

## THE AMERICAN LEGION UNIFORM

During a recent "official" Dinner event at an American Legion Post, it was noticed by some guests that some Post members as well as other Legion guests were wearing their American Legion caps during dinner. Through the years this practice has become so distasteful that many post levy fines for male members wearing their cap during dinner. In an effort to mentor our members on ritual and protocol of the American Legion, I have taken excerpts from my past articles to help our members understand and avoid "fines", ridicule and harassment by providing information regarding the proper wearing of the official uniform of The American Legion" the garrison cap.

You don't wear your cap during a meal (males only). Even though the long established Legion etiquette states that your cap is not to be worn during an official Legion, civic dinner or luncheon, our social norms have always been to uncover whenever eating. Use common sense with respect for the uniform and the organization. Just because some members have their caps on doesn't mean it is correct. . .it just means they haven't read proper guidance.

During the Pledge of Allegiance, why do we, as male members, remove our caps and place them over our heart? It dates back to our military service, while at the salute, we are at attention and when you are at attention, you do not speak. Thus, the cover is removed and placed over the heart so that we can pledge our allegiance, aloud. We follow American Legion protocol.

The question always arises; when can I wear my American Legion Cap? You can wear your Legion Cap and any Legion function, events where you represent the American Legion and your Post, as a guest at a civic function, but be aware that wearing the cap any place that brings discredit to the American Legion is strictly forbidden, such as political rallies.

The left side of the Post garrison style Legion cap should only have the American Legion's emblem and your Post's City, this is considered the American Legion's side of the cap, no other lettering, pins or other adornments are allowed. The right side of the cap may have the Post's name embroidered or the current or past officer's position held. Individual's or nick names are not allowed nor pins, patches, lettering or other items in bad taste. Pins showing your military rank should be avoided as "there is no rank among us". Civic and Fraternal organization pins or patches are prohibited, as well. Finally. the

garrison cap is the "Official Cap" of the American Legion, not a ball cap or beret with American Legion written on it or has an American Legion emblem. The American Legion cap should never be worn by male members while in a house of worship, unless you are under arms (Honor or Color Guard with Arms) or your religious protocol dictates that you remain covered. If you are marching the flags into a house of worship, you remain covered until the colors are posted and you return to your seat, at which time you uncover (again, males only) and remain uncovered until you retrieve the colors and march out of the building.

Show your Legion Pride; wear your uniform properly, with pride and respect. Your Legion cap is the most recognizable American Legion item you have and with the proper protocol you ARE the greatest Public Relation asset of this great organization.