



# Unpopular opinion: Stop Pandering for Younger, Women, Minority Membership

[Jeff Daly](#), Podcast Host at The American Legion | February 6, 2023

I can't tell you how upset I'd be if someone invited me to a special event that served fried chicken and had a hip-hop artist in a room of people that wanted to hear a country band.

Is it far off for a Post consisting of older folks putting in a video gaming rig, thinking that this is their solution for recruiting young people?

Today, less than 1% serve. In my (unpopular) opinion, we are better served if we treat ALL VETERANS as a singular subset of the population. The division and fabricated big problems only serve to segment the already relatively small demographic of VETERANS.

I thrive in a Post that has a younger population. In fact, we have more Gulf/Post 9-11 than we do Vietnam. We have a diverse membership that spans race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religious background, combat experience, and plenty of other demographics that I'm neglecting to list. Could we do better? Absolutely, but I don't think creating special programs where the aim is to attract (dupe) specific demographics is the way to go. I think that is a masking agent of the real problem that some Posts have.

Whatever you think the (insert demographic) is looking for, it's likely part of a bigger issue that should be addressed. Examples? Certainly...

1. I hear that some women "don't even know that they're eligible." News flash, there are many men that don't know that they are eligible. It wasn't until the LEGION Act that anyone that served during the Cold War was eligible and many still don't know that they are. The solution isn't to broadcast the false narrative that

women aren't welcome. The solution is better marketing that includes women along with men to show that they are welcome. More on marketing, in a bit.

2. Almost every day, I hear that younger people don't want this and are looking for that and this/that is why they aren't joining. The fastest-growing small veterans organizations all have similarities in that they DO THINGS. Many Posts have boiled down to meetings and bar nights and their overall attendance has fallen, not just with the youngins. People, in general, want to do things. People show up to volunteer. People show up for blood drives. People show up for group hikes. People show up for events. We are, at any age, mission-orientated folks. Give us things to DO and we'll show up.
3. I hear that you'll encounter horrific racism in Posts. I specifically heard that about my Post...sometimes from Veterans of Color IN my Post. The reality is that I have heard the N-word, used one time, by an older vet, when I was new. I reprimanded him immediately and he's been as nice as possible for years. Maybe he still uses the word at home with his other friends, but not in my presence and hopefully not at anywhere near a Legion event. He even told me that he was excited to vote for me when after about 4 ½ years, I became the first black Commander of my Post.
4. I see issues with people establishing and superior class of "combat veterans" as well. There are some specifically focused non-profits that work with that subset and are doing great things, but I don't think large orgs should focus on that. I only care that someone signed the oath, served honorably, and continues to serve. I know of people who died in or have been severely injured in non-combat roles. I know people who never left North America. All of them signed an oath that they WOULD.

see OPINION page 4



# ROUND-UP

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Chris Carlton (IN)

## National Vice-Commander Central Region

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## National Vice-Commander Midwestern Region

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Ron Roberts (MS)

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Jack Youngs (ID)

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## Trailing Candidate

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Round-Up is a publication designed to disseminate information related to Sons of The American Legion and the American Legion Family. It is published weekly and distributed each Sunday.

**SUBMITTING ARTICLES:** All submissions are to be made electronically to [jef-fvrabelsr@gmail.com](mailto:jef-fvrabelsr@gmail.com). If you need assistance, please send an email to same.

PNVC Jeff Vrabel, Sr., Editor

All information must be submitted by noon each Friday



The current SAL membership report can be accessed on the national website at

[www.legion.org/membership/standings](http://www.legion.org/membership/standings)



**RENEW  
ONLINE  
TODAY**



**MEMBERSHIP  
RENEWAL**

**TARGET DATE**

**February 15, 2023**



**CHRIS CARLTON**

**NATIONAL COMMANDER**

**2022 – 2023**



Chris Carlton, National Commander  
Sons of The American Legion

**"Purpose is why we journey;  
passion is the flame that lights the way."**

## Carlton 'plunges' into role as SAL national commander

The American Legion | February 9, 2023

SAL National Commander Christopher Carlton's first thought when he ran into the water for his first polar plunge: "This isn't bad."

Then reality set in.

"My brain told me, 'Hey, crazy, it's cold!' That's when I decided to run back out from the water," Carlton recalled.

Carlton's chilly experience came Feb. 3 as part of the Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge during the commander's visit to the Detachment of Maryland. The polar plunge is a fundraiser for Special Olympics that annually raises more than \$3 million for the charity.



SAL National Commander Christopher Carlton leads Department of Maryland President Carmin Brittain and Department Commander Ron Holcombe to the water before the Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge at Sandy Point State Park.

Photo provided by Jeff Thorne

SAL PNC Joe Gladden noted on his Facebook page that the temperature was 33 degrees with the water temperature 43 degrees and wind speed of 20 knots.

Carlton said "it felt amazing" to participate in the polar plunge with Department Commander Ron Holcombe, Detachment Commander Larry Ford, and Department Auxiliary President Carmin Brittain.

"Every detachment that I have visited has been a wonderful experience," Carlton said. "I have felt included not just as a participant but more like part of their family — helping where I can, laughing with them and knowing I was a part of what they are doing.

"No matter where I am, I am always reminded that just because I might be a member of Squadron 495 in Indianapolis, I'm a member of the Detachment of Indiana, which is part of a national organization. No matter where you are at, no matter what post you walk into, you can walk in knowing everyone there believes and feels the same way about our nation's veterans, their families, and the future of our great nation."



**YOUR  
MEMBERSHIP  
MATTERS**



**DAVID MENNEL**  
**NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER**  
**CENTRAL REGION**  
**2022 – 2023**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING**

Third Thursday of Each Month  
8:00 p.m. Eastern Time  
(720) 527-5854 | 202 4742#



**ERNIE LABERGE**  
**NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER**  
**EASTERN REGION**  
**2022 – 2023**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING**

Fourth Tuesday of Each Month  
7:00 p.m. Eastern Time  
(605) 313-4388 | 346 8542#



**MICHAEL KIRSCHNER**  
**NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER**  
**MIDWEST REGION**  
**2022 – 2023**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING**

First Tuesday of Each Month  
7:00 p.m. Mountain Time  
(605) 313-5379 | 830 520



**RON ROBERTS**  
**NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER**  
**SOUTHERN REGION**  
**2022 – 2023**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING**

Second Tuesday of Each Month  
7:00 p.m. Central  
(945) 218-0044 | 472 0682



**JACK YOUNGS**  
**NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER**  
**WESTERN REGION**  
**2022 – 2023**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING**

Fourth Wednesday of Each Month  
7:00 p.m. Mountain Time  
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)  
Meeting ID: 847 2013 6661 | 697 464



The commitment comes from within; orders come from above. You have no control over that, and I don't regard segmentation, outside of organizations that are specific to that, as productive.



Liz Hartman and I. We are from different coasts, genders, races, etc. We are also from Ohio and Michigan, so we should be blood enemies. Despite all of these things we are veterans and Marines first! :)

None of this is to say that the collective evil of racism, sexism, and homophobia doesn't linger. I mean, they lingered in the military, and they linger in society. We can't make them vanish, but we can make them unsavory to the point where the culture doesn't reward such thoughts. Preaching division, in my mind highlights differences, artificially magnifies the problem, and makes it seem like any efforts to the contrary, aren't worth it.

There's no doubt that our membership numbers are suffering, so it's understandable that folks will posit and preach as to the cause. We've been doing that for several years and it's not working. Similarly, the Marine Corps has been the only branch lately to meet its recruitment goals and they are the only one not drastically changing how they deal with young recruits. They are just as unreasonable, tough, unrelenting, and destructive to mind and body....and YOUNG folks keep signing up. I think veterans service organizations, including the American Legion, need a similar focus on the missions that The American Legion engages in. National is the supposed "legacy org" that I hear some people talk about. They do the good work in lobbying and creating a national presence. The Posts really do need to DO STUFF for their veterans, but also with their veterans, as we serve "community, state and nation."

Even doing stuff isn't enough. With so few having served, the pool from which to recruit is like the 2021 water reservoirs in California...drying up. When we do stuff, we need to talk about what we do. That's all in the marketing. We don't

do that enough. I don't see enough of the good work that Posts do, shared on social media or reported in bigger media. Ask those youngins for help with social media. Give them something meaningful to do and their efforts will attract the attention of new members for you

I can tell you that all of this is true, from experience. I spoke at LA Film School to their GI Bill students and told them about things we do that might help them as professionals, veterans, and good citizens. Several of them have already joined and even have a team in our Member Made Media short film competition. We had an article recently in the newspaper and it's everywhere and we're getting member and business interest. Just because you might not read the paper, doesn't mean that someone else doesn't. I've run into 2 or 3 that read it from an actual, physical newspaper, but that story was digitally making the rounds, as well.

So, the point of this extended missive is:

- Serve ALL veterans
- Do stuff
- Make sure people know that you do stuff
- Stay on mission

THIS is how you attract young members, older members, and female members, and minority members, and combat-experienced members, and...

Reprinted from LinkedIn

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HAPPY  
*Valentine's*  
DAY



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# BE THE ONE



## State of the Union: 'We've got to do more' to stem veteran suicide

The American Legion | February 8, 2023

Some of The American Legion's highest priorities for veterans – career opportunities, help for the homeless and suicide reduction – were shared and amplified by President Joseph Biden in his State of the Union Address Tuesday night.

"Let's do more to keep this nation's one truly sacred obligation – to equip those we send into harm's way and care for them and their families when they come home," Biden told the nation before listing some of the ways that care can take shape. "Job training. Job placement for veterans and their spouses as they return to civilian life. Helping veterans afford the rent because no one should be homeless in America, especially someone who served the country."

Biden noted that when he appointed Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Denis McDonough in 2020, "We were losing up to 25 veterans a day on suicide. Now, we are losing 17 a day to the silent scourge of suicide ... VA is doing everything it can, including expanding mental health screening and a proven program that recruits veterans to help other veterans understand what they are going through, to get them the help they need. We've got to do more."

Veterans represent no less than a quarter of Biden's four-part Unity Agenda announced in his first State of the Union Address last year, and suicide prevention has been a focal

point for his administration and The American Legion's nationwide Be the One initiative.

"The American Legion is pleased that the White House is bringing needed attention to the tragedy of veteran suicide," American Legion National Commander Vincent J. "Jim" Troiola said after the address. "More than 71,000 veterans have taken their lives since 2010. It's time we stop focusing on that horrific number and instead focus on the one veteran we can save."

Troiola said it's imperative that at-risk veterans seek help when they need it, without worry about stigmatization. "As a society, we need to let veterans know that it is OK to not be OK. We ask all Americans to 'Be the one' to encourage any veteran in crisis to call 988 (ext. 1) and take the path toward mental wellness."

Troiola also applauded Biden's recognition of veteran-to-veteran support at VA. The American Legion's Buddy Check peer-support program has been conducted by nearly 4,000 local posts a year since its 2019 inception. An omnibus bill passed in the waning days of the 117th Congress in December requires VA to conduct a National Buddy Check Week each year to connect veterans with the resources they need, and with each other. "The American Legion believes that Buddy Checks are an effective preventative tool that saves veterans' lives," Troiola said.



## 'Be the One' takes center stage at California revitalization

The American Legion | February 7, 2023

Military veterans, servicemembers and their families in and around Merced, Calif., are invited to a special Veterans Awareness Campaign that will include free VA claims assistance, discussions on reducing the rate of veteran suicide and more.

The event takes place from Feb. 17-19 at American Legion Post 83 at the Veterans Memorial Building, 939 W. Main St. in Merced. Officers and staff members from National Headquarters and the Department of California, along with local post members, will be available throughout the three-day event.

On Feb. 18, American Legion Post 190 member Jeffrey Freeman and Department of California Chaplain Dave Whalen will present on the organization's [Be the One initiative](#). The goal of Be the One is to reduce the rate of veteran suicide by reducing the stigma of mental health treatment and empowering everyone to "Be the One" to act accordingly when the life of a veteran is at risk.

### *Veterans Awareness and Membership Information Campaign*

Military veterans, servicemembers and their families in and around Merced, California are invited to:

**AMERICAN LEGION**

American Legion Post 83  
Veterans Memorial Building  
9393 W Main Street, Merced, California

Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Each day, there will be food and coffee available for a minimal purchase.

Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> Only – Guest Speakers Topics will include: \*

- Veteran Benefits – 10:20 am, 11:00 am, 1:20 pm & 3:00 pm
- American Legion History – 10:40 am
- American Legion Baseball – 11:20 am
- Veteran Suicide Awareness/Be The One – 11:40 am & 3:40 pm
- Veteran Housing – 12:40 pm
- American Legion Riders – 1:00 pm
- Student Veterans of America/UC Merced – 1:40 pm
- American Legion Auxiliary – 2:00 pm
- National Emergency Fund – 2:20 pm
- Tango Alpha Lima – 2:40 pm
- Sons of The American Legion – 3:20 pm

Accredited American Legion service officers will be available during this event to assist veterans and their families with VA claims and other questions related to benefits. Additionally, a membership outreach program will be conducted at this time.

Officers and staff members from National Headquarters and the Department of California, along with local post members, will be available throughout the three-day event to address questions on your membership.

\*Schedule subject to change

POC: Jeff Freeman, Area 3 Vice Commander, candj@future-tek.com/209-840-2253

**SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**  
**LEGION RIDERS**  
**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

Freeman, who shared [his story of surviving a suicide attempt](#) on the Tango Alpha Lima podcast, and Whalen will discuss Be the One at 11:40 a.m. and again at 3:40 p.m. on Feb. 18.

Other day-by-day highlights include:

- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, Feb. 17: Accredited American Legion service officers will be available to assist veterans and their families with VA claims and other questions related to benefits. Additionally, a membership outreach program will be conducted at this time.
- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18: Guest speakers will address a number of topics including VA benefits

claims, veteran housing, assistance available for victims of natural disasters, American Legion Baseball, American Legion history and more.

- 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 19: Accredited American Legion service officers will be available to assist veterans and their families with VA claims and other questions related to benefits. Additionally, a membership outreach program will be conducted at this time.

Each day, there will be food and coffee available for a minimal purchase.



New York State Commander David Riley Sr. (left) has made "Be the One" his strongest message during his tenure.

Department of New York photo

## New York state commander making 'Be the One' a priority

The American Legion | February 8, 2023

When he was elected American Legion Department of New York Commander last year, David R. Riley Sr. made [Operation Comfort Warriors \(OCW\)](#) his primary cause. Riley had been a strong supporter of OCW since 2013 and wanted to continue that support.

But then Riley learned about ["Be the One"](#), The American Legion's suicide prevention initiative aimed at reducing veteran suicides through destigmatizing asking for mental health support. He recognized the importance of the cause and wanted to do his part to spread the word, so he has shared the "Be the One" message at every one of his stops during his tenure as state commander.

He also wanted to support the mission of a fellow New York Legionnaire, National Commander Vincent J. "James" Troiola, a life member of American Legion Post 1682 in Rockland County. During his acceptance speech at the 2022 National Convention in Milwaukee, Troiola made tackling veteran suicides his No. 1 priority for his year.

"I think the platform The American Legion started with ('Be the One'), and with Jim being from New York, I kind of wanted to mimic what he was doing," Riley said. "The Department of New York has a history of always trying to support the mission of the national commander, and we follow through on that."

"When 'Be the One' rolled out, it just made sense to add it to my (projects). I even changed my whole message around it. I give every visitation with 'Be the One' as a big part of it. It's important."

Riley, a member of Harry P. Smith Post 24 in Rome, the Legion's suicide-prevention initiative comes at the crucial time. "We've got to stop all of the (veteran suicides). It's crazy," he said. "When you look at the statistics and how many people it's affecting, it's a lot more than people realize."

"I think people thought (the most recent wars were) fought behind the scenes with drones and stuff like that. I don't think they realized how much our troops were actually on the ground and how much it's been affecting them, to the point where the multiple tours just kept adding up and adding up. I had two friends who each (deployed) five different times. That's a lot."

Riley and fellow New York American Legion Family leadership – Department Auxiliary President Nancy Babis and Sons of The American Legion Detachment Commander Timothy Van Patten II – travel together and have visited 53 of New York's 62 counties so far.

At the stops, Riley provides the opportunities for posts and counties to donate to his project. He's collected \$17,000 for OCW and almost \$15,000 to support "Be the One" already. He'll present the final amounts on the floor of the national convention in Charlotte this summer.

But it's not the money collected that's stuck with Riley during his visits. "I've had on my visitations several people come up and talk about loved ones that had (died by) suicide, and that they're glad we're doing something and bringing it to the front," he said. "It's very moving. You kind of don't know what to say. You listen to them talk. That's all you can do."

In addition to what Riley has raised, the Department of New York set aside \$1.5 million last summer to provide grants to nonprofits that work with at-risk veterans to assist them before they consider suicide. Those grants included assistance with homeless veterans programs; to support RTM Protocol therapy, a non-drug, non-traumatizing treatment

that re-programs the neurological connection between the brain's feeling center and specific traumatic memories; and most recently to EquiCenter Mustang Mission program, which assists veterans who are dealing with the physical and emotional effects of combat with the use of mustang horses.

"What I like about this ('Be the One') campaign is that The American Legion started it at the top, and they're pushing it down to the local level," Riley said. "And that's what you want: for the local post to be more educated. And that's what we're doing."



## NATIONAL COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

### Advisory Committee

Joe Mayne (MN), Chairman

### Americanism Commission

Chris Casey (NE), Chairman  
Fourth Thursday of Bi-monthly  
7:30 p.m. Eastern

[Join Zoom meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 956 9846 2868 | 840 830  
(877) 853-5257

March 23, 2023 | May 25 | July 27



**FLYING FLAGS  
FOR HEROES**  
[www.flyingflagsforheroes.com](http://www.flyingflagsforheroes.com)

As of February 10, 2023, **10,763**  
flags have been placed and  
reported to honor our veterans  
since September 1, 2022

### Century Committee (CENTCOM)

Jeff Vrabel, Sr. (OH), Chairman

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Second Thursday of Each Month

7:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Meeting ID: 974 1352 0429 | 473 385  
(877) 853-5257





# Child Welfare Foundation Committee

Mark Nave (PA), Chairman

Third Wednesday of Each Month

8:00 p.m. Eastern Time

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 989 9129 8443 | 967 563

(877) 853-5257

## SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION (CWF) - DONATIONS REPORT

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DETACHMENT	2022 DONATIONS (FINAL)	2022 MEMBERSHIP (FINAL)	2023 CWF GOAL (FINAL)	2023 DONATIONS (CURRENT)	% OF GOAL	DONATIONS PER CAPITA
AL - ALABAMA	\$ 2,786.00	2,053	\$ 2,053.00	\$ 675.00	32.9%	\$ 0.33
AK - ALASKA	\$ 3,200.00	1,627	\$ 1,627.00	\$ 1,678.00	103.1%	\$ 1.03
AZ - ARIZONA	\$ 12,170.00	8,076	\$ 8,076.00	\$ 10,804.00	133.8%	\$ 1.34
AR - ARKANSAS	\$ 6,442.48	441	\$ 441.00	\$ 200.00	45.4%	\$ 0.45
CA - CALIFORNIA	\$ 6,842.48	10,728	\$ 10,728.00	\$ 1,383.56	12.9%	\$ 0.13
CO - COLORADO	\$ 23,235.00	2,784	\$ 2,784.00	\$ 5,130.00	184.3%	\$ 1.84
CT - CONNECTICUT	\$ 1,580.82	1,856	\$ 1,856.00	\$ 1,100.00	59.3%	\$ 0.59
DE - DELAWARE	\$ 1,950.00	2,433	\$ 2,433.00	\$ 50.00	2.1%	\$ 0.02
DC - DIST OF COL	\$ 113.00	113	\$ 113.00	\$ 0.00	0.0%	\$ -
FL - FLORIDA	\$ 23,230.00	21,568	\$ 21,568.00	\$ 19,171.00	88.9%	\$ 0.89
FR - FRANCE	\$ 156.00	156	\$ 156.00	\$ 100.00	64.1%	\$ 0.64
GA - GEORGIA	\$ 11,789.00	4,452	\$ 4,452.00	\$ 1,560.00	35.0%	\$ 0.35
HI - HAWAII	\$ 1,016.00	75	\$ 75.00	\$ 300.00	400.0%	\$ 4.00
ID - IDAHO	\$ 1,001.00	645	\$ 645.00	\$ 200.00	31.0%	\$ 0.31
IL - ILLINOIS	\$ 11,697.83	13,348	\$ 13,348.00	\$ 2,811.78	21.1%	\$ 0.21
IN - INDIANA	\$ 32,645.05	35,836	\$ 35,836.00	\$ 825.00	2.3%	\$ 0.02
IA - IOWA	\$ 2,300.00	4,836	\$ 4,836.00	\$ 304.00	6.3%	\$ 0.06
KS - KANSAS	\$ 5,800.00	5,859	\$ 5,859.00	\$ 425.00	7.3%	\$ 0.07
KY - KENTUCKY	\$ 2,586.00	2,586	\$ 2,586.00	\$ 0.00	0.0%	\$ -
LA - LOUISIANA	\$ 4,692.20	1,773	\$ 1,773.00	\$ 2,410.00	135.9%	\$ 1.36
ME - MAINE	\$ 2,610.00	2,596	\$ 2,596.00	\$ 100.00	3.9%	\$ 0.04
MD - MARYLAND	\$ 3,100.00	16,051	\$ 16,051.00	\$ 580.00	3.6%	\$ 0.04
MA - MASSACHUSETTS	\$ 4,011.00	5,500	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 121.00	2.2%	\$ 0.02
MX - MEXICO	\$ 31.00	31	\$ 31.00	\$ 0.00	0.0%	\$ -
MI - MICHIGAN	\$ 8,688.33	24,311	\$ 24,311.00	\$ 5,158.00	21.2%	\$ 0.21
MN - MINNESOTA	\$ 17,625.09	11,289	\$ 11,289.00	\$ 6,827.75	60.5%	\$ 0.60
MS - MISSISSIPPI	\$ 6,476.00	725	\$ 725.00	\$ 187.00	25.8%	\$ 0.26
MO - MISSOURI	\$ 2,332.00	3,197	\$ 3,197.00	\$ 350.00	10.9%	\$ 0.11
MT - MONTANA	\$ 1,550.00	1,076	\$ 1,076.00	\$ 867.00	80.6%	\$ 0.81
NE - NEBRASKA	\$ 7,638.00	6,913	\$ 6,913.00	\$ 4,845.00	70.1%	\$ 0.70
NV - NEVADA	\$ 4,326.00	360	\$ 360.00	\$ 1,075.00	298.6%	\$ 2.99
NH - NEW HAMPSHIRE	\$ 6,634.00	5,811	\$ 5,811.00	\$ 2,488.78	42.8%	\$ 0.43
NJ - NEW JERSEY	\$ 13,902.00	9,364	\$ 9,364.00	\$ 270.00	2.9%	\$ 0.03
NM - NEW MEXICO	\$ 200.00	1,504	\$ 1,504.00	\$ 4,800.00	319.1%	\$ 3.19
NY - NEW YORK	\$ 4,620.00	29,905	\$ 29,905.00	\$ 10,293.00	34.4%	\$ 0.34
NC - NORTH CAROLINA	\$ 5,921.00	2,698	\$ 2,698.00	\$ 2,318.00	85.9%	\$ 0.86
ND - NORTH DAKOTA	\$ 1,051.00	1,051	\$ 1,051.00	\$ 0.00	0.0%	\$ -
OH - OHIO	\$ 6,646.25	30,144	\$ 30,144.00	\$ 6,892.80	22.9%	\$ 0.23
OK - OKLAHOMA	\$ 1,343.00	1,343	\$ 1,343.00	\$ 0.00	0.0%	\$ -
OR - OREGON	\$ 8,214.33	1,428	\$ 1,428.00	\$ 1,087.00	76.1%	\$ 0.76
PA - PENNSYLVANIA	\$ 38,798.86	60,612	\$ 60,612.00	\$ 6,732.98	11.1%	\$ 0.11
PI - PHILIPPINES	\$ 350.00	67	\$ 67.00	\$ 75.00	111.9%	\$ 1.12
PR - PUERTO RICO	\$ 263.00	121	\$ 121.00	\$ 10.00	8.3%	\$ 0.08
RI - RHODE ISLAND	\$ 350.00	330	\$ 330.00	\$ 0.00	0.0%	\$ -
SC - SOUTH CAROLINA	\$ 4,106.00	1,485	\$ 1,485.00	\$ 400.00	26.9%	\$ 0.27
SD - SOUTH DAKOTA	\$ 1,447.81	1,360	\$ 1,360.00	\$ 1,451.85	106.8%	\$ 1.07
TN - TENNESSEE	\$ 2,985.00	1,683	\$ 1,683.00	\$ 1,058.44	62.9%	\$ 0.63
TX - TEXAS	\$ 17,953.97	5,584	\$ 5,584.00	\$ 9,884.00	177.0%	\$ 1.77
UT - UTAH	\$ 185.00	442	\$ 442.00	\$ 475.00	107.5%	\$ 1.07
VT - VERMONT	\$ 8,875.23	3,830	\$ 3,830.00	\$ 1,950.00	50.9%	\$ 0.51
VA - VIRGINIA	\$ 6,532.00	4,079	\$ 4,079.00	\$ 11,700.00	286.8%	\$ 2.87
WA - WASHINGTON	\$ 1,480.00	2,504	\$ 2,504.00	\$ 675.00	27.0%	\$ 0.27
WV - WEST VIRGINIA	\$ 4,900.00	2,404	\$ 2,404.00	\$ 2,727.25	113.4%	\$ 1.13
WI - WISCONSIN	\$ 707.00	4,173	\$ 4,173.00	\$ 605.00	14.5%	\$ 0.14
WY - WYOMING	\$ 6,250.00	1,295	\$ 1,295.00	\$ 0.00	0.0%	\$ -
NATIONAL HQ	\$ 4,176.00	-	\$ -	\$ 3,699.91	37.9%	\$ 0.38
GRAND TOTALS:	\$ 349,789.25	366,511	\$ 366,511.00	\$ 138,832.10	37.9%	\$ 0.38



DETACHMENT	2022 DONATIONS (FINAL)	2022 MEMBERSHIP (FINAL)	2023 CWF GOAL (FINAL)	2023 DONATIONS (CURRENT)	% OF GOAL	DONATIONS PER CAPITA
<b>EASTERN REGION</b>						
CONNECTICUT	\$ 1,580.82	1,856	\$ 1,856.00	\$ 1,100.00	59.3%	\$ 0.59
DELAWARE	\$ 1,950.00	2,433	\$ 2,433.00	\$ 50.00	2.1%	\$ 0.02
DIST OF COL	\$ -	113	\$ 113.00	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -
FRANCE	\$ -	156	\$ 156.00	\$ 100.00	64.1%	\$ 0.64
MAINE	\$ 2,610.00	2,596	\$ 2,596.00	\$ 100.00	3.9%	\$ 0.04
MARYLAND	\$ 3,100.00	16,051	\$ 16,051.00	\$ 580.00	3.6%	\$ 0.04
MASSACHUSETTS	\$ 4,011.00	5,500	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 121.00	2.2%	\$ 0.02
NEW HAMPSHIRE	\$ 6,634.00	5,811	\$ 5,811.00	\$ 2,488.78	42.8%	\$ 0.43
NEW JERSEY	\$ 13,902.00	9,364	\$ 9,364.00	\$ 270.00	2.9%	\$ 0.03
NEW YORK	\$ 4,620.00	29,905	\$ 29,905.00	\$ 10,293.00	34.4%	\$ 0.34
PENNSYLVANIA	\$ 38,798.86	60,612	\$ 60,612.00	\$ 6,732.98	11.1%	\$ 0.11
RHODE ISLAND	\$ 350.00	330	\$ 330.00	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -
VERMONT	\$ 8,875.23	3,830	\$ 3,830.00	\$ 1,950.00	50.9%	\$ 0.51
WEST VIRGINIA	\$ 4,900.00	2,404	\$ 2,404.00	\$ 2,727.25	113.4%	\$ 1.13
Total:	\$ 91,331.91	140,961	\$ 140,961.00	\$ 26,513.01	18.8%	\$ 0.19

<b>CENTRAL REGION</b>						
ILLINOIS	\$ 11,697.83	13,348	\$ 13,348.00	\$ 2,811.78	21.1%	\$ 0.21
INDIANA	\$ 32,645.05	35,836	\$ 35,836.00	\$ 825.00	2.3%	\$ 0.02
IOWA	\$ 2,300.00	4,836	\$ 4,836.00	\$ 304.00	6.3%	\$ 0.06
MICHIGAN	\$ 8,688.33	24,311	\$ 24,311.00	\$ 5,158.00	21.2%	\$ 0.21
MINNESOTA	\$ 17,625.09	11,289	\$ 11,289.00	\$ 6,827.75	60.5%	\$ 0.60
MISSOURI	\$ 2,332.00	3,197	\$ 3,197.00	\$ 350.00	10.9%	\$ 0.11
OHIO	\$ 6,646.25	30,144	\$ 30,144.00	\$ 6,892.80	22.9%	\$ 0.23
WISCONSIN	\$ 707.00	4,173	\$ 4,173.00	\$ 605.00	14.5%	\$ 0.14
Total:	\$ 82,641.55	127,134	\$ 127,134.00	\$ 23,774.33	18.7%	\$ 0.19

<b>WESTERN REGION</b>						
ALASKA	\$ 3,200.00	1,627	\$ 1,627.00	\$ 1,678.00	103.1%	\$ 1.03
ARIZONA	\$ 12,170.00	8,076	\$ 8,076.00	\$ 10,804.00	133.8%	\$ 1.34
CALIFORNIA	\$ 6,842.48	10,728	\$ 10,728.00	\$ 1,383.56	12.9%	\$ 0.13
HAWAII	\$ 1,016.00	75	\$ 75.00	\$ 300.00	400.0%	\$ 4.00
IDAHO	\$ 1,001.00	645	\$ 645.00	\$ 200.00	31.0%	\$ 0.31
NEVADA	\$ 4,326.00	360	\$ 360.00	\$ 1,075.00	298.6%	\$ 2.99
OREGON	\$ 8,214.33	1,428	\$ 1,428.00	\$ 1,087.00	76.1%	\$ 0.76
PHILIPPINES	\$ 350.00	67	\$ 67.00	\$ 75.00	111.9%	\$ 1.12
UTAH	\$ 185.00	442	\$ 442.00	\$ 475.00	107.5%	\$ 1.07
WASHINGTON	\$ 1,480.00	2,504	\$ 2,504.00	\$ 675.00	27.0%	\$ 0.27
Total:	\$ 38,784.81	25,952	\$ 25,952.00	\$ 17,752.56	68.4%	\$ 0.68

DETACHMENT	2022 DONATIONS (FINAL)	2022 MEMBERSHIP (FINAL)	2023 CWF GOAL (FINAL)	2023 DONATIONS (CURRENT)	% OF GOAL	DONATIONS PER CAPITA
<b>SOUTHERN REGION</b>						
ALABAMA	\$ 2,786.00	2,053	\$ 2,053.00	\$ 675.00	32.9%	\$ 0.33
ARKANSAS	\$ -	441	\$ 441.00	\$ 200.00	45.4%	\$ 0.45
FLORIDA	\$ 23,230.00	21,568	\$ 21,568.00	\$ 19,171.00	88.9%	\$ 0.89
GEORGIA	\$ 11,789.00	4,452	\$ 4,452.00	\$ 1,560.00	35.0%	\$ 0.35
KENTUCKY	\$ -	2,586	\$ 2,586.00	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -
LOUISIANA	\$ 4,692.20	1,773	\$ 1,773.00	\$ 2,410.00	135.9%	\$ 1.36
MISSISSIPPI	\$ 6,476.00	725	\$ 725.00	\$ 187.00	25.8%	\$ 0.26
NORTH CAROLINA	\$ 5,921.00	2,698	\$ 2,698.00	\$ 2,318.00	85.9%	\$ 0.86
PUERTO RICO	\$ 263.00	121	\$ 121.00	\$ 10.00	8.3%	\$ 0.08
SOUTH CAROLINA	\$ 4,106.00	1,485	\$ 1,485.00	\$ 400.00	26.9%	\$ 0.27
TENNESSEE	\$ 2,985.00	1,683	\$ 1,683.00	\$ 1,058.44	62.9%	\$ 0.63
VIRGINIA	\$ 6,532.00	4,079	\$ 4,079.00	\$ 11,700.00	286.8%	\$ 2.87
Total:	\$ 68,780.20	43,664	\$ 43,664.00	\$ 39,689.44	90.9%	\$ 0.91

<b>MIDWEST REGION</b>						
COLORADO	\$ 23,235.00	2,784	\$ 2,784.00	\$ 5,130.00	184.3%	\$ 1.84
KANSAS	\$ 5,800.00	5,859	\$ 5,859.00	\$ 425.00	7.3%	\$ 0.07
MEXICO	\$ -	31	\$ 31.00	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -
MONTANA	\$ 1,550.00	1,076	\$ 1,076.00	\$ 867.00	80.6%	\$ 0.81
NEBRASKA	\$ 7,638.00	6,913	\$ 6,913.00	\$ 4,845.00	70.1%	\$ 0.70
NEW MEXICO	\$ 200.00	1,504	\$ 1,504.00	\$ 4,800.00	319.1%	\$ 3.19
NORTH DAKOTA	\$ -	1,051	\$ 1,051.00	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -
OKLAHOMA	\$ -	1,343	\$ 1,343.00	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -
SOUTH DAKOTA	\$ 1,447.81	1,360	\$ 1,360.00	\$ 1,451.85	106.8%	\$ 1.07
TEXAS	\$ 17,953.97	5,584	\$ 5,584.00	\$ 9,884.00	177.0%	\$ 1.77
WYOMING	\$ 6,250.00	1,295	\$ 1,295.00	\$ -	0.0%	\$ -
Total:	\$ 64,074.78	28,800	\$ 28,800.00	\$ 27,402.85	95.1%	\$ 0.95

NATIONAL HQ:	\$ 4,176.00	-	\$ -	\$ 3,699.91	-	-
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GRAND TOTAL:	\$ 349,789.25	366,511	\$ 366,511.00	\$ 138,832.10	37.9%	\$ 0.38
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SAL DONATIONS AS OF: FEBRUARY 3, 2023

2022 SAL MEMBERSHIP AS OF: DECEMBER 31, 2022 (FINAL)

# Children & Youth Committee

James A. Noble (NJ), Chairman

Second Wednesday of Each Month

7:30 p.m. Eastern Time

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 934 1509 0014 | 403 800

(877) 853-5257

## Finance Commission

William G. Hill (MD), Chairman

8:00 p.m. Eastern Time

[Join Zoom meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 957 1342 7326 | 44846

(877) 853-5257

February 9 | April 13 | May 6 (NEC) | July 13

## Internal Affairs Commission

William Clancy, III (NY), Chairman

First Thursday of Each Month

6:00 p.m. Eastern Time

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 917 1243 8217 | 914 458

(877) 853-5257

## Legislative Commission

Thomas G. Deal (MD), Chairman

Third Thursday of ODD Months

7:30 p.m. Eastern Time

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 991 2070 0860 | 092 260

877 853 5257

## Member Training and Development Committee

Mike Monserud (IA), Chairman

First Monday of Each Month

8:00 p.m. Eastern

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 918 2414 1981 | 777 490

(877) 853-5258

## Membership Committee

Thom Skelley (TX), Chairman

Third Tuesday of Each Month

7:00 p.m. Eastern Time

(605) 472-5756 | 771 7294

The current SAL membership report can be accessed  
on the national website at  
[www.legion.org/membership/standings](http://www.legion.org/membership/standings)

additional membership information appears later in this edition

Congratulations to the 42 Detachments that have already surpassed the upcoming 75% target date and to the 4 Regions that have done the same.

Do you realize that we only need 1727 members in the next 5 days to reach the March 15 goal??

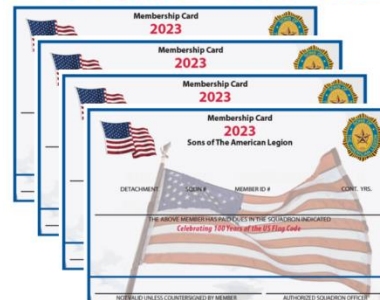
Let's be a part of HISTORY!! Keep up the fantastic work, drive those numbers and...

## RECRUIT-RENEW-REINSTATE

2023 SAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT AS OF: FEBRUARY 9, 2023

#	DETACHMENT	2023 DET. YEAR END GOAL	NEEDED TO MEET 75% TARGET 2/15/2023	2023 ACTUAL MBRSH	% OF YEAR END GOAL	2023 RENEWAL %
1	HAWAII	77	-26	84	109.09%	94.74
2	SOUTH DAKOTA	1,362	-344	1,365	100.22%	81.50
3	FRANCE	158	-29	147	93.04%	83.97
4	PUERTO RICO	123	-14	106	86.18%	52.46
5	FLORIDA	21,519	-2,261	18,400	85.51%	70.54
6	LOUISIANA	1,790	-180	1,522	85.03%	76.89
7	MARYLAND	16,058	-1,585	13,628	84.87%	77.07
8	WISCONSIN	4,187	-392	3,532	84.36%	74.92
9	DELAWARE	2,430	-224	2,046	84.20%	72.54
10	SOUTH CAROLINA	1,473	-135	1,240	84.18%	71.93
11	GEORGIA	4,490	-401	3,768	83.92%	71.80
12	VERMONT	3,818	-310	3,173	83.11%	75.92
13	OREGON	1,414	-114	1,174	83.03%	65.74
14	MISSOURI	3,219	-243	2,657	82.54%	73.14
15	RHODE ISLAND	336	-23	275	81.85%	71.21
16	IOWA	4,857	-330	3,973	81.80%	72.70
17	OHIO	30,636	-2,043	25,020	81.67%	75.39
18	KANSAS	5,919	-383	4,822	81.47%	73.27
19	ILLINOIS	13,398	-856	10,904	81.39%	73.91
20	VIRGINIA	4,109	-258	3,340	81.28%	69.97
21	MEXICO	31	-2	25	80.65%	38.71
22	PENNSYLVANIA	60,803	-3,399	49,001	80.59%	74.57
23	NEVADA	357	-19	287	80.39%	64.72
24	WEST VIRGINIA	2,362	-117	1,888	79.93%	66.71
25	ALABAMA	2,066	-100	1,649	79.82%	68.94
26	MICHIGAN	24,271	-1,121	19,324	79.62%	70.69
27	INDIANA	36,387	-1,597	28,887	79.39%	73.04
28	NORTH CAROLINA	2,727	-116	2,161	79.24%	65.33
29	OKLAHOMA	1,348	-55	1,066	79.08%	63.68
30	NEW HAMPSHIRE	5,677	-229	4,487	79.04%	70.58
31	NORTH DAKOTA	1,056	-42	834	78.98%	68.76
32	MISSISSIPPI	722	-26	567	78.53%	67.49
33	COLORADO	2,729	-93	2,140	78.42%	67.38
34	MONTANA	1,108	-37	868	78.34%	72.63
35	CONNECTICUT	1,867	-62	1,462	78.31%	70.03
36	NEBRASKA	7,015	-216	5,477	78.08%	74.53
37	MAINE	2,617	-68	2,031	77.61%	67.13
38	TENNESSEE	1,718	-41	1,329	77.36%	63.35
39	ALASKA	1,608	-33	1,239	77.05%	61.88
40	NEW YORK	29,864	-570	22,968	76.91%	70.63
41	ARIZONA	8,004	-147	6,150	76.84%	62.06
42	MINNESOTA	11,378	-7	8,540	75.06%	69.10
43	NEW JERSEY	9,386	19	7,021	74.80%	66.96
44	CALIFORNIA	10,714	171	7,865	73.41%	61.69
45	MASSACHUSETTS	5,442	111	3,971	72.97%	64.75
46	TEXAS	5,569	177	4,000	71.83%	59.95
47	IDAHO	644	26	457	70.96%	59.38
48	WYOMING	1,298	68	906	69.80%	61.50
49	NEW MEXICO	1,483	92	1,020	68.78%	55.74
50	WASHINGTON	2,485	234	1,630	65.59%	51.02
51	UTAH	449	63	274	61.02%	52.93
52	ARKANSAS	447	72	263	58.84%	50.11
53	DIST OF COL	114	21	65	57.02%	45.13
54	KENTUCKY	2,609	509	1,448	55.50%	47.82
55	PHILIPPINES	70	18	35	50.00%	48.53
Grand Totals:		367,798	-16,663	292,511	79.53%	71.11

## EVERY CARD COUNTS



## 2023 SAL REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

WESTERN REGION - JACK A. YOUNGS (ID)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
HAWAII	77	84	109.09%
OREGON	1,414	1,174	83.03%
NEVADA	357	287	80.39%
ALASKA	1,608	1,239	77.05%
ARIZONA	8,004	6,150	76.84%
CALIFORNIA	10,714	7,865	73.41%
IDAHO	644	457	70.96%
WASHINGTON	2,485	1,630	65.59%
UTAH	449	274	61.02%
PHILIPPINES	70	35	50.00%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>25,822</b>	<b>19,195</b>	<b>74.34%</b>

MIDWEST REGION - MICHAEL L. KIRSCHNER (CO)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
SOUTH DAKOTA	1,362	1,365	100.22%
KANSAS	5,919	4,822	81.47%
MEXICO	31	25	80.65%
OKLAHOMA	1,348	1,066	79.08%
NORTH DAKOTA	1,056	834	78.98%
COLORADO	2,729	2,140	78.42%
MONTANA	1,108	868	78.34%
NEBRASKA	7,015	5,477	78.08%
TEXAS	5,569	4,000	71.83%
WYOMING	1,298	906	69.80%
NEW MEXICO	1,483	1,020	68.78%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>28,918</b>	<b>22,523</b>	<b>77.89%</b>

CENTRAL REGION - DAVID J. MENNEL (MI)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
WISCONSIN	4,187	3,532	84.36%
MISSOURI	3,219	2,657	82.54%
IOWA	4,857	3,973	81.80%
OHIO	30,636	25,020	81.67%
ILLINOIS	13,398	10,904	81.39%
MICHIGAN	24,271	19,324	79.62%
INDIANA	36,387	28,887	79.39%
MINNESOTA	11,378	8,540	75.06%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>128,333</b>	<b>102,837</b>	<b>80.13%</b>

EASTERN REGION - ERNEST E. LABERGE (MA)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
FRANCE	158	147	93.04%
MARYLAND	16,058	13,628	84.87%
DELAWARE	2,430	2,046	84.20%
VERMONT	3,818	3,173	83.11%
RHODE ISLAND	336	275	81.85%
PENNSYLVANIA	60,803	49,001	80.59%
WEST VIRGINIA	2,362	1,888	79.93%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	5,677	4,487	79.04%
CONNECTICUT	1,857	1,462	78.31%
MAINE	2,617	2,031	77.61%
NEW YORK	29,864	22,968	76.91%
NEW JERSEY	9,386	7,021	74.80%
MASSACHUSETTS	5,442	3,971	72.97%
DIST OF COL	114	65	57.02%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>140,932</b>	<b>112,163</b>	<b>79.59%</b>

SOUTHERN REGION - RONALD E. ROBERTS (MS)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
PUERTO RICO	123	106	86.18%
FLORIDA	21,519	18,400	85.51%
LOUISIANA	1,790	1,522	85.03%
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,473	1,240	84.18%
GEORGIA	4,490	3,768	83.92%
VIRGINIA	4,109	3,340	81.28%
ALABAMA	2,066	1,649	79.82%
NORTH CAROLINA	2,727	2,161	79.24%
MISSISSIPPI	722	567	78.53%
TENNESSEE	1,718	1,329	77.36%
ARKANSAS	447	263	58.84%
KENTUCKY	2,609	1,448	55.50%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>43,793</b>	<b>35,793</b>	<b>81.73%</b>

- Manage profile information such as your home address, phone number and email, and make updates.
- Print a current membership card that you can have your post adjutant sign.
- Renew membership or set up automatic renewal that is safe and secure.
- View member-only discounts from retail to travel.
- Manage American Legion subscriptions to e-newsletters and The American Legion Magazine.
- Find an American Legion accredited service officer to help with VA benefits.

### What to know before creating a MyLegion account:

- Register using the email on your membership record. Registering with a different email will not include membership details or officer/committee activity. To update or verify the email on your membership record, contact your department headquarters.
- Do not register with a post, squadron, county, or district account. All MyLegion accounts are individual member accounts. Access to post and squadron membership management and online membership processing, reports and rosters are provided to members that hold an adjutant or commander position.
- Do not share emails. Only one email can be registered.

### How to register an account

1. Go to [MyLegion.org](https://MyLegion.org) and click on Register in the upper right-hand corner.
2. Enter your email in the Register window and click Next. A Verify Account window opens. Leave this page open. Go to your email and retrieve the OTP (One Time Password).
3. Enter the OTP and click Verify.
4. Create your password in the welcome window (your password must include an uppercase, lowercase, number and symbol, and there's an eight-character minimum)
5. Go to My Account to view your membership details.

## National Convention Committee

Christopher Byrd (NC), Chairman

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 961 5391 3982 | 690 337  
(877) 853-5257



## A guide to registering a MyLegion account for membership benefits

The American Legion | February 1, 2023

If you are a new or longtime member of The American Legion, member benefits are available to you on one platform – [MyLegion.org](https://MyLegion.org).

[MyLegion.org](https://MyLegion.org) is a free and secure website for American Legion and Sons of The American Legion members, as well as administrative officers of American Legion posts, districts, and counties. Users can view their MyLegion.org membership account on any device with web access to quickly access member benefits.

Use [this PowerPoint](#) for a step-by-step guide on how to register an account and use MyLegion that was presented Jan. 31 during [Training Tuesday](#).

As a registered user of MyLegion, you can:



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**National Executive Committee**  
**Liaison Committee**  
Jim Stewart (NV), Chairman

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**National Vice-Commander**  
**Selection Committee**  
James Hartman (MD), Co-Chairman  
David Stephens (IN), Co-Chairman

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**Public and Media**  
**Communications Commission**  
Kevin Chaplin (VA), Chairman  
Fourth Tuesday of Each Month  
8:00 p.m. Eastern Time  
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)  
Meeting ID: 963 1528 2340 | 075079  
(877) 853-5257

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**Subcommittee on Resolutions**  
Ned Fox (CA), Chairman

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**Subcommittee**  
**on National Appointments**  
Donald Allisot, Jr. (ME), Chairman

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**Veterans Affairs**  
**& Rehabilitation Commission**  
Seth A. Rippe (NE), Chairman  
Third Wednesday of Each Month  
8:00 p.m. Eastern Time  
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)  
Meeting ID: 941 4100 3972 | 378 079  
(646) 931-3860

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**Veterans Employment**  
**& Education Commission**  
Jim Coates (NY), Chairman  
Third Wednesday of Each Month  
8:00 p.m. Eastern Time  
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)  
Meeting ID: 935 4405 3884 | 786 114  
(877) 853-5257

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**SONS OF THE**  
 **AMERICAN**  
**LEGION**

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**PASSION**  
**PURPOSE**

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**Post 105 Family observes**  
**Four Chaplains Sunday**

[Rusty Myers](#), Squadron 105 Adjutant | February 5, 2022

KEARNY, NJ – American Legion Post 105, Sons of the American Legion (SAL) Squadron 105, and members of the American Legion Auxiliary interest group seeking a charter at Post 105 were honored to attend the Four Chaplains' Mass at Saint Stephen's RC Church in Kearny. The mass commemorates the service and sacrifice of who became known as the Four Chaplains on February 3, 1943 – one of which, Father John P. Washington, was actually assigned as a priest to Kearney's Saint Stephen's.

The Four Chaplains – Methodist minister Rev. George L. Fox, Reform Rabbi Alexander D. Goode, Catholic priest Father John P. Washington, and Reformed Church in America minister Rev. Clark V. Poling – all served as US Army Chaplains in the first year of World War II. In January of 1943, they set sail from New York along with 900 other soldiers headed for Greenland aboard the USAT Dorchester, a troop transport which was part of a larger convoy. On the morning of February 3<sup>rd</sup>, the ship was torpedoed by a German U-boat. The ship immediately began sinking quickly.

The chaplains were seen handing out life jackets and helping soldiers into the water, eventually giving up their own life jackets to save other men. Survivors of the *Dorchester*, of which there were only 230 out of 904, recall seeing the four men standing arm-in-arm on the ship as it went down, praying and singing hymns. The chaplains all went down with the *Dorchester*.



As a testament to the universality of faith, some survivors later recalled they could hear different languages mixed in the prayers of the chaplains, including Jewish prayers in Hebrew and Catholic prayers in Latin.

As Father Washington was a priest at Saint Stephen's beginning in 1938, Four Chaplains' Day is deeply entrenched in the history of the parish. There is a statue of the four men outside, as well as a chapel within the church dedicated in their honor.

This year's Catholic Mass took place on the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sinking, with members of Rabbi Godde and Father Washington's family in attendance, along with descendants of survivors of the *Dorchester*.

"They gave not only their [life] jackets, but their lives ... true faith is when one gives of himself for another," spoke the officiant of the mass, Auxiliary Bishop Gregory Studerus during his homily.

Each year, veterans' and patriotic groups from around the area are invited to attend the mass. Each group, which ranges from the VFW to the Catholic War Veterans to the American Legion to the Boy Scouts, files into the church behind a Kearny Police colorguard, followed by a mass of other flags and banners. Entering the standing-room only church to "Procession Alegre," everyone in attendance

cannot help but be in awe of the pomp and pageantry which this mass is given.

To the majestic music of the church's organ, to the choral renditions of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," to the St. Columille United Gaelic Pipe Band playing "God Bless America," this mass rooted in patriotism truly honors the sacrifice of the Four Chaplains by keeping their story alive. Perhaps one of the more moving moments of the mass was the playing of the hymn "No Greater Love" during communion, which speaks to the Immortal Chaplain's story with the words "... there is no greater love, says the Lord, then to lay down your life for a friend."

The Post 105 American Legion Family always is deeply honored to be invited to attend. This year, perhaps 20 members from the Post were at Saint Stephen's, many of whom had not ever heard of the Four Chaplains before two weeks ago. "I just thought it was absolutely beautiful," said American Legion Auxiliary member Jackie Elsmore. "Honestly, I didn't know [about the Four Chaplains]," noted Post 105 Legionnaire Elsie Cruz, a Navy veteran herself. "To be a part of this – especially for the young people – it's showing them to honor people who make sacrifices ... to honor their own history." The young people Cruz speaks of are Boy Scout Troop 305, who, sponsored by this church, have adopted the Four Chaplains as their patron, wearing their image on their uniforms and neckerchiefs.

Generations of descendants of the troops on that ship, some of whom were in attendance at this 80th Anniversary of the sinking, owe their lives to the selflessness of these four, and their love for their brother man. American Legion Post and Squadron 105 are proud and humbled they could be part of honoring that legacy.

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## Sons of The American Legion Squadron 105 helps the homeless

[Rusty Myers](#), Squadron 105 Adjutant | February 4, 2022

NEWARK, NJ – Belleville's Sons of the American Legion (SAL) Squadron 105 organized a trip on a Saturday morning to go down to Newark to help the homeless, by handing out blankets, jackets, and bags full of sandwiches, cookies, and water on what ended up being the coldest day of the year.

"We went down there with a car full of jackets and sandwiches, and came back with nothing," noted project officer Vinnie Ferriole, who planned the event with his wife. At a meeting in December of the Squadron, he presented his idea of doing something to help the homeless during the

winter in the area. He was given the go-ahead by Squadron 105 Commander Steve Sangemino ... “you’re the chairman now, run with it”.

Over the next few weeks, he collected items to do just that. American Legion Crawford-Crews Post 251 in Montclair held a coat giveaway in January, with winterwear generously provided by Ocean State Job Lot to handout. They provided two cases of brand-new winter jackets. Members from the Post 105 Family provided jackets and blankets as well – others donated cookies, and the Post donated bottles of water. The night before, members made PB&J’s – Lisa Bocchino noted afterward “We sat and made 22 sandwiches in an hour”.

On a day when it was three degrees out, members of the Squadron and Post got together and made the ten-minute trip “Down Neck,” as Newark’s Ironbound section is called locally. Advised by Newark Police to pull up to Peter Francesco Park right behind Newark Penn Station, the two trucks of members pulled up and hopped out to hand everything out. Almost immediately, over fifty people ran up and formed a line. The contents of the two cars was emptied in under five minutes.



Post 105 Legionnaire Ed Hall, Lisa Bocchino, SAL 105 Adjutant Rusty Myers, SAL 105 Ron Planer, and Melody Ciresi.

Submitted photo.

Unfortunately, even in the terribly frigid temperatures last week in New Jersey, so many people were living outside in the elements. In what can only be described as heartbreaking, what the Squadron provided wasn’t nearly enough to help those in line who needed it, running out of jackets and sandwiches almost immediately.

Of those in line were a mother and a little girl of probably six years old. In a moment that speaks to the true giving nature of the American Legion Family, Melody Ciresi, who is

a member of the American Legion Auxiliary group seeking a charter at Belleville Post 105, gave the little girl the gloves off her hands. “You don’t know how blessed you are, until you go down there” she later noted.

“I’m just glad to be a part of something where we help people, and make a difference,” noted new SAL member Ron Planer, on one of the first events he participated in. Ferriole, who has also run a number of the Squadron’s cancer fundraisers in the past, said after returning to the Post how “thankful I am for everybody who helped – we learned a lot about how to do this next time ... and we’re going to do this again.”

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## AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS

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### Pennsylvania Legion Riders stage fundraiser for family of daughter awaiting heart transplant

The American Legion | February 1, 2023

When Robin Weaver took over as director of American Legion Riders Chapter 101 in Carlisle, Pa., she made it clear she wanted the chapter to be a service for its community. That approach was on full display recently, benefiting a family dealing with a very difficult medical situation in the process.

On Jan. 28, Chapter 101 staged a fundraiser that netted more than \$7,200 for the family of Harmonee Washington. The 6-year-old Harmonee has an enlarged heart with blood clots and is forced to stay at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia to use a ventricular assist device machine to help pump blood throughout her body while she waits for a transplant.

Harmonee’s father, Charles Washington, is a firefighter at Carlisle Fire & Rescue Services, and makes a more than five-hour round-trip drive each week to visit his daughter



at the hospital. Chapter 101 learned about their situation through a member who also works at Carlisle Fire & Rescue Services.



Post 101 photo

"I've always been somebody who helps other. I'd give the shirt off my back to someone," said Weaver, a member of Auxiliary Unit 101 and the wife of Post 101 Commander Doug Weaver. "When I became the Riders director here, I told everybody my main goal – and I hoped they felt the same way – was that we were here to help our veterans, their families, and our community. So, when I heard about (Har-monee), I didn't even skip a beat. We were on it. That's just who I want our Riders to be."

The post hosted a Hope for Harmonee fundraiser that featured a "fill the wheelbarrow" event where participants could donate money to assist the Washington family. There also was a raffle that contribute to the impressive total raised.

In addition to Chapter 101, Legion Riders from Chambersburg Chapter 46, Greencastle Chapter 373, Newville Chapter 421, Fort Loudon Chapter 606, and Lickdale Chapter 910 also showed up to offer their support to the cause.

"I was shocked," Weaver said. "I didn't set a donation goal. But the amount of support from the other Legion Riders who came was out of this world. It was heart-warming, to say the least. I told every single one of them that we will definitely pay that forward. That's just who I want our Riders to be. That's my goal."

Harmonee's father said he was moved by the Riders' effort. "It lets us know that we're not alone in this fight," [he told The Sentinel](#). "There are people out here that really care now. It's like when you think you have no support, you really do."

Weaver said Charles was surprised when the Riders reached out. "He thought the family was alone," she said. "When we reached out to him, he was pretty much flabbergasted. He couldn't believe perfect strangers were going to help his family."

"To be honest, the night of the fundraiser, we brought him up to speak. He might have gotten seven words out and he was done. Just the overwhelming response of everybody who showed up, and talking about his daughter, he just couldn't get anything out. He was very honored."



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# AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families



Vickie Koutz, National President  
The American Legion Auxiliary

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Check your mailbox! The February issue of *Auxiliary* magazine is on its way! In this issue, learn about Marines walking across the country to raise POW/MIA awareness, ALA's branding refresh, and much more! We'd love to hear what you thought of this issue. [Let us know!](#) *Auxiliary* magazine is published every quarter in February, May, August, and November. Members receive the issue via mail, and it's available [online](#). Find this issue and more [here](#).

Has your membership expired? You can still renew for 2023 and continue serving veterans, military, and their families. You can renew your membership in three easy ways: by phone, online, or mail. Go to [www.ALForVeterans.org](http://www.ALForVeterans.org), call (317) 569-4570, or mail in your renewal notice.

Need American Legion Family membership applications? We have two versions available — color and black-and-white — available for [download](#). We created the black-and-white version to be printer friendly from your home office. The traditional brochures are still available from your department.

Help us increase our following on Instagram. You may be familiar with our social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter, but did you know we are on Instagram too? Join us there for fun, unique content you won't see anywhere else! Just search for [@ALAforVeterans](#).

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Scholarship  
Applications  
Due  
March 1

## Deadline alert!

Applications for ALA national scholarships are due March 1.

Scholarships available:

- Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship
- Non-Traditional Student Scholarship
- Spirit of Youth Scholarship
- Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship

Learn more and apply [here](#).

Send questions to [Education@ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:Education@ALAforVeterans.org).

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National  
Poppy Day®  
is  
May 26 this year



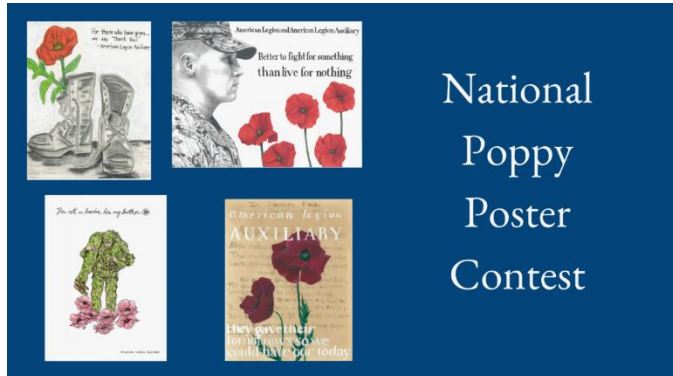
## Time to make plans for National Poppy Day®

As you're preparing your unit activities for this special day, consider ordering ALA poppy coloring books — a great way to educate kids about the meaning behind the poppy. The

books are available for purchase from [Emblem Sales](#) and can be [downloaded](#).

Other resources:

- [Overview of the ALA Poppy Program](#)
- [Banners](#)
- [Posters](#)
- [Media templates](#)
- In Flanders Fields [video](#)



### Youth: Show off your art skills in ALA National Poppy Poster Contest

For decades, our Auxiliary units have sponsored the National Poppy Poster Contest in local schools. Kids in grades 2-12 are eligible to participate. All department entries are due to the division chairmen by June 1.

[Learn how to get involved.](#)



What are you planning for April's  
Month of the Military Child  
and Purple UP! Day?

Military children face unique challenges and make sacrifices. To recognize this, April is designated as the Month of the Military Child (#MOMC), and April 15 is Purple Up! Day.

During the month of April, plan special events and activities for the military children in your community.

On Purple Up! Day, everyone can wear purple to show support for military children and raise awareness of their sacrifices. Purple symbolizes a combination of the colors of each branch of the U.S. military: Army green, Navy blue, Air Force blue, Marine red, and Coast Guard blue.

We'd love to hear what you have planned. Send us an [email](#).



### ALA Junior Patch Program: Earn a limited-edition patch

The Veterans Creative Arts Festival patch raises money for ALA National President Vickie Koutz's 2022-2023 area of focus. Any Junior or SAL youth can earn this patch if they raise at least \$5 for each year old. For example, a 17-year-old would raise a minimum of \$85 (17 x \$5 = \$85). Donations can be raised in a variety of ways — solicited from family, friends, Legion Family members, or contribute themselves. So far, 33 Juniors have earned this patch, raising over \$1,600. [Learn more.](#)







Save the date: Support the ALA Foundation by donating March 8 in honor of a woman who inspires you. A tribute donation offers you a thoughtful way to celebrate a special person while contributing to our mission to positively impact the lives of our veterans, military, and their families by funding programs of the ALA today and for future generations. Every gift received will go to the ALA Foundation's Mission Endowment Fund, which benefits ALA programs like Girls Nation and the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, and funds the ALA Foundation's Mission in Action Grants.



# SPORTS



## ALWS Road to Hope 5K moving to April

The American Legion | February 3, 2023

In an effort to draw more runners in the annual Road to Hope 5K, organizers have moved the race — annually the opening event of the 7th Inning Stretch Festival before the American Legion World Series — from August to April.

This year's Road to Hope 5K will take place April 29 in Shelby, N.C., the permanent home of the ALWS.

"The heat and humidity in August are oppressive and can be dangerous," said Kim Davis, media director for the festival, related events and the ALWS. "We're hoping the April date will draw more runners and therefore, more contributions to Road to Hope Shelby."

Proceeds from race registration and related sponsorships go to Road to Hope Shelby, a 529-mile bike ride from Shelby to Washington, D.C., held annually each May. The ride ends at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, which lists the names of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.

This year's 5K will be the 10th annual race affiliated with the 7th Inning Stretch Festival and the ALWS.

The 7th Inning Stretch Festival will take place Aug. 5, the Saturday before the 96th American Legion World Series, Aug. 10-15.

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# SQUADRON EVERLASTING

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to have a member's information listed here,  
please send to [jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com](mailto:jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com)

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## Howard Jerome "Howie" Jock, "Sakohawitha," Bear Clan, 55, of Akwesasne



AKWESASNE (WNNY) - Howard Jerome "Howie" Jock, "Sakohawitha," Bear Clan, 55, Akwesasne, Ontario passed away surrounded by his family on February 4, 2023 after a brief illness.

Howie was born on February 20, 1967, the son of the late Ann (Chubb) and Edgar Jock. He was the youngest son of the "Jock Boys" and yet still like a big brother to so many people he met along the way.

Howie was a doer and didn't sit idle for too long. He was always helping someone out with whatever they needed. His passion was heavy machine work and family. He loved traveling, the Buffalo Bills, Boston Bruins, visiting with family, hosting get togethers, hanging out with "the bags" and "the boys." He was known for his jokester ways and giving you the shirt off his back. He never thought twice about jumping in to help someone and did it wherever he went - even on vacation. He lived life large and loved even larger. Many stories of him being in the right place at the right time to help people are often told.

He was a member of the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 1479 and a volunteer fireman with the Hogsburg Akwesasne Fire Department for many years. He was the proud owner/operator of Jock's Excavating. He was also a former member of the Local 440 and worked at Bear's Den for several years.

Howie is survived by his wife and lifelong companion, Maureen Thompson; his five children, Theo Mitchell (Iakokatste), Truman (Alexandria), Tori (Hank), Taelor, and Thomas Jock, all of Akwesasne; four grandchildren, Aweniserahthe, Wentiih, Kahetiioh and was greatly anticipating his fifth in July; and a chosen grandson Creed.

He is also survived his eight brothers and 6 sisters, Warren Jock, Carol Thompson, both of Akwesasne, Dave (Frances) Jock of Kingston, Barbara (Larry) Mitchell, Kathy White, also

of Akwesasne, Harriet (Joe) Cheek of Mississippi, Mike Jock of Akwesasne, Mark (Maxine) Jock of Florida, Alvin (Caroline) of Akwesasne, Connie (Jerome) Gibson of Syracuse, Roger (Diane) Jock, Glen (Lisa) Jock, Nelson (Donna) Jock, and Patricia (Troy) Barnes, all of Akwesasne; a chosen siblings, Stanley Thompson, Kenny Perkins, Robin Tarbell, Jerry Gambill, Dean George, Jane George, Joy Jock, Boo Mitchell and Margaret LaFrance. He is also survived by his wife's family, Timmy Thompson (Becca), Luke Thompson, Roger Thompson (Peggy), Robert Thompson (LucyAnn), Norris Thompson (Sylvia), Velma Cook (Leon), Ruth Seymour, Lucille Cook (Ronnie), Stephanie Thompson (Harvey Delormier), his faithful canine companion, Charlie "Chucky," so many nieces, nephews, and cousins - too numerous to count.

He was predeceased by his parents Ann and Edgar, his father and mother-in-law, James and Esther Thompson; a sister-in-law, Patricia Jock; and his brothers-in-law, Angus "Um" Boots, Angus White, Danny Thompson, and John Square.

Friends may call at his home, 2 James Thompson Road on Wednesday beginning at 4:00 PM until 1:00 PM Thursday followed by visitation at the Indian Way Longhouse, Jock Road, beginning at 3:00 PM until the time of his service on Friday at 11:00 AM. Burial will follow the services in Jock Road Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, those wishing may consider memorial contributions to be made in his memory to the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 1479.

Arrangements are under the care and guidance of the Donaldson Funeral Home, Massena, where friends may share memories and offer condolences online at [www.donaldsonfh.com](http://www.donaldsonfh.com).

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## Don C. Forgette Sr.



Don C. Forgette Sr., 83, a long-time resident of Nadeau, MI and currently residing in Oconto, WI passed away on Thursday, February 2, 2023, at The Bay in Oconto.

Don was born on October 24, 1939, in Daggett, MI to Clarence and Ada (Christenson) Forgette. Don married the former Janice Swanson on December 26, 1959, and together they had 4 children. She preceded him in death on

March 8, 1984. Don later married the former Bonnie Charlier on August 9, 2003, in Carney, MI.

Don owned and operated Forgette Oil Company for many years and later drove for LaFaive Oil Company and Wendricks Truss Inc. Don loved farming and hunting, his favorite times were spent at the Forgette Camp, also known as "Camp FFB" in Nadeau. He served as trustee for Nadeau Township for 32 years. He was a member of St. Bruno Catholic Church and Sons of the American Legion.

Survivors include his wife Bonnie, his 4 children: Sherry (Phil) Klatt, Don Jr (Sheri), David (Bonnie) and Lori (Scott) Van; his 4 stepsons: Jerry Wusterbarth, Chad (Danielle) Wusterbarth, Jeremy Wusterbarth, and Troy (Jessica) Wusterbarth, 18 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren and brother Michael (Ruth) Forgette. Don was preceded in death by his parents, Clarence and Ada, his first wife Janice and his grandson Brayson Wusterbarth. Visitation for Don will be held at Anderson Diehm Funeral Home in Stephenson, MI on Thursday, February 9, 2023 from 4:00 pm until time of Memorial Service at 6:00 pm with Father Benny Mathew presiding. The family encourages everyone to wear camouflage or their favorite flannel to honor Don's favorite time of year!

Colorado regrets to report that Past Detachment Commander Ernie Clark Jr has been called to the Squadron Everlasting. Ernie was Colorado Detachment Commander 1996-97. Ernie was very active in the community of Aurora CO, where he ran the Second Chance Bicycle Shop and donated over 4,500 bicycles to homeless veterans and needy children in the Community.

We also must inform you of the passing of 2003 Shaw Rigsby VA&R Volunteer of the year Kenney Wederski. Kenny was a valuable member of the Colorado Legion family as was appointed Assistant Sgt-at-Arms Emeritus by the Detachment in 2016.



As Spring is rapidly approaching, so are district meetings, detachment conventions will begin, and the NEC meeting is right around the corner. And let's not forget the Washington Conference at the end of the month. Many of us will be

traveling to attend these meetings and events, as well as continuing to work hard at their squadrons.

People's schedules will also get busy with youth sports, events at school, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day and many, many other things going on.

With all of this in mind, I would ask readers to be patient and understanding if some of our editions of Round-Up are delayed or combined. The goal of this publication is to get pertinent information out in a timely manner, and effort will be made to continue.

As a reminder, anyone who has information to share should email to me, and I will take care of the rest.

**Honor the Veteran Who Made You Eligible. Renew Today!**

Jeff Vrabel, Sr., Editor

[jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com](mailto:jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com) | [Team Vrabel](#)

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## Central Region Extravaganza

2023 marks the first year that a gathering of members in the Central Region is officially taking place. Taking place the weekend of April 21 - 23, 2023, 2023CREI has a jam-packed line-up of great presenters and speakers. Attendees will learn, participate, have fun, and most importantly, come together to further the mission of the American Legion Family.

The Embassy Suites Airport in Columbus, Ohio is the location of the Extravaganza, and an evening of fun is planned for Saturday night, as there are tentative plans to visit American Legion Posts in the area.

Attendance is open to Sons, as well as to Legionnaires and members of the American Legion Auxiliary.

The event flyer appears later in this edition.



To register, please email [jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com](mailto:jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com). Please register early, as there is a limit of fifty participants, and spots are filling up fast. Hotel reservations must be made directly with the hotel.

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## Meeting of the Jeffs



There will be a Meeting of the Jeffs on Saturday, April 22, 2023 during the Central Region Extravaganza.

All Jeffs planning to attend the meeting must email [jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com](mailto:jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com).

Jeffs do not need to attend the conference to attend this very important meeting.

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## With legislative victory comes responsibility

February 8, 2023

Dear American Legion Family Members and Friends,

Following a successful year of legislative victories, The American Legion is continuing to press for necessary changes that benefit all veterans, servicemembers and their families.

Among our key legislative priorities for the new Congress are ones calling for:

- Implementing what's outlined in the PACT Act. The American Legion urges Congress to provide necessary oversight and funding to ensure VA has the resources needed to properly implement this landmark legislation that will help more than 3.5 million veterans affected by toxic contamination.
- Decreasing the rate of veteran suicide. The American Legion encourages Congress to enhance access to alternative therapies, robustly fund VA's suicide-prevention outreach budget and continue to invest in mental-health research.
- Supporting our Afghanistan allies. The American Legion urges Congress to reintroduce and pass legislation that would grant permanent legal status to Afghan refugees and improve the Special Immigrant Visa process for Afghans who served alongside U.S. servicemembers.

Those are just a few of The American Legion's priorities, [which are outlined here](#). You can also download and share this brochure that lays out the priorities.

Soon, I will be presenting The American Legion's legislative priorities to a joint session of the Senate and House Committees on Veterans' Affairs. The presentation is scheduled for 10 a.m. Eastern Wednesday, March 1. Tune in to [le-gion.org](https://legion.org) to watch live or view a replay.

In the meantime, there are other ways you can help drive awareness toward our legislative goals.

Visit [legion.org/washingtonconference](https://legion.org/washingtonconference) for guidance on how to engage your lawmakers, the Know Before You Go presentation, the legislative agenda and more resources.

You can also participate in our grassroots advocacy via [The American Legion's Grassroots Action Center](#). It offers information to stay informed on the issues and tools to communicate online with lawmakers and the media about our priorities.

Thank you for what you do, virtually and in person, every day to improve the lives of our fellow veterans, servicemembers and their families.

Vincent "Jim" Troiola, National Commander  
The American Legion

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U.S. Air Force photo

## China makes accusations The American Legion | February 6, 2023

[China on Monday accused the United States of indiscriminate use of force in shooting down a suspected Chinese spy balloon](#), saying it “seriously impacted and damaged both sides’ efforts and progress in stabilizing Sino-U.S. relations.” The U.S. shot down the balloon off the Carolina coast after it traversed sensitive military sites across North America. China insisted the flyover was an accident involving a civilian aircraft.

## REMEMBERING THE GREATEST GENERATION

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**EXTRAVAGANZA**

**April 21 - 23, 2023**

**LIMITED TO 50 PARTICIPANTS - PLEASE REGISTER EARLY**



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**Embassy Suites by Hilton Columbus Airport**  
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**Reservation Code: LDO**  
**Suite Rate: \$129.00 per night**

**Friday evening Social Gathering & Networking**  
**Saturday Training, Presentations, and Guest Speakers**  
**Saturday evening visit local American Legion Posts**

**Topics include:**

**CENTCOM update | Obtaining Discharge Documents**  
**Keeping Members Involved | Building an Effective Youth Program**  
**Honoring Veterans in Health Care Facilities | Servant Leadership**  
**Public Speaking | Being a Military Child | Working with the Media**  
**Be The One - Suicide: Knowing the Signs, Prevention, & Support**

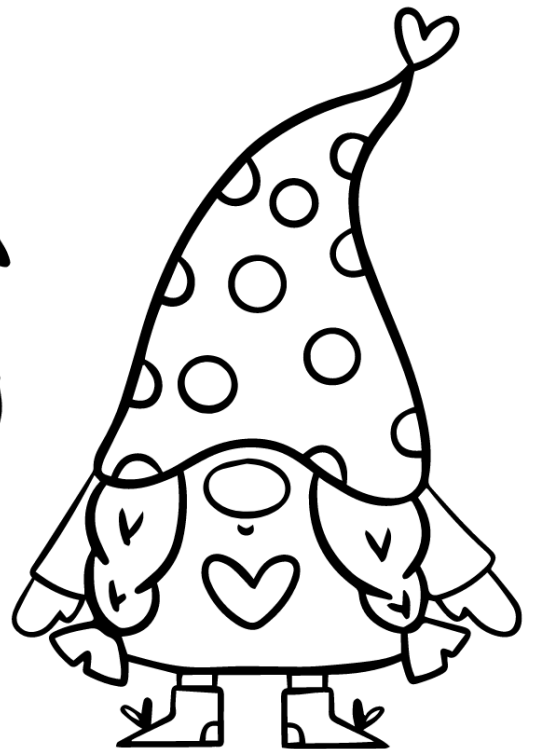
**Meeting of the Jeffs**

**For more information and to reserve your spot at the conference,**  
**please contact Jeff Vrabel Sr. | [jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com](mailto:jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com)**  
**hotel reservations own your own**

### **Local Attractions**



HAPPY  
VALENTINE'S  
DAY!



02/09/23		2023 NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP STANDINGS Christopher Carlton (IN), National Commander				
Region	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Quota Date
1 Southern 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	43,793	35,793	(8,000)	81.73%	415	
2 Central 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	128,333	102,837	(25,496)	80.13%	1,066	
3 Eastern 4, 5, 6	140,932	112,163	(28,769)	79.59%	2,777	
4 Midwest 1, 3, 4, 5, 6	28,918	22,523	(6,395)	77.89%	482	
5 Western 1, 4, 5, 6	25,822	19,195	(6,627)	74.34%	275	
TOTALS 1, 4, 5, 6	367,798	292,511	(75,287)	79.53%	5,015	



02/09/23		2023 CENTRAL REGION STANDINGS David Mennell (MI), National Vice-Commander						
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date
1 Wisconsin 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	4,187	3,532	(655)	84.36%	28	74.92%	8	
2 Missouri 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	3,219	2,657	(562)	82.54%	16	73.14%	14	
3 Iowa 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	4,857	3,973	(884)	81.80%	19	72.70%	16	
4 Ohio 1, 4, 5, 6	30,636	25,020	(5,616)	81.67%	102	75.39%	17	
5 Illinois 1, 2, 3, 5, 6	13,398	10,904	(2,494)	81.39%	-	73.91%	19	
6 Michigan 4, 5, 6	24,271	19,324	(4,947)	79.62%	374	70.69%	26	
7 Indiana 1, 3, 4, 5, 6	36,387	28,887	(7,500)	79.39%	399	73.04%	27	
8 Minnesota 5	11,378	8,540	(2,838)	75.06%	128	69.10%	42	
TOTALS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	128,333	102,837	(25,496)	80.13%	1,066			

02/09/23		2023 WESTERN REGION STANDINGS Jack Youngs (ID) National Vice-Commander						
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date
1 Hawaii 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q, 10	77	84	7	109.09%	-	94.74%	1	10/10/22
2 Oregon 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	1,414	1,174	(240)	83.03%	19	65.74%	13	
3 Nevada 4, 5, 6, 7	357	287	(70)	80.39%	2	64.72%	23	
4 Alaska 3, 6	1,608	1,239	(369)	77.05%	4	61.88%	39	
5 Arizona 5, 6	8,004	6,150	(1,854)	76.84%	121	62.06%	41	
6 California 1, 5	10,714	7,865	(2,849)	73.41%	87	61.69%	44	
7 Idaho 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	644	457	(187)	70.96%	16	59.38%	47	
8 Washington	2,485	1,630	(855)	65.59%	8	51.02%	50	
9 Utah 5	449	274	(175)	61.02%	-	52.93%	51	
10 Phillippines	70	35	(35)	50.00%	18	48.53%	55	
TOTALS 1, 4, 5	25,822	19,195	(6,627)	74.34%	275			

02/09/23		2023 SOUTHERN REGION STANDINGS Ron Roberts (MS), National Vice-Commander						
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date
1 Puerto Rico 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	123	106	(17)	86.18%	106	52.46%	4	
2 Florida 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	21,519	18,400	(3,119)	85.51%	235	70.54%	5	
3 Louisiana 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	1,790	1,522	(268)	85.03%	2	76.89%	6	
4 South Carolina 4, 5, 6, 7	1,473	1,240	(233)	84.18%	8	71.93%	10	
5 Georgia 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	4,490	3,768	(722)	83.92%	54	71.80%	11	
6 Virginia 4, 5, 6, 7	4,109	3,340	(769)	81.28%	69	69.97%	20	
7 Alabama 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	2,066	1,649	(417)	79.82%	7	68.94%	25	
8 North Carolina 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	2,727	2,161	(566)	79.24%	20	65.33%	28	
9 Mississippi 1, 3, 4, 5, 6	722	567	(155)	78.53%	1	67.49%	32	
10 Tennessee 1, 3, 4, 5, 6	1,718	1,329	(389)	77.36%	10	63.35%	38	
11 Arkansas 1	447	263	(184)	58.84%	8	50.11%	52	
12 Kentucky	2,609	1,448	(1,161)	55.50%	1	47.82%	54	
TOTALS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	43,793	35,793	(8,000)	81.73%	415			



02/09/23		2023 MIDWEST REGION STANDINGS Michael Kirschner (CO), National Vice-Commander						
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date
1 South Dakota 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	1,362	1,365	3	100.22%	33	81.50%	2	02/09/23
2 Kansas 3, 4, 5, 6	5,919	4,822	(1,097)	81.47%	113	73.27%	18	
3 Mexico 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	31	25	(6)	80.65%	-	38.71%	21	
4 Oklahoma 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	1,348	1,066	(282)	79.08%	18	63.68%	29	
5 North Dakota 1, 3, 4, 5	1,056	834	(222)	78.98%	49	68.76%	31	
6 Colorado 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	2,729	2,140	(589)	78.42%	41	67.38%	33	
7 Montana 1, 3, 4, 5, 6	1,108	868	(240)	78.34%	23	72.63%	34	
8 Nebraska 1, 3, 4, 5, 6	7,015	5,477	(1,538)	78.08%	115	74.53%	36	
9 Texas 1, 3, 4, 5	5,569	4,000	(1,569)	71.83%	40	59.95%	46	
10 Wyoming 1, 4, 5	1,298	906	(392)	69.80%	2	61.50%	48	
11 New Mexico	1,483	1,020	(463)	68.78%	48	55.74%	49	
TOTALS 1, 3, 4, 5, 6	28,918	22,523	(6,395)	77.89%	449			

02/09/23		2023 EASTERN REGION STANDINGS Ernie LaBerge (MA) National Vice-Commander						
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date
1 France 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	158	147	(11)	93.04%	1	83.97%	3	
2 Maryland 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	16,058	13,628	(2,430)	84.87%	174	77.07%	7	
3 Delaware 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	2,430	2,046	(384)	84.20%	50	72.54%	9	
4 Vermont 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	3,818	3,173	(645)	83.11%	21	75.92%	12	
5 Rhode Island 4, 5, 7	336	275	(61)	81.85%	1	71.21%	15	
6 Pennsylvania 4, 5, 6	60,803	49,001	(11,802)	80.59%	776	74.57%	22	
7 West Virginia 4, 5, 6	2,362	1,888	(474)	79.93%	43	66.71%	24	
8 New Hampshire 4, 5, 6	5,677	4,487	(1,190)	79.04%	18	70.58%	30	
9 Connecticut 4, 5, 6	1,867	1,462	(405)	78.31%	17	70.03%	35	
10 Maine 5, 6	2,617	2,031	(586)	77.61%	229	67.13%	37	
11 New York 4, 5	29,864	22,968	(6,896)	76.91%	989	70.63%	40	
12 New Jersey 2, 3, 4, 5	9,386	7,021	(2,365)	74.80%	367	66.96%	43	
13 Massachusetts 4	5,442	3,971	(1,471)	72.97%	91	64.75%	45	
14 Dist. of Columbia	114	65	(49)	57.02%	-	45.13%	53	
TOTALS 4, 5, 6	140,932	112,163	(28,769)	79.59%	2,777			

02/09/23		2023 SUPER SIX STANDINGS						
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date
1 Florida 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	21,519	18,400	(3,119)	85.51%	235	70.54%	5	
2 Ohio 1, 4, 5, 6, 7	30,636	25,020	(5,616)	81.67%	102	75.39%	17	
3 Pennsylvania 5, 6, 7	60,803	49,001	(11,802)	80.59%	776	74.57%	22	
4 Michigan 4, 5, 6	24,271	19,324	(4,947)	79.62%	374	70.69%	26	
5 Indiana 1, 3, 4, 5, 6	36,387	28,887	(7,500)	79.39%	399	73.04%	27	
6 New York 4, 5, 6	29,864	22,968	(6,896)	76.91%	989	70.63%	40	
TOTALS	203,480	163,600	(39,880)	80.40%	2,875			

National Totals 4, 5, 6	367,798	292,511	(75,287)	79.53%	5,015	71.11%		
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#### Q Quota

- 1 Met 09/14/22 goal of 10%
- 2 Met 10/13/22 goal of 25%
- 3 Met 11/09/22 goal of 35%
- 4 Met 12/14/22 goal of 45%
- 5 Met 01/19/23 goal of 60%
- 6 Met 02/15/23 goal of 75%
- 7 Met 03/15/23 goal of 80%
- 8 Met 04/19/23 goal of 90%
- 9 Met 05/17/23 goal of 100%
- 10 Met 07/16/23 goal of 105%





# 1919 Society Pledge Commitment

## DONOR INFORMATION

Donor(s)		
Address		
City	State	ZIP
Phone	Email	
Are you a member of the American Legion: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Member number

## TERMS OF PLEDGE

I am supporting the 1919 Society with a pledge total of: \$
<input type="checkbox"/> Today with a single payment <input type="checkbox"/> Over the next year, beginning on (date): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Over the next _____ years, beginning on (date): _____ Please bill me <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

## METHOD OF PAYMENT(S)

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Check</b> - Make checks payable to: <b>American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation - 1919 Society</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Credit card</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> MC <input type="checkbox"/> AmEx <input type="checkbox"/> Discover	
Credit Card Number	Exp. Date
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Planned Gifts and Stock</b> - Please contact The American Legion Office of Charitable Gifts toll free at <b>833-257-0955</b> or by email at <b>CharitableGiving@legion.org</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b>	
My/Our gift will be matched by	
<input type="checkbox"/> Matching gift enclosed <input type="checkbox"/> Matching gift form will be sent	

By electronically signing this 1919 Society Pledge Commitment (pledge commitment) I/we agree that this is a legally binding contract to give the amount(s) specified above to the American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation, doing business as American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation (ALVCF) and the ALVCF accepts such pledge/donation. I/we agree that the terms of this pledge commitment is legally binding upon and enforceable against me/us and my/our respective successors and heirs, including without limitation, my/our estate(s) and executor(s). This pledge commitment shall be governed by and interpreted under the laws of the State of Indiana. The ALVCF is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization under the provisions of Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3). The ALVCF's federal tax identification number is 35-6039680. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Donor Signature	Date
Donor Signature	Date

**Thank you for your charitable contribution.**

**American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation**

P.O. Box 1055

Indianapolis, IN 46206

# Sons of The American Legion National Commander

## Christopher Carlton



# Homecoming

## BE THE ONE

### March 24 & 25, 2023

**Friday Night Dinner at the Commanders home Post #495 with entertainment.**

**Number of guests**

**X \$20.00 =**

**Saturday visit to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum Followed by lunch at Post #500 and trip to Indiana War Memorial.**

**Number of guests**

**X \$45.00 =**

**Saturday night Homecoming Dinner at Post #64, buffet style Program and Entertainment to follow.**

**Number of guests**

**X \$55.00 =**

**Total Amount =**

### Count me in!

**Name:**

**Guests:**



**Hotel accommodations at Holiday Inn Indianapolis Airport North, an IHG Hotel.  
5601 Fortune Circle W, Indianapolis, IN 46241, 317-348-0033  
Use Link below for booking**

[https://www.holidayinn.com/redirect?path=rates&brandCode=HI&localeCode=en&regionCode=1&hotelCode=INDFC&checkInDate=24&checkInMonthYear=022023&checkOutDate=26&checkOutMonthYear=022023&\\_PMID=99801505&GPC=GRS&cn=no&viewfullsite=true](https://www.holidayinn.com/redirect?path=rates&brandCode=HI&localeCode=en&regionCode=1&hotelCode=INDFC&checkInDate=24&checkInMonthYear=022023&checkOutDate=26&checkOutMonthYear=022023&_PMID=99801505&GPC=GRS&cn=no&viewfullsite=true)

**Hotel Reservations are available until **2/24/2023****

**Hotel Airport Shuttle Available, 24/7 Call Hotel**

**Transportation to all events, entertainment and breakfast will be provided at hotel listed above.**

**Breakfast Buffet Available at Hotel listed above Saturday & Sunday with advance order check "X" for yes and list number of people below.**

**Saturday:** ☐ **Guests:** ☐ **Sunday:** ☐ **Guests:** ☐

**You may pay by Check or Credit/Debit Card**

**Name on Card:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Card #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EXP:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CVV:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Or,**

**Make check payable to: "Carlton Homecoming"**

**Send Homecoming Reservations and check or CC Info to:**

**Raymond Giehll, Jr.**

**6767 W Brier Creek Dr., New Palestine, IN 46163**

**Preferred, Email to: [rpgiehll@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rpgiehll@sbcglobal.net)**

**Homecoming Reservations RSVP By **3/18/2023****



## THE AMERICAN LEGION – MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Initial Last Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Membership ID# former member \_\_\_\_\_ Post # \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Gender ☐ Male ☐ Female

### Please check war era and branch of service below:

- |                                               |                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Global War on Terror | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Army                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf War             | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Navy                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Panama               | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Air Force               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanon/Grenada      | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Marines                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnam              | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Space Force             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Korea                | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Coast Guard             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WWII                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Merchant Marines (WWII only) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Conflicts      |                                                       |

I certify that I have served federal active duty in the United States Armed Forces since December 7, 1941, and have been honorably discharged or I am still serving.

Signed by applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name of recruiter \_\_\_\_\_

If you are a new member, send this completed application with annual dues to The American Legion, Attn: Membership, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206 (check [www.legion.org/join](http://www.legion.org/join) for dues amount), or take it to a local post. To locate a post near you, click on "Find a Post" at [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org).

D17010



### DUES RECEIPT (please print)

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Received from \_\_\_\_\_  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ for 20 \_\_\_\_\_ dues  
Recruiter's name \_\_\_\_\_  
Recruiter's signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Recruiter's phone # \_\_\_\_\_



## SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION – MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Detachment of \_\_\_\_\_ Squadron No. \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Initial Last Recruited by \_\_\_\_\_  
Initial Last

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State ZIP Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Veteran through whom eligibility is established \_\_\_\_\_

(a) Above is a member in good standing of Post No. \_\_\_\_\_ Department of \_\_\_\_\_

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

(c) Relationship of applicant to veteran \_\_\_\_\_

Has applicant previously been a member of the SAL? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby subscribe to the Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion and apply for membership.

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Transmit \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for 20 \_\_\_\_\_ annual membership dues

Signed by applicant (or legal guardian if under 18) \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility certified by \_\_\_\_\_

Mail completed application to Sons of The American Legion department/state headquarters. Annual dues must accompany completed application. Ask local contact for amount due. For current detachment address, go to The American Legion department/state headquarters, or visit [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org).

D17010



### DUES RECEIPT (please print)

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Received from \_\_\_\_\_  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ for 20 \_\_\_\_\_ dues  
Squadron No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Department of \_\_\_\_\_



## AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY – MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Unit # and Location \_\_\_\_\_

/ / ☐ Birth - 17 ☐ 18 and older  
Date of Birth (Required)

Have you been a member previously? ☐ Yes ☐ No (If yes, fill in below, if known.)

Previous Unit City/State \_\_\_\_\_ ALA ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant (or legal guardian if under 18) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Submit this application to the ALA unit you wish to join. If unit is unknown, contact National Headquarters at (317) 569-4500 for assistance.

Annual dues must accompany completed application. Ask local contact for amount due.  
Membership pending approval of application.

### ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Through-Name of Veteran (if living, must be American Legion member) ☐ Living ☐ Deceased

If Living: American Legion Member ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Post # \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Deceased (If veteran is deceased, contact ALA unit about the necessary military records.)

### Veteran served: (check all that apply)

☐ WWI (4/6/1917-11/11/1918)

☐ Anytime After 12/7/1941 (check all that apply):

- |                                               |                                          |                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Global War on Terror | <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanon/Grenada | <input type="checkbox"/> WWII            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf War             | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnam         | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Conflicts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Panama               | <input type="checkbox"/> Korea           |                                          |

### Applicant's relationship to the veteran:

- |                                                                      |                                      |                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female Spouse                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Male Spouse | <input type="checkbox"/> Mother |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sister      | <input type="checkbox"/> Self   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Descendant (daughter, granddaughter) |                                      |                                 |

### To Be Completed By The American Legion Post Adjutant/Officer

I certify that the above named individual served at least one day of active duty during the dates marked above and was honorably discharged or is still serving honorably.

Post Adjutant/Officer Membership Verification \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



### DUES RECEIPT (please print)

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Received from \_\_\_\_\_  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ for 20 \_\_\_\_\_ dues  
Recruiter's name \_\_\_\_\_  
Recruiter's signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Recruiter's phone # \_\_\_\_\_

### Support our Afghan Allies

In the U.S. military, there is a code: “no one left behind.” For two decades, members of the U.S. Armed Forces fought shoulder-to-shoulder with brave Afghan allies who served with and protected Americans, fighting for the freedom of Afghanistan and its people. The United States must honor its promises and provide genuine, lasting protection for the Afghans who have made it safely to the United States, and for those who were left behind. The American Legion urges Congress to reintroduce and pass legislation that would grant permanent legal status to Afghan refugees and improve the Special Immigrant Visa process for Afghans who served alongside U.S. servicemembers.

### Military Quality of Life

The U.S. military’s greatest resources are individual servicemembers and their families. Without highly qualified and committed men and women, even the most sophisticated weaponry will not provide the deterrent necessary to defend our nation. Factors that contribute to quality of life include proper compensation, career development, appropriate housing, quality healthcare, reasonably priced commissaries and access to affordable daycare. The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation that would increase access to child care for military families, increase appropriations to address matters involving servicemember food insecurity and increase funding to renovate military housing.

### Pay the Coast Guard

U.S. Coast Guard personnel carry out vital national security missions, but they are the only U.S. military branch that works without pay during government shutdowns, due to their status under the Department of Homeland Security. The common threat of government shutdowns brings severe and unnecessary hardship on these men, women and their families. The American Legion urges Congress to reintroduce and pass the Unwavering Support for our Coast Guard Act, which would guarantee that Coast Guard personnel are paid without delay, even in the case of a government shutdown.



DoD Photo

### Protect the American Flag

The American Legion urges Congress to approve an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would allow Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the U.S. flag. Additionally, The American Legion urges Congress to pass the Flag Code Modernization Act of 2021 to amend the U.S. Flag Code to codify multiple common patriotic customs and practices, as described in American Legion Resolution No. 19: Flag Code Amendment.



1608 K St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(202) 263-2995  
[Leg@legion.org](mailto:Leg@legion.org)  
[legion.org](https://www.legion.org)

# The American Legion Legislative Agenda

For the 118th Congress, 1st Session

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The American Legion is the voice of nearly 1.6 million U.S. military veterans and servicemembers. A resolution-based organization, The American Legion's positions represent the views of its membership and shape the organization's legislative priorities for the 118th Congress:

## Mental Health & Suicide Prevention

The leading issue facing the veteran community is suicide. The suicide rate among veterans is nearly double that of their civilian counterparts, with more than 6,000 veterans taking their lives annually. It is imperative to destigmatize asking for mental health support. Simultaneously, access to such support must increase. The American Legion encourages Congress to enhance access to alternative therapies, robustly fund VA's suicide-prevention outreach budget and continue to invest in mental-health research.

## VA Healthcare Modernization

The future of VA healthcare is as a hybrid system consisting of Veterans Health Administration-provided inpatient and outpatient care, telehealth and community care. Ensuring VA is equipped to meet the unique needs of an increasingly diverse veteran population requires that VA fully leverage all healthcare modalities and ensure a seamless transition between them. Modernizing electronic health records, veteran-centric access standards, and a transparent online scheduling system for VHA-provided care and community care alike are all essential to ensuring veterans receive the care they deserve. The means by which VA delivers care may change, but one thing will not: VA should continue to provide the best care anywhere to our nation's veterans.

## PACT Act: Implementation & Oversight

Passage of the SFC Heath Robinson PACT Act in the 117th Congress ensured millions of toxic-exposed veterans will now have access to healthcare and compensation they rightfully deserve. VA estimates there will be up to 7 million new disability claims filed, due to eligibility expansion under the PACT Act and that the claims backlog will increase to 450,000 by October 2023. The efforts put forth by the VA workforce to reduce claims backlogs in recent years have been admirable, but substantial backlogs of hundreds of thousands of claims for sustained periods of time are not acceptable. It is imperative that VA fully leverage the resources made available in the PACT Act to assist in the continued modernization of information technology systems, as well as the hiring of additional employees to ensure veterans claims are adjudicated in a timely manner. The American Legion urges Congress to provide necessary oversight and funding to ensure VA has the resources needed to properly implement this legislation.

## Protect Veterans from Predatory Actors

America's veterans are targeted by predatory actors that seek to profit from an array of benefits that have been rightfully earned by those who have served our nation. From claims companies that charge exorbitant fees (for services provided free by veterans service organizations) to lawyers vying for billions of dollars set aside for victims of diseases associated with contaminants, veterans and their families are met by promises of large payouts if they agree to surrender substantial portions of their benefits. Predatory actors often attempt to overwhelm veterans with aggressive marketing tactics and complicated contracts. The American Legion urges Congress to oppose legislation that elevates the standing of unaccredited claims companies or legitimizes predatory practices that target veterans and encourages Congress to impose a cap on legal services provided in association with the Camp Lejeune Justice Act.

## Concurrent Receipt

Currently, 50,300 military retirees with combat-related injuries qualify for DoD retirement pay as well as VA disability compensation. However, for retired veterans with disability ratings less than 50%, the VA compensation is deducted from their DoD retirement pay. The American Legion strongly supports ending this unfair policy. The Major Richard Star Act would repeal this draconian offset, allowing disabled veterans to concurrently receive their retirement pay and disability compensation.

## Guard & Reserve GI Bill Parity

Despite the same duties, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers are deprived of education benefits that active-duty servicemembers enjoy. According to current law, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers only accrue GI Bill entitlement when called to active duty under federal orders. When National Guard and Reserve servicemembers are activated under state orders, they do not accrue eligibility for Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits, as do their active-duty counterparts. The American Legion believes that every day in uniform counts and urges Congress to recognize the service of National Guard and Reserve servicemembers as eligible for the GI Bill.

## GI Bill for Honorable Service

To receive most VA benefits, a veteran's characterization of discharge from service must be "under honorable conditions." However, education assistance benefits within the GI Bill, require that servicemembers receive an "honorable discharge." If the characterization of service is "general under honorable conditions," the Post-9/11 GI Bill remains out of reach for these veterans. The American Legion urges Congress to correct this statutory incongruity by amending U.S. Code to allow access to VA educational assistance to veterans with "general under honorable conditions" discharges.