

# H & E News

By David Paris, 2nd Vice Commander



The Biggest Loser Contest has begun and we're up to five teams. We also have a couple of individuals and with a few more we'll put them together on a team. So it's not too late to get in on this fundraiser for Children & Youth programs. We previously announced there would be two winning groups expanded to four! 1) Group losing the most weight; 2) group raising most pledge money; 3) group losing percentage of weight (beginning to end); and 4) all contestants as they'll be more fit! Contest ends on Good Friday and we'll announce winners during the music that evening.

Which brings up music. Starting in February we'll have your favorites performing on a regular basis. Tiny has the first Friday, Stu the second, and Ross the third. They'll play those nights each month. Steak night will still rotate.

Winners of NYE raffles and CASI Chili raffles are posted on the web.

Lastly, this year's Superbowl will be Sunday, Feb 4<sup>th</sup> and we plan to have a good party for this annual event.

For God & Country, *Dave*

## Service Officer News

By Sebastian Rodriguez, Service Officer



### Omnibus Veterans' Bill Passes

MOAA is pleased that the outgoing Chairmen of the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committees, Senator Larry Craig (R-ID) and Rep. Steve Buyer (R-IN), won passage of a wide-ranging veterans' benefits bill during the waning hours of the 109th Congress.

The Veterans' Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act (S. 3421) includes \$65 million to increase the number of clinicians treating post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and improve DoD/VA collaboration on PTSD care. This has been a priority for MOAA and The Military Coalition.

The legislation also:

- Authorizes \$600 million to repair/replace Gulf Coast VA facilities damaged by Hurricane Katrina and fund 22 other major construction projects
- Provides \$2 million for blind rehabilitation specialists and increases the number of specialty facilities for their treatment
- Allows families to begin receiving VA education benefits before the service member's discharge for a total and permanent disability
- Permits attorneys to represent veterans' claims after an initial rejection of a claim
- Requires the VA to notify veterans of any theft/misuse of personal information, and to provide credit monitoring services and identity theft insurance in the event of a data theft/compromise
- Authorizes six Parkinson's Diseases research, education and clinical centers and two Multiple Sclerosis centers
- Strengthens support for homeless veterans

S.3421 now goes to the President for action and he is expected to sign it.

### "A Special Thanks"

Thanks to Pat Parker for our new fence in front of the Legion! Also, Peggy Ann sends her thanks to Pat for the new shelves in the storeroom. *They're Great!!*

## History of the Legion Emblem: Part 6



*The words American Legion tie the whole together for truth, remembrance, constancy, honor, service, veterans affairs and rehabilitation, children and youth, loyalty, and Americanism.*

## Chaplain's Corner

By Dennis Ducharme, Post Chaplain



Hi Everyone! I have a couple of things to report on this month. Louie Montalvo continues to be under the weather and has recently been released from the hospital. Please continue to keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

Don't forget your Valentine! February 14th is Valentine's Day. We should always tell our significant others how much they

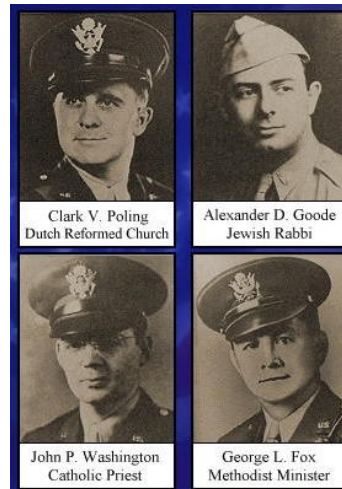
mean to us, but this day is set aside to make sure we remember (and also to help florists make money!)


On Feb 25th at 2:00 pm we will hold the Four Chaplains ceremony. "What is the Four Chaplains ceremony?" you ask. In brief, in the early morning hours of Feb. 3, 1943, the U.S.A.T. Dorchester was crowded to capacity, carrying 902 service men, merchant seamen and civilian workers when it was hit by one of three torpedoes fired by a German submarine.

With the ship sinking, the four chaplains on board gave up their life jackets. Those chaplains were Lt. George L. Fox, Methodist; Lt. Alexander D. Goode, Jewish; Lt. John P. Washington, Roman Catholic; and Lt. Clark V. Poling, Dutch Reformed. That night, 672 men died, including the four chaplains. Speaking of the sacrifice the chaplains made: "It was the finest thing I have seen or hope to see this side of heaven," said John Ladd, a survivor who saw the chaplains' selfless act.

Please come out on Feb 25 to learn the whole story and to help us remember and pay tribute to these heroes.

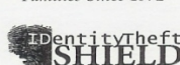
For God and Country, *Dennis*





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