



Chris Carlton elected National Commander

SAL elects Indiana's Carlton as national commander

[Andy Proffert](#) | August 28, 2022



Chris Carlton of the Detachment of Indiana addresses the SAL 50th National Convention following his election as National Commander on Aug. 28, 2022, in Milwaukee, Wis.

The Sons of The American Legion elected Indiana's Chris Carlton as their next national commander on Sunday as the SAL's 50th National Convention came to a close.

Carlton, a member of Squadron 495 in Indianapolis, is the state's first SAL national commander since Raymond Giehll Jr. in 2008 — coincidentally, Carlton's father-in-law.

Giehll was the one to bring Carlton's nomination to the floor in Sunday's election, with Carlton being elected by acclamation.

Carlton has embraced leading candidate for American Legion National Commander James Troiola's support for the "Be the One" campaign aimed at ending the stigma around veterans' mental health issues.

"To 'Be the One,' we just need to ask a veteran in (our) life how they're doing. To 'Be the One,' we need to listen when

a veteran needs to talk. To 'Be the One,' we need to reach out when a veteran is struggling," Carlton said.

It's important to help the veteran's family as well, Carlton said.

"As that veteran is going through hard times and struggling, so is that family. We can reach out to those children, to those spouses, see what kind of help we can give them, what kind of support we can give them, point them in the right direction, in the direction of need, and help," he said.

"...I look forward to 'being the one' with you," Carlton added.

He also voiced his support for helping reach Troiola's \$2 million goal for the Veterans & Children Foundation.

"We gave \$500,000 this year; how much can we give next year?" he said.

And Carlton is supportive of the goal announced Saturday of reaching 1 million SAL members by the program's 100th anniversary in 2032. He encouraged the SAL to work on attracting new members while also retaining current members. "Do those buddy checks on members you haven't seen in a while," he said.

The SAL also elected the five national vice commanders for the 2022-23 year. They are:

- Eastern Region: Ernest Laberge, Massachusetts
- Southern Region: Ronald Roberts, Mississippi
- Central Region: David Mennel, Michigan
- Midwestern Region: Michael Kirschner, Colorado
- Western Region: Jack Youngs, Idaho



ROUND-UP

A Newsletter of Sons of The American Legion

National Commander
 Chris Carlton (IN)
 National Vice-Commander Central
 David Mennel (MI)
 National Vice-Commander East
 Ernie LaBerge (MA)
 National Vice-Commander Midwest
 Michael Kirschner (CO)
 National Vice-Commander South
 Ron Roberts (MS)
 National Vice-Commander West
 Jack Youngs (ID)

Immediate Past National Commander
 Michael Fox (CA)

PNVC Jeff Vrabel, Sr., Editor

Round-Up is published weekly and distributed each Sunday.

SUBMITTING ARTICLES: All submissions are to be made electronically to jef-vrabelsr@gmail.com. If you need assistance, please send an email to same.

All articles must be submitted by noon each Friday.



SAL membership reports are available [here](#)

BE THE ONE



**MEMBERSHIP
 RENEWAL
 TARGET DATE**
September 14, 2022



CHRIS CARLTON
NATIONAL COMMANDER
2022 – 2023



DAVID MENNEL
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER
CENTRAL REGION
2022 – 2023

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING TBA



ERNIE LABERGE
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER
EASTERN REGION
2022 – 2023

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING TBA



MICHAEL KIRSCHNER
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER
MIDWEST REGION
2022 – 2023

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING TBA



RON ROBERTS
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER
SOUTHERN REGION
2022 – 2023

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING TBA



JACK YOUNGS
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER
WESTERN REGION
2022 – 2023

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING TBA





REGIONAL UPDATES



NATIONAL COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Advisory Committee

Joe Mayne (MN), Chairman

Americanism Commission

Chris Casey (NE), Chairman

Fourth Thursday of each month

7:30 p.m. Eastern | 6:30 p.m. Central

5:30 p.m. Mountain | 4:30 p.m. Pacific

Call in # (508) 924 3315

Access Code: NONE

<https://join.freeconferencecall.com/x19ct26>

Century Committee (CENTCOM)

Jeff Vrabel, Sr. (OH), Chairman

jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com

Child Welfare Foundation Committee

Mark Nave (PA), Chairman

Third Wednesday of each month

8:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Call in # (605) 472-5332

Access Code: 808 417

Online Meeting ID:

<https://join.freeconferencecall.com/coolcameo>

Children & Youth Committee

James A. Noble (NJ), Chairman

Second Monday of each month

7:30 p.m. Eastern Time

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85189484607?pwd=MTkvT09XYkdvZlM0eW5RTG4dW94QT09>

Meeting ID: 851 8948 4607

Passcode: xZztq6

Finance Commission

William G. Hill (MD), Chairman



FLYING FLAGS FOR HEROES

www.flyingflagsforheroes.com

Tim Aboudara, Sr.,

National Service Project Coordinator

As of August 30, 2022

1,835,164

Flags have been placed and reported to honor our veterans

since September 1, 2021

Internal Affairs Commission

William Clancy, III (NY), Chairman

Fourth Thursday of each month

6:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Call in # (605) 313-6050

Access Code: 344590

Legislative Commission

Thomas G. Deal (MD), Chairman

First Thursday of each month

7:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Call in # (267) 807-9601

Access Code 988 284 103#

Member Training and Development Committee

Mike Monserud (IA), Chairman

First Monday of each month

8:00 p.m. Eastern

Call in # (605) 468-8772

Access Code: 625764#



Membership Committee

Thom Skelley (TX), Chairman
 Third Tuesday of each month
 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time
 Call In # (605) 472-5756
 Access Code 771 7294#

The current SAL membership report can be accessed
 on the national website at
www.legion.org/membership/standings

2022 SAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT AS OF: AUGUST 25, 2022

#	DETACHMENT	2022 DET. YEAR END GOAL	NEEDED TO MEET 105% TARGET 12/31/2022	2022 ACTUAL MBSP.	% OF YEAR END GOAL	2022 RENEWAL %
1	HAWAII	49	-24	75	153.06%	100.00
2	PUERTO RICO	88	-29	121	137.50%	100.00
3	SOUTH DAKOTA	1,052	-247	1,352	128.52%	91.67
4	DIST OF COL	92	-16	113	122.83%	91.01
5	WASHINGTON	2,086	-297	2,487	119.22%	91.36
6	NEW MEXICO	1,261	-151	1,475	116.97%	86.65
7	MEXICO	26	-3	30	115.38%	68.00
8	NORTH DAKOTA	916	-85	1,047	114.30%	99.77
9	MICHIGAN	21,985	-999	24,083	109.54%	91.87
10	DELAWARE	2,229	-75	2,415	108.34%	92.55
11	WEST VIRGINIA	2,183	-50	2,342	107.28%	88.16
12	NEVADA	334	-7	358	107.19%	87.83
13	OREGON	1,317	-22	1,405	106.68%	85.50
14	MASSACHUSETTS	5,074	-71	5,399	106.41%	91.11
15	SOUTH CAROLINA	1,382	-19	1,470	106.37%	87.73
16	WISCONSIN	3,914	-41	4,151	106.06%	93.98
17	VERMONT	3,576	-35	3,790	105.98%	91.43
18	IOWA	4,571	-17	4,817	105.38%	95.23
19	NEW HAMPSHIRE	5,336	-6	5,609	105.12%	89.35
20	IDAHO	606	-1	637	105.12%	86.67
21	ARIZONA	7,566	20	7,924	104.73%	84.20
22	RHODE ISLAND	316	3	329	104.11%	80.97
23	MAINE	2,482	22	2,584	104.11%	91.47
24	PHILIPPINES	66	1	68	103.03%	98.46
25	NORTH CAROLINA	2,619	63	2,687	102.60%	82.46
26	GEORGIA	4,316	120	4,412	102.22%	84.36
27	FLORIDA	20,745	588	21,194	102.16%	84.05
28	CALIFORNIA	10,338	294	10,561	102.16%	86.27
29	COLORADO	2,632	82	2,682	101.90%	83.72
30	MARYLAND	15,533	500	15,810	101.78%	91.33
31	ALASKA	1,560	52	1,586	101.67%	79.54
32	PENNSYLVANIA	58,902	2,028	59,819	101.56%	91.47
33	TEXAS	5,425	201	5,495	101.29%	82.97
34	MINNESOTA	11,091	474	11,172	100.73%	90.08
35	ALABAMA	2,020	88	2,033	100.64%	82.13
36	VIRGINIA	4,023	183	4,041	100.45%	85.64
37	NEW YORK	29,246	1,376	29,332	100.29%	89.54
38	CONNECTICUT	1,820	92	1,819	99.95%	85.01
39	OHIO	29,946	1,569	29,874	99.76%	90.61
40	TENNESSEE	1,681	95	1,670	99.35%	77.51
41	NEW JERSEY	9,211	540	9,132	99.14%	87.52
42	WYOMING	1,273	75	1,262	99.14%	78.44
43	NEBRASKA	6,959	446	6,861	98.59%	92.14
44	MISSOURI	3,211	236	3,136	97.66%	84.78
45	INDIANA	36,657	2,932	35,558	97.00%	88.38
46	ILLINOIS	13,602	1,112	13,170	96.82%	88.78
47	LOUISIANA	1,808	149	1,749	96.74%	85.91
48	KENTUCKY	2,648	242	2,538	95.85%	77.92
49	OKLAHOMA	1,380	134	1,315	95.29%	78.68
50	ARKANSAS	468	51	440	94.02%	76.57
51	MONTANA	1,160	140	1,078	92.93%	86.23
52	KANSAS	6,424	955	5,790	90.13%	82.16
53	UTAH	492	81	436	88.62%	75.31
54	MISSISSIPPI	795	134	701	88.18%	60.29
55	FRANCE	233	92	153	65.67%	64.89
Grand Totals:		356,725	12,974	361,587	101.36%	88.75



2022 SAL REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

WESTERN REGION - L. JIM STEWART (NV)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
HAWAII	49	75	153.06%
WASHINGTON	2,086	2,487	119.22%
NEVADA	334	358	107.19%
OREGON	1,317	1,405	106.68%
IDAHO	606	637	105.12%
ARIZONA	7,566	7,924	104.73%
PHILIPPINES	66	68	103.03%
CALIFORNIA	10,338	10,561	102.16%
ALASKA	1,560	1,586	101.67%
UTAH	492	436	88.62%
Totals:	24,414	25,537	104.60%

MIDWEST REGION - JUAN R. TORRES (TX)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
SOUTH DAKOTA	1,052	1,352	128.52%
NEW MEXICO	1,261	1,475	116.97%
MEXICO	26	30	115.38%
NORTH DAKOTA	916	1,047	114.30%
COLORADO	2,632	2,682	101.90%
TEXAS	5,425	5,495	101.29%
WYOMING	1,273	1,262	99.14%
NEBRASKA	6,959	6,861	98.59%
OKLAHOMA	1,380	1,315	95.29%
MONTANA	1,160	1,078	92.93%
KANSAS	6,424	5,790	90.13%
Totals:	28,508	28,387	99.58%

CENTRAL REGION - JEFF M. VRABEL SR. (OH)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
MICHIGAN	21,985	24,083	109.54%
WISCONSIN	3,914	4,151	106.06%
IOWA	4,571	4,817	105.38%
MINNESOTA	11,091	11,172	100.73%
OHIO	29,946	29,874	99.76%
MISSOURI	3,211	3,136	97.66%
INDIANA	36,657	35,558	97.00%
ILLINOIS	13,602	13,170	96.82%
Totals:	124,977	125,961	100.79%

EASTERN REGION - RICHARD L. HUNTLEY, JR. (ME)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
DIST OF COL	92	113	122.83%
DELAWARE	2,229	2,415	108.34%
WEST VIRGINIA	2,183	2,342	107.28%
MASSACHUSETTS	5,074	5,399	106.41%
VERMONT	3,576	3,790	105.98%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	5,336	5,609	105.12%
RHODE ISLAND	316	329	104.11%
MAINE	2,482	2,584	104.11%
MARYLAND	15,533	15,810	101.78%
PENNSYLVANIA	58,902	59,819	101.56%
NEW YORK	29,246	29,332	100.29%
CONNECTICUT	1,820	1,819	99.95%
NEW JERSEY	9,211	9,132	99.14%
FRANCE	233	153	65.67%
Totals:	136,233	138,646	101.77%

SOUTHERN REGION - JASON S. ROBERTS (GA)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
PUERTO RICO	88	121	137.50%
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,382	1,470	106.37%
NORTH CAROLINA	2,619	2,687	102.60%
GEORGIA	4,316	4,412	102.22%
FLORIDA	20,745	21,194	102.16%
ALABAMA	2,020	2,033	100.64%
VIRGINIA	4,023	4,041	100.45%
TENNESSEE	1,681	1,670	99.35%
LOUISIANA	1,808	1,749	96.74%
KENTUCKY	2,648	2,538	95.85%
ARKANSAS	468	440	94.02%
MISSISSIPPI	795	701	88.18%
Totals:	42,593	43,056	101.09%

National Convention Committee

Allen J. Watry (WI), Chairman
awatry@mindspring.com
 Meetings held as necessary
 Call in # (857) 2320159
 Access Code: 962347

Public and Media Communications Commission

Kevin Chaplin (VA), Chairman
 Fourth Monday of Each Month
 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time/8:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Committee on National Appointments

Don Allisot, Chairman

Subcommittee on Resolutions

Ned Fox (CA), Chairman

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

Seth A. Rippe (NE), Chairman
 Fourth Monday of each month
 7:00 p.m. Central Time/8:00 p.m. Eastern Time
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)
 Meeting ID: 845 1668 0686
 Passcode: 243945

Veterans Employment & Education Commission

Jim Coats (NY), Chairman

Third Wednesday of Each Month

6:00 p.m. Mountain Time/8:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Call In # (508) 924-3315

<https://join.freeconferencecall.com/x19ct26>



BE THE ONE

TO **ASK** VETERANS IN YOUR LIFE HOW THEY ARE DOING.

TO **LISTEN** WHEN A VETERAN NEEDS TO TALK.

TO **REACH** OUT WHEN A VETERAN IS STRUGGLING.

988
SUICIDE PREVENTION
HOTLINE

LEGION RIDERS

SPORTS

SQUADRON EVERLASTING



FROM THE EDITOR

With the new administration comes a new look to Round-Up. The newsletter will be different from what it has been, but will continue to be published on a weekly basis, when possible. The plan is to make this a more member-driven publication, and I hope that more members of the American Legion Family will submit articles, pictures, and other information.

As information regarding Commission and Committee monthly business meetings gets updated, it will be provided to you. You will also receive information about the monthly regional business meetings once the national vice-commanders have set their schedule.

I hope you enjoy the fresh new look, and continue to support Round-Up.

JOIN

DONATE



TEAM
VRABEL
SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com

<https://sites.google.com/vies/teamvrabel/home>

AMERICAN LEGION





National Overall Totals	
Dollars Donated:	\$7,771,295
Volunteer Hours:	3,043,470
1 Volunteer Hour is Worth:	\$29.95
Volunteer Hours Value:	\$91,151,912
Total Volunteer Value:	\$98,923,207

Pillar	Donations	Hours	Hours Value
Americanism	\$2,668,475	2,271,503	\$68,031,515
Children & Youth	\$1,085,501	146,743	\$4,394,938
Vets Affairs & Rehab.	\$1,473,321	199,527	\$5,975,819
Vets Employ & Edu.	\$315,478	30,505	\$913,625
Internal Affairs	\$2,228,521	395,193	\$11,836,015

Americanism	
<i>Boys State / Girls State</i>	\$153,861 in Donations to Boys State / Girls State with 16,024 Hours of Participation
<i>Legion Ed. Programs</i>	\$5,369 in Donations to 5-Star / 10-Ideals Progs. with 4,424 Hours of Participation
<i>Flag Programs</i>	\$155,041 in Donations to Flags Presented (All) with 341,654 Hours of Participation 336,840 Flags Presented (All Sizes / Events)
<i>Flag Education</i>	\$25,115 in Donations to Flag Education Progs. with 7,486 Hours of Participation
<i>Other Ed. Programs</i>	\$417,810 in Donations to Scholarships Awarded with 13,370 Hours of Participation
<i>Oratorical Contest</i>	\$9,506 in Donations to Oratorical Contest with 4,339 Hours of Participation
<i>Color Guard</i>	\$74,242 in Donations to Color Guard with 72,396 Hours of Participation
<i>Community Service</i>	\$720,789 in Donations to Other Organizations with 1,522,651 Hours of Participation
<i>Scouting</i>	\$278,189 in Donations to Scouting with 37,700 Hours of Participation
<i>Jr. Shooting Sports</i>	\$42,776 in Donations to Jr. Shooting Sports with 16,635 Hours of Participation
<i>Am. Legion Baseball</i>	\$130,492 in Donations to Am. Legion Baseball with 16,363 Hours of Participation
<i>Other Teams</i>	\$123,347 in Donations to Other Teams with 17,153 Hours of Participation
<i>Blood Drives</i>	\$8,012 in Donations to Blood Drives with 4,915 Hours of Participation
<i>N.E.F.</i>	\$124,546 in Donations to Nat'l Emergency Fund with 6,625 Hours of Participation
<i>Legacy Schol. Fund</i>	\$54,605 in Donations to Legacy Scholarship Fund with 6,740 Hours of Participation
<i>Other Amer. Projects</i>	\$344,776 in Donations to Other Amer. Projects with 183,030 Hours of Participation

Children and Youth	
<i>CWF</i>	\$245,916 in Donations to Child Welfare Found. with 16,952 Hours of Participation
<i>Special Olympics</i>	\$99,688 in Donations to Special Olympics with 16,786 Hours of Participation
<i>CMN</i>	\$23,647 in Donations to Children's Miracle Net. with 774 Hours of Participation
<i>Ronald McDonald House</i>	\$21,950 in Donations to R. McDonald House with 3,056 Hours of Participation
<i>C.O.T.A.</i>	\$10,982 in Donations to Child. Org. Trans. Assn. with 2,481 Hours of Participation
<i>T.A.L. Vets. & Child. Found.</i>	\$31,970 in Donations to T.A.L. Vets. & Child. F. with 9,468 Hours of Participation
<i>Other C&Y Projects</i>	\$651,348 in Donations to Other C&Y Projects with 97,226 Hours of Participation

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation	
<i>VAMCs & Facilities</i>	\$230,634 in Donations to VAMCs & Facilities with 28,735 Hours of Participation
<i>State Vets Facilities</i>	\$115,655 in Donations to State Vets Facilities with 13,228 Hours of Participation
<i>Nat'l Vets Assist. Day</i>	\$16,454 in Donations to Nat'l Vets. Assist. Day with 6,356 Hours of Participation
<i>O.C.W.</i>	\$57,332 in Donations to Op. Comfort Warriors with 3,055 Hours of Participation
<i>Fisher House</i>	\$139,385 in Donations to Fisher House with 3,412 Hours of Participation
<i>Other VA&R Projects</i>	\$913,861 in Donations to Other VA&R Projects with 144,741 Hours of Participation

Veterans Employment and Education	
<i>VE&E Projects</i>	\$315,478 in Donations to VE&E Projects with 30,505 Hours of Participation

Internal Affairs	
<i>Other Totals</i>	\$2,228,521 in Donations, Not Covered Above with 395,193 Hours, Not Covered Above

Published: August 26, 2022

359,999 Total Members

5,912 Total Squadrons

294 Total Districts



SAL National Commander Michael Fox addresses the 50th SAL National Convention on Aug. 26, 2022, in Milwaukee, Wis. Photo by Andy Proffet

SAL opens 50th national convention with nod to past, vision for future

[Andy Proffet](#) | August 26, 2022

As J.R. Stillwell stood at the podium on stage at Milwaukee's Miller High Life Theater on Friday, he had to compare the venue — site of the 50th Sons of The American Legion National Convention — to the locations of the workshops in the years preceding the first convention.

"When we attended a meeting many, many, years ago, we got everyone that was there for the national meeting in a little room, you could probably put 20 of (those rooms) in this one," Stillwell said. "God, people, look around at what we've come to."

The SAL celebrated its history on Friday's first day of the 50th national convention by recognizing those past national commanders able to attend the event — including those like Stillwell who were instead called national chairmen when they served because the SAL was still operating under its original bylaws.

The American Legion National Executive Committee approved a new constitution and bylaws for the SAL in May 1972, three months before the SAL's first national convention in Chicago.

"I think about how long ago we got started, and what our missions were," said Robert McBride, who served as SAL national chairman in 1969. "We kickstarted something that we could never imagine was going to be what it is today."

McBride; Stillwell, who served in 1970-71; Michael Seaton (1968) and John Smolinski (1972) are now considered past national commanders of the SAL. But the first officially elected SAL national commander was Bob Faust, whom

current National Commander Michael Fox called "a dear friend my entire life."

"Bob has been mentoring me since probably before I can remember," Fox said.

The weekend isn't only the SAL's 50th national convention, which will be marked by a special banquet Saturday afternoon, but the program is also celebrating its 90th anniversary after first being created in 1932.

"Our organization has come a long way in supporting our nation's heroes and their families since our inception in 1932. In our 90 years of existence and 50 years of holding national conventions, we have transformed into the greatest program that The American Legion has, something each and every one of you should be proud of," Fox said.

"You should also be proud of that veteran that gave you your eligibility to be a part of this organization. You should be proud of the great work you have done and get excited for what this future holds. As we celebrate our 50th national convention, each and every one of us should take some time to reflect on the amazing work that our founders did, the vision they had for our organization some 50 years ago. Take a moment to speak to some of those founding members (this weekend)," Fox added.

The convention is also dedicated to the memory of SAL PNC Roland Matteson, who passed away Jan. 1 in Phoenix. Matteson served as national commander in 1994.

Legion leadership. American Legion National Commander Paul E. Dillard, the leading candidate to succeed him and the trailing candidate for the position each spoke to the SAL delegates on Friday.

Dillard thanked the SAL for their support in passing the PACT Act, which will help thousands of veterans facing health issues from burn pits and other toxic sources. "You all are always there in support," he said.

Leading candidate for national commander James Troiola noted that he was a member of the SAL before he joined The American Legion six months later.

"If that didn't happen in my life, I don't know where I would be today," Troiola said.

Troiola also touted the [Be the One](#) campaign aimed at helping veterans with their mental health. He said it's important for the entire Legion Family to get involved.

“We want to get everyone of you trained, if you’re not trained already, on how to start a conversation with a veteran with mental health problems. Know what to ask and know what to listen for so you can identify somebody within your own community who needs help,” Troiola said.

Trailing candidate Daniel Seehafer agreed that the Be the One campaign is important enough to be an ongoing focus. “One year is not sufficient with this, and I think you’d all agree,” Seehafer said.

He also encouraged the SAL to find ways to help veterans considering suicide, and to be prepared.

“You never know the moment you will be used, and you will be needed,” he said.

CFW. After passing the \$9 million mark in lifetime donations from the SAL to the Child Welfare Foundation (CFW) earlier this year, the next goal is \$10 million.

CFW President Dennis Boland thanked the SAL for their support of the fund.

“Without your backbone at times, the Child Welfare Foundation would flounder,” Boland said. “... It’s not monetary figures, it’s the lives we save.”

American Legion Internal Affairs Commission Chairman Robert Newman also praised the SAL for their donations both financial and in volunteer hours.

“It is you, the Sons, that continue to set an example of how a veterans support organization should be modeled,” Newman said.

The SAL National Convention continued Saturday and Sunday.

An ‘audacious’ goal: 1 million SAL members by 2032

[Andy Proffet](#) | August 27, 2022

Joseph Paviglianti admitted it is an “audacious” goal: 1 million members of the Sons of The American Legion by the program’s 100th anniversary in 2032.

But he also expressed optimism that it’s a goal that can be achieved when he spoke about it during Saturday’s general session of the 50th SAL National Convention at Milwaukee’s Miller High Life Theater.



Outgoing SAL national judge advocate Joseph Paviglianti, center front, poses with past national commanders after Saturday’s general session of the 50th SAL National Convention. Photo by Andy Proffet

“We can be at a million members within 10 years if we plan accordingly and we look at how we do it sincerely and seriously and honestly,” said Paviglianti, speaking in his role as chair of the SAL Century Committee.

“Are you with me in getting to that audacious goal of 1 million members?” he asked to resounding applause. “It is possible.”

The current SAL membership is 361,587.

The goal may come, but it will do so without Paviglianti in as active a role. After 43 years in national office with the SAL, rising from assistant adjutant to adjutant to national judge advocate, Paviglianti announced that this convention would be his last as the SAL’s top legal counsel as well as his last as chair of the Century Committee.

“We have changed our constitution and bylaws, for the better, and come into alignment with those of The American Legion. That is a very good thing; it keeps everything clean; it keeps everything tight; it keeps everything organized,” Paviglianti said. It also eliminates the SAL national judge advocate position as The American Legion National Judge Advocate assumes those responsibilities.

“I have absolute confidence and great optimism about the future, where the Sons of The American Legion is going,” Paviglianti said.

That’s in part due to the strategic plan the SAL Century Committee has been working on since being established a year ago. Paviglianti compared the process to a marathon, not a sprint.

“I ask all of us to be a little patient” as the plan is developed, he said.

“We are in a multi-phased process of developing and gathering data on what exactly we want our organization to be as we move into our next century,” Paviglianti said.

In the wake of Paviglianti’s retirement, a resolution adopted unanimously by the SAL bestowed upon him the rank of honorary past national commander. He’s the third SAL member to receive that honor after Pat Shea, an endorsed candidate for the office of national commander who passed away unexpectedly 19 months before that election, and Brian O’Hearne, who served as a national vice commander and assistant adjutant before serving as national adjutant from 1999 to 2017.

A stream of SAL past national commanders seconded the resolution to make Paviglianti an honorary past national commander on Saturday.

“I failed as judge advocate, because part of the role as judge advocate is to see all resolutions that come through and make sure they have some sort of properness. I obviously screwed up on this one,” Paviglianti joked.

“I am extraordinarily humbled and embarrassed by what was just bestowed upon me, and I use the word ‘embarrassed’ because I do what I’ve done for the organization because I love the organization. I wish my dad were here to celebrate with me, celebrate with us ... I wish my wife were here because she also knew of my love of the organization. I have nothing but the greatest degree of appreciation to each and every one of you.”

Resolutions. The SAL adopted two other resolutions Saturday. One would establish call-in rights for the program’s entire Legislative Commission for the duration of the annual Washington Conference, as the commission members are responsible for the wreath laying the SAL conducts at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery on the Sunday before the conference begins. The other resolution calls for adoption of American Legion Family Day to take place annually on the last Saturday in April, “when all American Legion posts throughout the nation open their doors to their members and the members of their local communities with the intent of celebrating all great deeds and works of the American Legion Family, with the intent to educate, recruit, recognize and give back to those members that continually support the gift of giving.” The event would also place special emphasis on the “Be the One” campaign.

Flying Flags for Heroes. Tim Aboudara Sr., the national chair of SAL National Commander Michael Fox’s service project, Flying Flags for Heroes, gave an update on the project.

“At the end of March, we were just under 250,000 flag placements,” Aboudara said. But some innovative activities and buy-in from the entire Legion Family helped shatter Fox’s goal of 1 million flags placed on veterans’ graves at local cemeteries.

“As of today, we have placed just over 1.835 million flags at the gravesites,” Aboudara said.

Fox said, “Flying Flags for Heroes was about getting our message out, getting outside of our four walls, getting back in the communities where the American Legion Family dominated in the 60s and the 70s and into the 80s. We can’t be complacent; we have to continue to strive for greatness.”

Guest speakers. In addition to committee reports, the SAL heard from a number of guest speakers at Saturday’s general session, including PNC Jake Comer; American Legion Auxiliary National President Kathy Daudistel; Saturday Night Live alumnus and SAL member [Joe Piscopo](#); and youth champions Emma Noble (National Oratorical Contest champion), Dylan Owens (2021 American Legion Baseball All-Academic Team captain), Christopher Adam (National Eagle Scout of the Year), Tamarus Darby Jr. (Boys Nation President) and Samantha Zermeno (Junior 3-Position Air Rifle Sporter champion).

Comer, Daudistel and Piscopo were also guest speakers at Saturday afternoon’s 50th National Convention Banquet.

The SAL national convention concluded Sunday with the election of a new national commander.

SAL convention banquet brings Legion Family together to celebrate

[Andy Proffet](#) | August 27, 2022

Over 600 members of the Legion Family filled the Hilton Milwaukee City Center’s Crystal Ballroom for the SAL’s 50th National Convention Banquet Saturday afternoon.

For American Legion National Commander Paul E. Dillard, it was a beautiful sight.

“This is kind of what I’ve seen of pictures of the Legion many years ago, when it was so crowded you couldn’t hardly get through,” Dillard told the audience. “I think it’s beautiful that there’s this many people crowded in here for the same cause.”

Dillard was one of several guest speakers to address the crowd at the banquet, held to celebrate the SAL's milestone convention.

Joe Piscopo, the Saturday Night Live alumnus and radio show host who was [inducted into the SAL](#) during an event in Woodstock, Ill., in May, said he was "humbled and amazed" to be part of the event.

"I am so honored to be up here," Piscopo said. "I don't belong up here, but in the name of my father, I appreciate it."

Piscopo said the future of the nation is in good shape because of the Legion Family.

"Our parents and grandparents believed in the promise of America, the promise that all men and women are created equal in the eyes of God, that a nation of free people is always stronger than a nation oppressed and divided, and that every individual has something worthwhile to contribute to society," Piscopo said. "It is our job to carry on the legacy of the Greatest Generation. We must believe in America as they did and inspire future generations to carry that same torch."



Joe Piscopo speaks at the 2022 Sons of the American Legion 50th National Convention Banquet.

"That's what The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion do every single day. I am so proud and humbled to be part of the family of such a devout and patriotic group of American citizens."

American Legion Auxiliary National President Kathy Daudistel noted that "everywhere we go, the Sons have a presence." And PNC Jake Comer said it would be difficult for the Legion to do its important work without the help of the SAL. Legacy Run Chief Road Captain Mark Clark, himself a member of SAL Squadron 21 in Missouri, said the Legacy Run couldn't happen without the dedication of the Sons.

"The entire family is here, and that's what this is about; this is what the entire 50th year was about ... was bringing the family back," SAL National Commander Michael Fox said. "As I preached all year, the stronger we are as a family unit, the better we are. The more we can show unity as a family, the more things can get done."

"... If we can pack a room like this, what can we do 10 years from now? How much better can we be for The American Legion? They need us, we need them. It's a family unit."

Banquet attendees received a commemorative challenge coin and a bookazine celebrating the 50 SAL national conventions.

Sons of The American Legion Membership Application

Detachment of _____ Squadron No. _____

Name _____ (First) _____ (Initial) _____ (Last) _____

Address _____ (Street) _____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip) _____

E-mail Address _____ Telephone _____

Veteran through whom eligibility is established _____

(a) Above is a member in good standing of Post No _____, Dept. of _____

OR (b) Above is a deceased veteran who served honorably from _____ to _____

(c) Relationship of Applicant to Veteran _____

I hereby subscribe to the Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion, apply for membership, and transmit \$ _____ as annual membership dues.

Eligibility certified by _____ (Post Adjutant) _____ (By Applicant or Parent)

Signed _____

Birth Date _____ Date _____

Recruited by _____ (Initial) _____ (Last)

RECEIPT

Date _____

Received of _____

For God and Country

\$ _____ in payment of dues for 20 _____ in

Squadron _____, Detachment of _____

By _____