

History of American Legion Post TH-02

Sergeant Thomas Oliver Ahlberg Memorial Post No. TH02
Pattaya City, Chon Buri, Kingdom of Thailand
Calendar Year 2022



Introduction

Following its landmark permanent charter activation, the Sergeant Thomas Oliver Ahlberg Memorial Post No. TH02 entered 2022 focused on structural continuity, localized advocacy, and the reinforcement of basic service pipelines. Operating under the overseas jurisdiction of the Department of France, the Post completed its second full administrative year under its permanent charter while navigating an era of significant travel restrictions and fluid global health conditions. Through dedicated welfare initiatives and strategic community coordination, the Post preserved its core mission to eliminate the geographical isolation affecting American veterans residing across Thailand's Eastern Seaboard.

1. Post Identity & Regional Alignment

Throughout 2022, Post TH02 continued to expand its collaborative framework with allied veterans' organizations, local charitable foundations, and diplomatic entities to fortify its regional support network.

- **Embassy Liaison & Healthcare Pipelines:** To protect aging military retirees facing isolation, the Post maintained direct coordination channels with the United States Embassy in Bangkok. This collaborative pipeline was instrumental in securing essential medical authorizations, health verifications, and healthcare access for senior retirees structurally cut off from standard regional networks. This included hands-on assistance to help members navigate local hospital vaccination frameworks for Pfizer and Astra-Zeneca distributions.
- **Cross-Organizational Collaboration:** Post TH02 sustained its tight operational bond with allied veteran groups. On June 6, 2022, Post TH02 jointly attended a D-Day Remembrance ceremony alongside VFW Post 9876 and VFW Post 12146, following a formal invitation from the French Foreign Legion (F.A.C.S.), for which the Post extended formal gratitude on June 7.
- **Joint Humanitarian Initiatives:** Broadening its community outreach, Post TH02 partnered with VFW Post 9876 and Smoky M Foods on October 25, 2022, to donate meat products to the Teacher Boonchoo Home for Special Children. This local advocacy was reinforced over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend when Post representative Skip Storno visited the Teacher Boonchoo Home on November 26, 2022, to present further institutional donations.

2. Executive Leadership & Officer Rotations

The 2022–2023 operational term was defined by administrative stability under the established officer slate. Under the steady guidance of its executive leadership, the administration utilized its localized veteran support framework to sustain and protect its base membership.

- **Annual Officers Election:** Official notification was distributed to the general membership on April 17, 2022, establishing that the primary order of business for the April 23 general membership meeting would be the annual election of officers.
- **The Administrative Slate:** Following the installation of the operational slate, Post Commander William Martin Ahlberg and Post Adjutant Michael J. Chitwood successfully guided the post through its second full administrative year under the permanent charter, managing continuous welfare operations and emergency cases.

2022 Officer Roster

Position	Full-Year Term
Post Commander	William Martin (Bill) Ahlberg
Post Adjutant	Michael J. Chitwood
Finance Officer	Michael J. Chitwood
Representative / Committee Leaders	Claude (Skip) Storno

3. Financial Milestones & Post Home Preservation

Faced with long-term planning considerations, the Post Executive Committee prioritized asset management, structural continuity, and securing the physical infrastructure of the post home.

- **Post Newsletter Outreach:** On August 1, 2022, Post Commander Bill Ahlberg requested direct feedback from the general membership regarding repeated information in official newsletters and actively prompted for writing volunteers to assist with future publications
- **The Long-Term Lease Settlement:** On September 4, 2022, the Post formally accepted a strategic request from its landlord to extend the lease for the 2023–2024 term under the exact same financial terms. This successful arrangement legally secured the physical Post Home location through March 2024, ensuring operational continuity free from relocation pressures

4. COVID-19 Operational Adjustments & Logistics

Public safety health regulations, localized pandemic surges, and an abundance of caution within Chonburi Province continued to reshape standard veteran activities, forcing the Post to adapt its meeting schedules and logistics

- **Meeting Cancellations and Digital Evolution:** Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and strict local Chonburi restrictions regarding public gatherings, Commander Ahlberg cancelled the in-person January meeting on January 18, 2022, successfully replacing it with an online open forum stream on January 22.
- **Localized Pandemic Surges:** Following a localized surge of COVID-19 cases within the active post membership, the Commander cancelled the February general meeting on February 22, 2022, to err on the side of caution and protect member health.
- **Resuming Safe Operations:** In-person operations resumed in the spring with a strict emphasis on public safety. On March 25, 2022, a reminder was issued for the March 26 general membership meeting, noting that attendees must maintain strict compliance with local COVID-19 safety protocols due to an ongoing abundance of caution.
- **Operational Scheduling Shifts:** As regional health conditions stabilized, meeting schedules adjusted to fit membership needs. On June 23, 2022, a time-change modification notice was published shifting the start time of the monthly general membership meeting to 14:00. The monthly meeting on August 22, 2022, returned to the standard 12:00 timeline. Later in the year, a localized power outage on October 27, 2022, forced the Post to reschedule its General Membership Meeting to October 29.

5. Major Events & Institutional Initiatives

Despite travel restrictions and health protocols, Post TH02 successfully executed several military commemorations, high-profile community initiatives, and unique military-civilian liaison events.

- **Memorial Day Ceremonies:** On May 21, 2022, Commander Ahlberg extended an open invitation for the annual Post Memorial Day event held on Monday, May 30, at the Poolside Restaurant inside Chockchai Village 4. The family-day event featured a formal ceremony and coordinated transportation for members commuting from Ban Chang. On June 2, 2022, the Post published historical records and photographs documenting the successful event, extending special praise to the TH02 Honor Guard.
- **Independence Day Celebration:** The Post observed US Independence Day weekend on July 1, 2022, at the Red Bar, culminating in a small, formal American Legion ceremony at 17:30 to honor the nation's independence.
- **USS Miguel Keith Naval Ship Tour:** Showcasing a unique opportunity for military liaison and fellowship, the Post successfully organized a short-notice naval ship tour of the U.S. Navy expeditionary sea base ship USS Miguel Keith (ESB-5) on December 16, 2022.
- **Annual Christmas Charity Drive:** On December 29, 2022, the Post completed its annual Christmas charity drive at the Red Bar. Sponsored by Shane Curtis, the initiative successfully raised over 20,000 Baht, with gifts and proceeds presented directly to the children of the Baan Kruja Orphanage.

6. Financial Condition and Membership Growth

Post TH02 maintained an active and diverse recruiting pipeline throughout 2022, welcoming numerous highly decorated wartime veterans, active regional Veteran Affairs leaders, and international transfers into its ranks.

2022 New Member Roll

The Post formally welcomed the following veterans into the permanent ranks of the organization throughout the calendar year:

- **January 4, 2022:** William Fedak, a retired US Army veteran residing in Fort Wayne, Indiana.
- **January 6, 2022:** Jeffrey Satterfield, a former USMC veteran and contractor working in the Marshall Islands (Kwajalein) who considers Jomtien and Pattaya his second home.
- **February 2, 2022:** Scott Henderson, a USAF veteran currently residing in Hua Hin.
- **February 18, 2022:** Ed Madeiros, a USAF veteran also residing in Hua Hin.
- **March 4, 2022:** Eve Tew Tew Thao (Bangkok), a Purple Heart recipient and US Army veteran; alongside Frank Eastwood (Pattaya), a USMC veteran.
- **March 9, 2022:** John Ketchledge, a US Navy veteran and Pattaya resident.
- **March 27, 2022:** Stephen D. Pullum, a USAF retiree with over 27 years of service who recently relocated to Pattaya and remains heavily active in regional Veteran Affairs.
- **September 1, 2022:** Michael Siegel, a USAF veteran who recently retired from the GE Engine Division.
- **October 27, 2022:** Tim Pratt, a USMC veteran and Superintendent of the Clark Veterans Cemetery in the Philippines; alongside Lajos "Louis" Katona, a US Army veteran and Jomtien resident.
- **December 30, 2022:** Ed Shawver, a US Army veteran and long-time resident of Pattaya.

7. Taps, Memorial Tributes, and Members in Distress

The solemn execution of emergency veteran assistance and final memorial duties remained the foundational priority of the Post executive leadership.

Emergency Case Resolution & Repatriation

From August through December 2022, Commander Bill Ahlberg and Adjutant Mike Chitwood conducted continuous, hands-on physical welfare checks on an ailing, isolated American veteran residing on the Eastern Seaboard. Following the veteran's subsequent passing, the Post efficiently managed all legal, administrative, and repatriation requirements. On December 30, 2022, the family members of the deceased veteran expressed deep, formal gratitude to the Post leadership for preserving their brother's dignity and successfully bringing him home to the United States.

Emergency Processing & Military Funeral Honors

On August 5, 2022, the Post successfully coordinated emergency processing and a formal honor guard memorial service with full military funeral honors for non-member USN combat medic Nathan Lee Kent (13th MEU, Iraq), who tragically passed away in Pattaya on July 25. The final solemn services were conducted at a temple located near Ban Bueng.

Conclusion

Calendar Year 2022 stands as a testament to institutional resilience, structural continuity, and deep-seated fraternal commitment for American Legion Post TH02. Confronting travel constraints, localized pandemic interruptions, and critical emergency situations, the Post successfully defended its physical home lease through 2024, expanded its member rolls with a highly dedicated veteran cohort, and executed vital repatriation and funeral honor details. Through persistent "buddy checks" and close diplomatic coordination with the U.S. Embassy, Post TH02 solidified its standing as a vital lifeline and sanctuary of service for veterans on Thailand's Eastern Seaboard.

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Certificate Of Meritorious Service

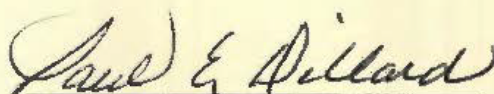
For Faithfulness In The Performance Of Duties, And Meriting Special Confidence And Esteem Because Of Manifested Cooperation And Loyalty. Recognition Is Hereby Accorded For Meritorious Service Rendered As Hereinafter Set Forth, And Presented To

Sgt. Thomas Oliver Ahlberg Post TH02
Department of France
The American Legion

Who Has Rendered Meritorious Service By Enrolling For The Year 2022, A Membership Equaling Or Surpassing Its Previous All-time High. This Enrollment Was Accomplished By December 31 Preceding The Beginning Of The Calendar Year Indicated.

In Witness Whereof, This Certificate Is Given To Said Post, Under The Hand Of The National Commander, And Duly Attested By The National Adjutant, At Indianapolis, Indiana, This 31st day of January, 2022, And Countersigned By The Commander And The Adjutant For The Department.

ATTEST:


National Commander


National Adjutant

Countersigned:


Department Commander


Department Adjutant

