," the young man says, "you hired my brother!"

"Of course we did," says the general, "he's a pilot!"

The young man rolls his eyes and says, "So what! I have to chop it before he can pile it!"

## **First Division Jr. Vice Commander Thomas Chambers**

Welcome to another exciting year with the first division.

The upcoming events are as follows, and are subject to change.

1. There will be a Christmas brunch and membership drive Dec.14th at the Morton Grove post.
2. We are planning a Veterans' Ball for January 19th. The final details should be in place shortly.
3. Past Commanders dinner tentatively on March 29th, 2020 Time and place (TBD)
4. The Mini- Convention will be held on June 6th, 8:00 am at the Evergreen Park Post #854

I am asking for volunteers for next year's Hospitality room at the state convention. This includes the Legion, the Auxiliary, The Son's of the American Legion and the Legion Riders. All help will be appreciated.

Remember to work together and we can enjoy our successes, this is your Legion.

*Tom Chambers*

**VA&R Chairman and Service Officer of the First Division  
Raymond P. Toczek**

Well our state convention has come and gone and I must say it was not only exciting but very informative! For those who have been to one before, most resolutions reported by the committee chairperson are rubber stamped after they are read to the assembly. This year, however, two were set aside for further debate and discussion. One was on posts within the 1<sup>st</sup> District being reassigned and the other one was on legal marijuana. It was great to see democracy in action.

Regarding resolutions, the most were submitted for consideration by posts in our own 1<sup>st</sup> Division. The following were passed and will now go on to our national convention.

VA should have a variety of CPAP machines available for vets with sleep apnea.

Tinnitus should be rated at two levels, right now the only level is 10%.

Former POW's, Purple Heart and Medal of Honor veterans should get the highest VA hospital category.

Burial benefits should only be paid to who actually paid for the vet's funeral and burial.

Some childcare expenses for single parent vets needing to go to appointments.

It's never too early to start thinking about resolutions for next year.

For posts who rent their building out please check the 1st division website to be sure the posted info is current. The last update was June 2016.

The Chicago VA&R office receives numerous calls from people wanting to know where BINGO is held. If your post has a current BINGO game program please send that info to us so we can better answer those inquiries. You may e-mail me at the above address.

We also get calls from families looking for an Honor Guard for a vet's funeral. Either they are a member of a post which is too small to have one or they are not a current member. If your post is willing to arrange an honor guard (time and resources permitting) please e-mail me your Point of Contact info for that.

There was a seminar at convention about the new computer update to MyLegion. Posts can now process dues payment online saving a lot of work for the adjutant. My adjutant has signed up for it and says it is very user friendly. As

of this newsletter we have already processed 30 dues for 2020 online.

Finally, the free \$1,000 accidental death insurance that comes with our membership is NOT automatic. The member must register with the American Legion insurance provider. You may call 1-800-235-6943 to confirm enrollment. The recording gives you options, press 6 # to speak to a representative. I thought I was enrolled but wasn't. Now I am.

Looking forward to an exciting new year and working with our new officers.

*LET YOUR YES BE YES AND YOUR NO BE NO.  
MATTHEW 5:37*

*Ray Toczek*

Q: What's the difference between mechanical engineers and civil engineers?

A: Mechanical engineers build weapons; civil engineers build targets.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS for FIRST DIVISION

<b>September 4, 2019</b>	<b><i>Division Meeting:</i></b> Calumet Memorial Post 330, 950 Legion Drive, Calumet City, IL 60409
<b>September 17, 2019</b>	<b><i>Emeritus Advisory Committee:</i></b> This is a special committee consisting of all Past Division Commanders. <b><i>(Place and Time TBD)</i></b>
<b>November 6, 2019</b>	<b><i>Division Meeting:</i></b> Evanston Post 42 1030 Central St, Evanston, IL 60201
<b>December 14, 2019</b>	<b><i>Christmas Party / Membership Drive:</i></b> Morton Grove Post 134 6140 Dempster St. Morton Grove, IL 60053 Brunch: 10:00 AM until 1:30 PM
<b>February 5, 2020</b>	<b><i>Division Meeting:</i></b> Dorie Miller Post 915 General Richard L Jones Armory 5200 S Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60615
<b>April 1, 2020</b>	<b><i>Division Meeting:</i></b> Broadview- Hillside Post 626 4941 Butterfield Rd, Hillside, IL 60162
<b>June 6, 2020</b>	<b><i>Division Mini Convention:</i></b> Evergreen Park Post 854 9701 S Kedzie Ave, Evergreen Park, IL 60805 <b>Doors open:</b> 8:00 AM <b>Meeting starts:</b> 9:00 AM

All Division meetings: DEC @ 7:00, meeting @ 7:30



**\* IN REMEMBRANCE OF OUR FALLEN  
LEGIONNAIRES\***

We can no longer not be in the know! After all, those who do transfer into Post Everlasting are our Brothers, Sisters and family!!!!

Please send the names of Fallen Legionnaires to:  
[div1newsletter@yandex.com](mailto:div1newsletter@yandex.com)

**OFFICER CONTACT INFORMATION**

2019-2020 First Division

PO Box 280, Riverside, IL 60546

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(224) 800-1177

**COMMANDER:**  
GIGI CALLAWAY

**SENIOR VICE COMMANDER:**  
AL PIZARRO

**JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER:**  
THOMAS CHAMBERS

**DIVISION ADJUTANT:**  
HAROLD DILLARD

**Finance Officer & Aide to Commander**  
**BERNARD DARMETKO**  
Phone: (708) 860 - 1897  
Email: [bcdarmetko@comcast.net](mailto:bcdarmetko@comcast.net)

**SERVICE OFFICER:**  
**RAYMOND TOCZEK**  
Phone: (312) 980 - 4264  
Email: [Raymond.toczek@va.gov](mailto:Raymond.toczek@va.gov)

**Medical Officer & Aide to Commander**  
DR. DON HORN

**Historian & Special Adviser**  
WILLIAM COOPER

**Events from ILLEGION.org**

September 2, 2019	<b>Labor Day</b> – Office Closed
September 7, 2019	<b>SAL DEC</b> - The Haven, 10289 Haven Lane, Carbondale, IL 62220
September 11, 2019	<b>Patriot Day</b>
September 14, 2019	<b>Commander's Homecoming</b> 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Effingham, IL
September 16, 2019	<b>AMERICAN LEGION DAY</b>
September 18, 2019	<b>Air Force Birthday</b>

September 20, 2019	<b>POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY</b>
September 28, 2019	<b>Fall Meetings</b> 10:00 am – 3:00 pm Department Headquarters, 2720 E. Lincoln St. Bloomington, IL 61704
<b>Events from LEGION.ORG</b>	
September 4, 2019	<b>Commander's Appointments</b> 9:00 am – 3:00 pm Where: Department Headquarters, 2720 E. Lincoln St. Bloomington, IL 61704
September 7, 2019 September 8, 2019	<b>Division Officer Retreat</b> Magnuson Hotel, 19067 W Frontage Rd, Raymond, IL 62560
September 7, 2019	<b>SAL DEC</b> The Haven, 10289 Haven Lane, Carbondale, IL 62220
September 14, 2019	<b>Commander's Homecoming</b> 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Effingham, IL 62401
September 16, 2019	<b>AMERICAN LEGION DAY</b>
September 18, 2019	<b>Air Force Birthday</b>
September 20, 2019	<b>POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY</b>
September 28, 2019	<b>Fall Meetings</b> 10:00 am – 3:00 pm Department Headquarters, 2720 E Lincoln St Bloomington, IL 61704
<p>Do you have an outstanding member at your Post that you would like to tell their story? We would love to help spread the word about our great membership. Submissions can be made to: <a href="mailto:div1newsletter@yandex.com">div1newsletter@yandex.com</a> and our team of editors will do our best to let the world know how special our members really are.</p>	
<p><b>Member Spotlight:</b> Robert (Bob) Kowalski, USMC 1964-1968</p> <p>Bob served on a ground unit in Vietnam, during a particularly bad combat situation his unit was being pulled out by chopper from a hot LZ. The door gunner was hit and Bob used the weapon until the air ship was clear. After that situation he served as a door gunner until returning to. At the end of his service he was Honorably Discharged and returned to civilian life. When he was back in civvies his wife Pat introduced him to the Legionnaires of the Franklin D Roosevelt Post and they welcomed him with open arms.</p> <p>He joined FDR in 1968 and is very proud that he did.</p>	

When he and Pat moved they transferred to Merle Guild Post 208. He started out on the color guard team and from there he worked my way up the line to Commander. He was Commander for two years and enjoyed every minute of it. From there he decided to work on the District Level and was endorsed and did all that was required to do. When he was Senior Vice Commander of the Ninth District they made their 100% goal. When he became Commander of the Ninth District they again made the 100% goal District. He visited many posts and helped whenever he was asked, he was there for them.

He also visited many of our comrades in the VA Hospitals. He worked very close with the Sons of the American Legion, Auxiliary and the Juniors. He always worked as a team with all the arms of The American Legion. He was thinking on moving up to the Division Level, but unfortunately became sick and his dreams ended at that time, but he has never stopped caring about this organization.

When he and Pat moved again, Bob transferred to Franklin Park Post 974. Two years ago he reached that 50 year mark and the Legion recognized his many years of service. He is now a 52 year member and proud of being a member of the Franklin Park Post 974 where he is serving as the Judge Advocate and the primary Color Bearer for the American flag at events.



From Left to Right: Outgoing Commander Joe Lampert, Past Department Commander Mike Carder and Incomming Comander Gigi Callaway





First Division officers standing by to be installed



The cap changing ceremony as Gigi Callaway officially takes command of the First Division

## Changes to the newsletter for the New Term

As discussed at the Division planning meeting held on June 23, 2019.

1. Send your articles to Greg with a copy to Kendal.  
(The copy to Kendal ([div1newsletter@yandex.com](mailto:div1newsletter@yandex.com)) is for his info only so that he is aware that your article has been sent to Greg, the copy editor). [gkjacobs2001@yahoo.com](mailto:gkjacobs2001@yahoo.com)
2. Once Greg, as copy editor [copy editor function is as proofreaders] reviews your article, he will send the article back to you (for corrections if needed) and cc Kendal. If there are NO corrections, the copy editor will email you saying your article as been reviewed with a copy to Kendal. You need not do anything, Kendal has received it twice already. However, if there are correction, make the corrections and send it to Division Newsletter manager, Kendal Bishop.

3. As in the past (and there is no change here) the Commander is final Editor. All articles are due to Kendal by the 20th of each month. Except for August which is due on July 15th. At times there may be exceptions such as this August newsletter. Note of interest: There is now a Member Spotlight article. This should be a Blue Cap. The first one was placed in July's Newsletter. Submit a "Blue Cap" member for the spotlight for consideration. (Take a look at this month's article as an example)

Also, let your pictures tell a story. Depending on space, let us see what is going on either at the post or district. Submit photo, short description, name of event, people in the photo and the photographer's name. First Division photos (for this legion year). Please forward your photos to Historian Bill Copper at [wic0974@gmail.com](mailto:wic0974@gmail.com) and cc [illfirstdivision@gmail.com](mailto:illfirstdivision@gmail.com)

Best regards,

*Gigi Callaway*, Commander, First Division, Department of Illinois

### *The Gentleman & Ladies Quarterly:*

*Anything not related to food. All items not having to do with food (and decoration) should remain off the table: keys, clutch bags, sunglasses, and especially phones.*



Road to Recovery®

## **An Urgent Call to Action**

An estimated 64,270 Illinois residents will learn they have cancer this year and getting to their scheduled treatment will be one of their greatest roadblocks. To ensure patients get to the critical care they need without additional stress, the American Cancer Society offers the Road To Recovery® program. This program can help provide free transportation to and from treatment for cancer patients who do not have a ride or are unable to drive themselves.

The need is great for additional Road to Recovery drivers in every community. Veterans being treated at VA Hospitals may face an additional challenge. Typically the veteran will travel greater distances to treatment. The American Cancer Society is urgently asking drivers to donate their passenger seat and volunteer to take cancer patients to treatment. One cancer patient requiring radiation therapy could need between 20 to 30 trips to treatment over the course of six weeks. A patient receiving chemotherapy may need weekly treatment for up to a year."

The Road To Recovery program provides transportation options for patients in these situations and is always in need of volunteer drivers. To volunteer or for more information on the Road To Recovery program, visit [cancer.org/drive](http://cancer.org/drive), or call 1.800.227.2345.

A Charlotte, NC, lawyer purchased a box of very rare and expensive cigars, then insured them against fire among other things. Within a month, having smoked his entire stockpile of these great cigars and without yet having made even his first premium payment on the policy, the lawyer filed claim against the insurance company. In his claim, the lawyer stated the cigars were lost "in a series of small fires." The insurance company refused to pay, citing the obvious reason: that the man had consumed the cigars in the normal fashion.

The lawyer sued...and won!

In delivering the ruling, the judge agreed with the insurance company that the claim was frivolous. The Judge stated nevertheless, that the lawyer held a policy from the company in which it had warranted that the cigars were insurable and also guaranteed that it would insure them against fire, without defining what is considered to be unacceptable fire, and was obligated to pay the claim.

Rather than endure a lengthy and costly appeal process, the insurance company accepted the ruling and paid \$15,000 to the lawyer for his loss of the rare cigars lost in the "fires."

NOW FOR THE BEST PART...

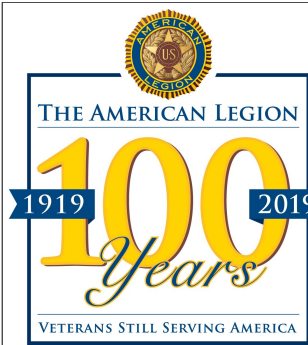
After the lawyer cashed the check, the insurance company had him arrested on 24 counts of ARSON!!! With his own insurance claim and testimony from the previous case being used against him, the lawyer was convicted of intentionally burning his insured property and was sentenced to 24 months in jail and a \$24,000 fine.

### **Need for Updated addresses**

Please forward updated addresses of District Commanders, Post Commanders and Adjutants to [Div1newsletter@yandex.com](mailto:Div1newsletter@yandex.com) so we can keep everyone updated with current information.

For members and officers who would like to receive a digital copy of the newsletter and emails with information from the Division, please send the information to [Div1newsletter@yandex.com](mailto:Div1newsletter@yandex.com)

Thank you for helping the 1<sup>st</sup> Division be the best in the Department of Illinois



First Division, Cook County Council  
The American Legion,  
Department of Illinois  
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***Chief Editor: Gigi Callaway***

***Reviewing Editor: Greg Jacobs***

If you would have any issues or concerns about the newsletter, please feel free

to contact: ***Shepherd K. S. Bishop – Managing Editor***

Member National American Legion Press Association

**[div1newsletter@yandex.com](mailto:div1newsletter@yandex.com)**