

# THE AMERICAN LEGION AT UBON RATCHATHANI, THAILAND



BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBIN OLDS

POST NUMBER TH01

POST MEETING: 2<sup>ND</sup> WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH, AT 10:00 AM  
POST LOCATION: PEPPERS RESTAURANT & BAKERY



JULY 2023

POST EMAIL: [COMMANDER@AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM](mailto:COMMANDER@AMERICANLEGIONTHAILAND.COM)

VOL. 6, ISSUE 7

## LINKS CONCERNING ISSUES OF GENERAL EXPAT INTEREST IN THAILAND

US DOLLAR TO THAI BAHT EXCHANGE RATE (AS OF 28/06/23)

**\$1.00 USD:35.44 THB**

<https://www.x-rates.com/calculator/?from=USD&to=THB&amount=1>



## POST COMMANDER'S COMMENTS...*BRUCE TEMPLEMAN*

A word from the Commander...

It seems that our hard work, this past year, has had great results! The Department of France has recognized us as the best in accomplishing membership goals for this year. Thank you, to everyone that worked on getting our message out to promote the Post and the American Legion. We now have new members to celebrate with and bring into our activities and events. They, too, will learn to be recruiters by proxy and give service. I encourage everyone to get involved with the leadership of this Post, for it is getting larger and more important to the lives of our veterans and families here in Thailand.

Thank you, to all that were able to come out to Yasothon, last month, to pay respects to our departed Charter Member, Richard Lee Montgomery. His family and neighbors were impressed at the devotion we gave our fellow veteran. In the works is planning and executing memorials for Joe Reedy and Joel Aldrich. I need a good chaplain to take the reins of the Graves and Registration program. This program entails coordinating with the families of the bereaved, the VA, and American Legion Headquarters to obtain grave markers, flowers, and flags for US veterans here in Thailand that have passed away.

Chris Lampert, our Public Affairs Officer and Communications Committee chairman, has been hard at work repairing our website. It incurred some disruption during the migration to a new web hosting service and some files were corrupted in the process. We are lucky to have a knowledgeable and dedicated person like Chris to keep us connected to the public through our website. Please, take the time to visit the website and offer suggestions, articles, and critiques to Chris.

### ACTIVITIES LOOK AHEAD

#### **BUDDY CHECKS**

In addition to our annual email and telephone Buddy Checks, I will be getting with our American Legion Riders President to see if we can design and plan a ride to visit all of our members in Thailand that cannot attend the meetings. It's quite an ambitious goal, but we may be able to pull it off.

#### **MEMORIAL DAY**

Veterans Day activities have normally been held at Remembrance Day with the Ubon local government and the UK veterans that attend. I would like to keep this tradition going. That being said, the Remembrance Day tradition we have is not the same as Memorial Day, which is a US military tradition. If you have any other ideas on how we can recognize Memorial Day, please feel free to submit them to 2nd Vice Commander Skabry or attend his activities committee meetings.

#### **POST UNIFORMS**

I would like to get member input on our Post TH01 uniforms. When performing military honors, we need to present the best image possible to the public. Our uniforms should be easy to maintain, standard, and of good quality. They may be initially expensive, but they are used once a month or during public ceremonies, so the wear and tear is not significant. I propose to create a committee to pursue:

- 1.1 Develop a standard Post uniform.
- 1.2 Develop a standard Post uniform wear policy.
- 2.1 Create Post merchandise.
- 2.2 Purchase Post merchandise.
- 2.3 Sales must be sold at a cost that will sustain the resupply of the merchandise.

The goal is not so much as raising money, but to publicize the Post's existence.

I look forward to having another great year with Post TH01.

#### **TAWANCHAI \$\$ DRIVE**

It's never too early or too late to start asking friends and family to donate and support the Tawanchai Foundation. It's our flagship charity, and we need to always be mindful to raise the subject up with everyone we meet.

Bruce A. Templeman  
Commander  
American Legion Post TH01  
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand

## **USEFUL INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS**

### **NEW POST TH01 EMAILS**

Post officers will cease using personal email addresses to conduct the business of the Post. Thank you, for helping us grow and become more organizationally efficient. Help the Post out by updating your email address books with the following addresses:

**Post Commander – For General Matters**  
[commander@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:commander@americanlegionthailand.com)

**Post Adjutant and Finance Officer – For Specific Administrative and Capital Finance Matters**  
[adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com)

**Post 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander and Historian – For all Memberships, Including New Applications and Renewals, Charity Donations, and Historical Matters**  
[1vice@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:1vice@americanlegionthailand.com)

**Post 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander – For all Events and Activities, Marketing, Sponsorship, and American Legion Riders Matters**  
[2vice@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:2vice@americanlegionthailand.com)

**Public Affairs and Communication Center – For all Online Presence, Website, Email, Social Media Management, and Technical Support Matters**  
[comms@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:comms@americanlegionthailand.com)

## **THE PACT ACT AND YOUR VA BENEFITS**

**~FILE YOUR PACT ACT CLAIM BY AUGUST 9 TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR BACKDATED BENEFITS~**

**THERE'S NO DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR PACT ACT BENEFITS. BUT IF YOU FILE YOUR PACT ACT CLAIM—OR QUICKLY SUBMIT YOUR INTENT TO FILE—*BY AUGUST 9, 2023*, YOU MAY RECEIVE BENEFITS BACKDATED TO AUGUST 10, 2022. SO DON'T WAIT, APPLY TODAY.**

The PACT Act is a new law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances.

The PACT Act adds to the list of health conditions that we assume (or “presume”) are caused by exposure to these substances. This law helps us provide generations of Veterans—and their [survivors](#)—with the care and benefits they've earned and deserve.

<https://americanlegionthailand.com/benefits/>

## POST HOLIDAYS AND EVENTS CALENDAR

04 July

**Independence Day**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independence\\_Day\\_\(United\\_States\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independence_Day_(United_States))

12 July

**American Legion Post TH01 Membership Monthly Meeting**

14 July

**Brigadier General Robin Olds, Jr.'s 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin\\_Olds](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Olds)

21 July

**American Legion Post TH01's 8<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

<https://americanlegionthailand.com/about/>

23 July

**Parent's Day**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parents%27\\_Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parents%27_Day)

27 July

**National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean\\_Armistice\\_Agreement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_Armistice_Agreement)

**Korean War Veterans Recognition Day**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean\\_War\\_Veterans\\_Memorial](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_War_Veterans_Memorial)

28 July

**King Vajiralongkorn's Birthday (Thailand)**

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vajiralongkorn>

## POST TH01 OFFICERS, 2023 MEMBERSHIP YEAR

COMMANDER – Bruce Templeman

[commander@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:commander@americanlegionthailand.com)

1<sup>st</sup> VICE COMMANDER AND

HISTORIAN – Ted Potyrala

[1vice@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:1vice@americanlegionthailand.com)

2<sup>nd</sup> VICE COMMANDER AND

OUR LEGION RIDERS DIRECTOR – John Skabry

[2vice@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:2vice@americanlegionthailand.com)

ADJUTANT AND

FINANCE OFFICER – Jeff Ludwig

[adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com)

SERVICE OFFICER –

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS – Sal Salzarulo

[salzy48@hotmail.com](mailto:salzy48@hotmail.com)

JUDGE ADVOCATE – Paul Ben-Yehuda

[renegademarine@icloud.com](mailto:renegademarine@icloud.com)

CHAPLAIN –

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER – Chris Lampert

[comms@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:comms@americanlegionthailand.com)

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Billy Holland

[billybholland@gmail.com](mailto:billybholland@gmail.com)

MEMBER-AT-LARGE – John Eschenbaum

[john\\_eschenbaum2003@yahoo.com](mailto:john_eschenbaum2003@yahoo.com)

MEMBER-AT-LARGE – Michael Baines

[mkbaines1@gmail.com](mailto:mkbaines1@gmail.com)



ADJUTANT'S CORNER...JEFF LUDWIG

Greetings Comrades,

### HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY, MY FELLOW AMERICAN LEGION POST TH01 MEMBERS!

This is the day we celebrate the start of our great Country, and the sacrifice our military made and continues to make to keep us free. July is also the start of a new membership year, and when we kick off the 2024-membership drive. It is also a time to reaffirm our commitment to the American Legion and our Post. You can do this by taking an active role in helping our Post fulfill our obligations directed in the 4 Pillars of the American Legion. In case you have forgotten, the 4 pillars are:

- I. **Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation**
- II. **National Security**
- III. **Americanism**
- IV. **Children and Youth**

Each of these pillars encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our nation's veterans, its servicemembers, their families, the youth of America, and ordinary citizens. These programs make a difference in hundreds of thousands of lives, each year. The programs, and the people who take the time to perform them, allow The American Legion and our Post TH01 to make a difference. So, how can you reaffirm your commitment? First, by simply renewing your membership for 2024. We know that some of you cannot commit time to the various programs, However, know that, by simply renewing your membership, you are strengthening our Post and the American Legion. Membership is the foundation of the American Legion and your Post. Without a strong membership, we cannot deliver on our commitment to help our veterans, their families, and our communities.

So, how do you renew your membership? There are a variety of simple ways to renew your membership. Just pick the method below that best suits you. If you have any difficulties, our Membership Chairman, Ted Potyrala, and I stand ready to help you in any way.

The dues are still only \$45.00 for the year if paid in American currency or 1,500 baht if paid in Thai currency. Here are a multitude of methods to pay and renew your membership:

The easiest and quickest method is to renew online: <https://www.legion.org/renew>. Once you go there, the online instructions are easy to follow. Also, they have resolved the issue of renewing online with an overseas credit card and/or an overseas address. Additionally, if like me, your billing address is different from the address listed, you can easily edit the address by clicking the edit button. I know it works because I did it. If you are uncomfortable with the online renewal, you can always simply call the American Legion customer service phone number: **+1 (800) 433-3318**. Just give them your name, American Legion membership ID number, credit card number, and your post: Post THo1. They will gladly process your renewal over the phone.

You can also electronically transfer your membership dues directly to our bank account with First Command Bank, using the account number and routing number below.

If, for whatever reason, you cannot use one of the above options, you can also mail us a check from an American banking institution to the address below. Unfortunately, we still cannot accept checks from a Thai Bank. However, you can send us a Thai money order in the name of the

commander or myself. If you prefer to send it to my local account, contact me directly, and I will give you my account number.



Finally, you can always bring your dues to the monthly Post meeting or give it to one of the members coming to the meeting. **IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU SEND YOUR DUES, AND THE METHOD YOU USE, SO WE CAN LOOK FOR IT.** If you have any problems, just call me, the Commander, Bruce Templeman, or the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, Ted Potyrala, and we will work with you to get you renewed.

We are counting on you!

#### **A. POST THo1 BANKING INFO.**

- 1. Bank:** First Command Bank
- 2. Account Name:** American Legion Thailand Post THo1
- 3. Account Number:** 557-9-818
- 4. Routing Number:** 1119-9369-5
- 5. SWIFT Code:** NONE

#### **B. POST MAILING ADDRESS**

Brig. Gen. Robin Olds American Legion Post THo1  
P.O. Box 41  
Wanarom Post Office  
Ubon Ratchathani 34003 Thailand

#### **C. POST EMAILS**

- 1. Commander:**  
[commander@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:commander@americanlegionthailand.com)
- 2. Adjutant:**  
[adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:adjutant@americanlegionthailand.com)
- 3. 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander:**  
[1vice@americanlegionthailand.com](mailto:1vice@americanlegionthailand.com)

Jeff Ludwig  
Adjutant and Finance Officer  
American Legion Post THo1  
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand



# SAFETY MESSAGE

## JULY RAINY SEASON IS UPON US

Rainy Season in Thailand means hazardous driving conditions out there on the roads. Here are some Rainy Season Driving Tips to help you drive and, most importantly, arrive safely.

1. ***First and foremost - Slow Down!*** It takes longer to stop or adjust in wet weather.
2. Stay toward the middle lanes – water tends to pool in the outside lanes.
3. Maintain proper following distance (3-Second Rule). In wet weather increase it to a 9-second rule.



***Read more***

***about the 3-Second Rule:***

<https://www.smartmotorist.com/safe-following-distance>.

4. Drive in the tracks of a car ahead of you.
5. Do not follow large trucks or busses too closely. The spray created by their large tires reduces your vision. Take care when passing them as well. If you must pass, do so quickly and safely.
6. Be more alert when driving in wet or slippery conditions. Watch out for brake lights in front of you.
7. Avoid using your brakes. If possible, take your foot off the accelerator to slow down.
8. Turn your headlights on.



Even in a light rain or in gloomy, foggy, or overcast conditions. Not only do they help you see the road, but they will help other drivers see you. If your car has

daytime running lights, you still should put them on, so vehicles behind you can see you better.

9. Before the start of the rainy season, replace old or brittle wipers.
10. Avoid off-road driving. It is hard to judge the actual depth of puddles, and you can easily become stuck. Even in an SUV.
11. Never drive beyond the limits of visibility. At night, rainy roads become especially treacherous. The glare of oncoming lights, amplified by the rain on your



windscreen, can cause temporary loss of visibility while substantially increasing driver fatigue. In rainy conditions, pedestrians, livestock, and wildlife are extremely hard to spot and even harder to avoid.

12. Never drive through moving water if you can't see the ground through it. Your car could be swept off the road.
13. When driving through a puddle of uncertain depth, go slow. If it is deeper than the bottom of your doors, turn around and find another route. Deep water can cause serious damage to a modern car's electrical system.
14. Avoid splashing pedestrians.
15. If possible, stay off the road during heavy thunderstorms. Large flashes of lightning can temporarily blind and disorient drivers. The accompanying high winds and heavy rain can create deadly driving conditions.

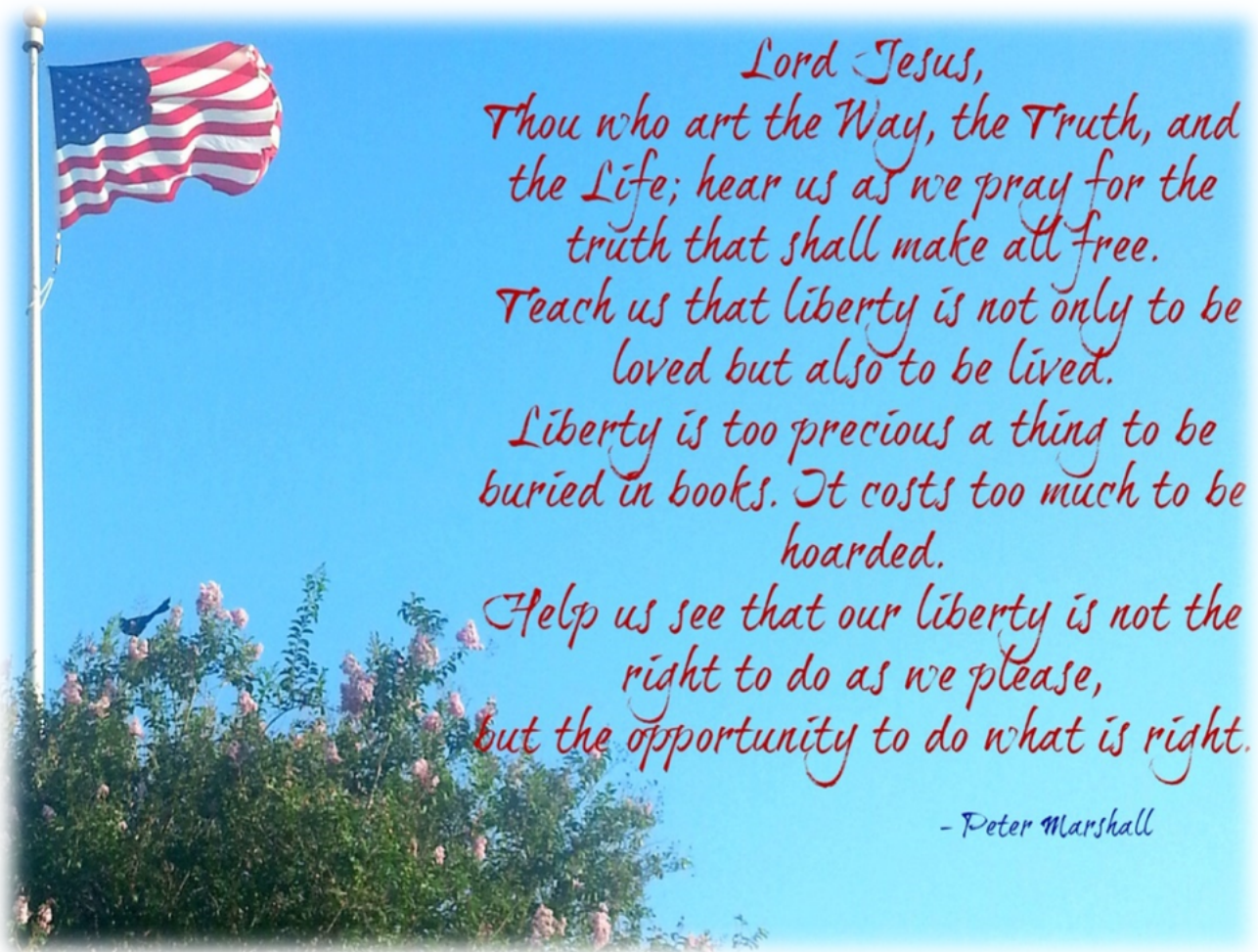
## CHAPLIN'S MESSAGE

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Greetings Comrades,

A prayer from Post THo1 to all members for July, 2023.

Chaplain  
American Legion Post THo1  
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand





**1<sup>ST</sup> VICE COMMANDER & HISTORIAN...TED POTYRALA**

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Greetings fellow legionnaires,

July is the month we start our membership drive for 2023-2024. Our post has come a long way since 2015 when a small group of us formed our Post. Members are what keeps our Post alive.

I, myself, joined the Post for a few reasons. The first is, I believe in supporting both the American Legion and the VFW, because they have veterans issues at heart. There are many programs and benefits for veterans. These were not started by our government but by veterans like you. You might have used these benefits or not. The important thing is that they are there if you need them. The members of the American Legion, VFW, and others seen the need to help veterans. The key word here is Membership. Without members, we would not have what we have today. Even now there are members of congress that are looking if ways to save money and cutting or diluting our programs and benefits is a good target. Strength in numbers is what's needed to fight this.

The second reason I joined was so that when the time comes, and I'm no longer here, there will be someone to help my wife in getting the benefits that I was entitled to. Even though I have a book with all the information for her to apply for benefits, she will still need help with the system.

The third reason is because, I live in Thailand. What better way to meet fellow Americans and to be able to help the community as our Post has done several times?!

So, I strongly urge you to renew. You will be not only helping your Post continue the work we are doing but also helping the American Legion keep our benefits from being taken away.

Ted Potyrala  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, Historian, and  
Membership Committee Chairman  
America Legion Post THo1  
Ubun Ratchathani, Thailand



## HISTORY ARTICLES

### REMEMBERING THE SACRIFICES OF OUR VETERANS: NATIONAL KOREAN WAR VETERANS ARMISTICE DAY

National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day is observed, annually, on July 27, in both America and South Korea. This day was established to commemorate and recognize the peace treaty that triggered a cease-fire in a long-standing war <sup>1</sup>. The Korean War was a significant chapter in American history, with approximately 50,000 American troops dying in the conflict, over 100,000 being wounded, and thousands of others being held captive as prisoners of war <sup>2</sup>.



On National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, we are encouraged to take some moments for reflection on the service and sacrifices of American troops during this conflict. The service members of the war had to overcome unique risks and experiences that set them apart from previous generations of veterans. After being colonized by Japan, the southern part of the Korean peninsula was liberated soon after World War II. With the support of the Soviet Union, communist North Korea invaded democratic South Korea in 1950. In the wake of these events, America deployed troops to support South Korea to keep the land that was truly theirs and protect the nation's democratic interests <sup>2</sup>.



After three years, an armistice was signed and the two Koreas have since then remained divided. The fighting resulted in more than 36,000 casualties for America and more than 103,000 service

members were wounded in action. The US Department of Veterans Affairs says that the extremely cold climates during the Chosin Reservoir Campaign, in the winter of 1950, posed serious risks to those serving and accounted for more than 5,000 American deaths. The temperatures dipped to 50 degrees Fahrenheit with a wind chill of -100 degrees Fahrenheit! This meant that the Korean War veterans are more likely to face health issues such as trauma to the nervous system, skin, and muscles, vascular conditions, and foot-related injuries, such as trench foot, frostbite scars, and skin cancer as compared to veterans of other wars <sup>2</sup>.

These veterans may have also been exposed to hazardous substances, such as asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and ionizing radiation during this long war. These substances are responsible for certain illnesses and cancers long after exposure. In fact, the nature of this exposure can be so serious that it may be passed down to the next generations <sup>2</sup>.

On National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, we honor those who served and sacrificed for their country during this conflict. We remember their bravery and dedication to protecting freedom and democracy abroad.

Billy Holland  
Member-at-Large  
American Legion Post TH01  
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand

*Excerpts from...*

**CONVERSATION WITH BING, 27.04.23**

**(1) National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day**

<https://nationaltoday.com/national-korean-war-veterans-armistice-day/>

**(2) A Proclamation on National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day**

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/07/26/a-proclamation-on-national-korean-war-veterans-armistice-day-2021/>

**(3) National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day**

<https://veteran.com/korean-war-veterans-armistice/>

**(4) July 27: National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day**

<https://mesavfw.org/2020/07/july-27-is-korean-war-armistice/>

## JULY BIRTHDAYS

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Robert Beckner

Harold Cohen

Philip Jones

Robert Kane

Daniel Kelley

Byron Petrides

Robert Rositer



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## SERVICE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

Greetings Comrades,

FBU Manila is encouraging the use of their Inquiry Form on their website as opposed to emailing requests to them. I have sent many emails to them in the past and can attest to the speed and efficiency of this new web-based inquiry link. If you have to contact them, this link is the easiest way to get a quick response:

<https://ph.usembassy.gov/services/fbu-inquiry-form/>.

Social Security payments to a Thai bank are restricted accounts and make it difficult for your spouse or partner to access this money in the case of your incapacitation. If you are a military retiree, you can offset this by having DFAS send an allotment to your Thai bank. The money will be deducted from your military pay and sent directly to your Thai bank on the same day as your military pay is sent. You eliminate the wire transfer fees and get the normal exchange rate from the receiving bank.

**Be prepared.** It's the motto of the Boy Scouts and sage advice to everyone at every age. As we get older, our responsibilities grow, and we need to be prepared for many more situations than when we were young. Have your will and powers of attorney designated. Fill out the document "**What My Family Should Know**" from 1 of the following links and safeguard it with a person you trust. Register yourself in the "**Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP), A Service of the Bureau of Consular Affairs, US State Department**" from 1 of the following links and designate your next of kin as

well as an executor to your estate. The US Embassy is a critical player in the process of notifying your family of your death, incapacitation, or incarceration. STEP is the first place they look to get information in which to assist you. Make it easier to help you and your family.

### ***1. What My Family Should Know***

- English Version:

<https://americanlegionthailand.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/1-What-My-Family-Needs-to-Know-English-11.03.23.pdf>

- Thai Version:

<https://americanlegionthailand.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/1-2-What-My-Family-Needs-to-Know-Thai-11.03.23.pdf>

### ***2. Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)***

- US State Department: <https://step.state.gov>

Our Post is in need of a Post Service Officer that lives here in Thailand. If you feel that you can help veterans, widows, and orphans navigate their issues through the different government agencies, please step up and volunteer. The pay is nonexistent, and the hours can add up, but the feeling of being someone's helping angel is the best feeling in the world. This position is the one that is most needed and crucial to our mission of serving veterans and their families.

Service Officer  
American Legion Post TH01  
Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand

**CLICK THE FOLLOWING LINKS FOR POST TH01...**

## **WEBSITE**

<https://americanlegionthailand.com>

## **Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/americanlegionthailandposttho1>

## **Twitter**

[https://twitter.com/Post\\_TH01](https://twitter.com/Post_TH01)

## **Instagram**

[https://www.instagram.com/post\\_tho1/](https://www.instagram.com/post_tho1/)

## **YouTube**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC74pEhMUgz5KmGcs7RMEXyA>

## **ASEAN Now**

<https://aseannow.com/profile/277159-american-legion-post-tho1/>