



Seehafer: “Service before self” most enduring memory of 9/11

[John Raughter](#) | September 12, 2023



Photo by Mike Rowan

National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer recalled the sacrifices of first responders and other heroes as he delivered remembrance remarks before dozens of American Legion Family members at the East Tennessee State Cemetery in Knoxville on Sept. 11.

“Who could forget the images of first responders running into burning buildings on 9/11 as most members of the general public were, understandably, running out?” Seehafer asked. “Four hundred and twelve emergency workers, that’s firefighters, police, and paramedics, were killed while responding to the World Trade Center attacks that day. And this number doesn’t include those who died years later due to the carcinogens and other debris that they were exposed to during the aftermath.

“The ‘service before self’ ethos that we so commonly see among first responders, our military and throughout The American Legion Family is the most enduring memory that I take from 9/11,” he said. Following his remarks, Seehafer joined other volunteers from The American Legion and Carry the Load in cleaning headstones of veterans buried at the cemetery.

In his speech, Seehafer pointed to the sacrifices made by more than 7,000 American servicemembers who died in the Global War on Terrorism and added that many more were wounded. He implored his fellow Americans to remember the heroes of 9/11 and continue their resolve that terrorism will not win.

“I am proud to live in a country like ours where people stand up and give their lives in the defense of others and do so with little or no thought of themselves or time to consider the consequences,” Seehafer said. “They simply do it because their instincts say it is the right thing to do. I hope – no, I *pray*, that America never stops raising these kinds of people. I know that Tennessee won’t.”

Round-Up

Donald "JR" Hall (MD) *National Commander*
Robert L. Bristo (MN) *Central National Vice-Commander*
John R. Cook (NH) *Northeast National Vice-Commander*
Terry A. Harris (KS) *Midwest National Vice-Commander*
Linwood A. Moore (VA) *Southeast National Vice-Commander*
James R. Fischer (CA) *Western National Vice-Commander*

Christopher Carlton (IN)
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Leading Candidate for National Commander

William Clancy III (NY)
Trailing Candidate for National Commander

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

Round-Up is a collection of information procured from various resources to stay better informed on happenings within The American Legion Family, and of other related topics of interest, and makes no claims or guarantees about the accuracy or currency of the contents of this publication, and expressly disclaims liability for errors and omissions.

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

All information must be submitted by noon each Friday.

PNVC [Jeff Vrabel, Sr.](#), Editor
[Rusty Myers](#), Contributor
[Lou Michaels](#), Contributor



Donald "JR" Hall, Jr.
National Commander

Representing More Than Me

From the Editor

This publication continues to evolve, and your help is still needed. It's easy to gather information from other sources, but I am in need of more local stories, information from Squadrons that are doing the work of our great organization.

Please don't be shy about telling your story. Send in pictures, short articles, and coming events, and I will make sure to get your information out.

THANKS for your continued support!

Honor the Veteran Who Made You Eligible. Renew Today!

Jeff Vrabel, Sr., Editor

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

click a button for more information



**YOUR
MEMBERSHIP
MATTERS**

Remembering the Greatest Generation

To honor a World War II Veteran,
please send information to jeffvrbelsr@gmail.com

Robert L. Bristo

Central National Vice-Commander

REGIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

Second Wednesday Quarterly

September 13, 2023 | December 13, 2023

March 13, 2024 | June 12, 2024

8:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)
(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 930 6046 3298 | Passcode: 140 802

The Value of Membership

Hello Central Region!

Way back in 2008 Past National Commander of The American Legion Marty Conatser's theme was **"The Value of Membership"** to point to the simple fact that for a few dollars each year, you could belong to the world's largest patriotic veterans service organization and make a difference in the lives of all veterans, their families, and the children of our country!

The Sons of The American Legion do the exact same thing for the very same reasons! How do we do this? We'll do it with continued active membership. Nationally we set an all-time high in membership this past year and we can and will do that again!

National Vice-Commander Robert Bristo's message last year is just as clear this year. **"Believe and Succeed"** If you believe you can do it, you can do it! And we here in the Central Region can make this happen. Remember **Consistency is what transforms Average into EXCELLENCE!** A little bit of work each day will make reaching our goals much easier!

We are the **CENTRAL Region!** We are the bull's eye to the target that all of the other regions hope they can reach!

It just takes one! I challenge every member of the Central Region to bring in or renew one new member

this coming year. If we all do this, we double our numbers, and the Central Region could be better than 268,000 members strong!

For GOD and Country,

Butch Ray, Central Region Membership Chairman

"I'm the ONE, You're the ONE, Be The ONE"

CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION

Sandy Lipman, SAL Central Region Representative

I would like to reintroduce myself to those of you who may know me, as well as the newcomers to our Central Region family. I'm proud to say I have been your representative for many years, and the Central has always been a strong supporter of the CWF. Each year we continue to lead the pack, and with our additions this year, I know we will continue to do so as well. As some of you know we have lost Iowa and Missouri, but we have gained West Virginia and Kentucky; welcome!

The Child Welfare Foundation is an important part of our Legion Family, and each year we stress the fact that we would like to see one dollar per member, a goal which is not hard to achieve. Please host a fundraiser, put out a canister or a piggy bank. Be creative with your ideas! On that note, seeing that I am retired, I will try to make your events if possible. To keep me up to date on activities, donations and more you can contact me at sandylipman95@hotmail.com. I also need your CWF chairman's information or your Americanism chair's information if you do not have a CWF chair. It is a great idea for each Detachment to have a CWF Chair, as well as an NEF chair, which I am in Michigan.

Looking forward to hearing from you, and please don't hesitate to contact me anytime. If you are in Indy stop by our table and we can chat.

Yours in God and Country!

Sandy Lipman, Central CWF
PDC 1998-1999 Michigan



John R. Cook

Northeast National Vice-Commander

REGIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

THIRD Wednesday Quarterly

September 20, 2023 | December 20, 2023

March 20, 2024 | June 19, 2024

7:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 980 7046 7820 | Passcode: 469 153

James R. Fischer

Western National Vice-Commander

REGIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

THIRD Wednesday Quarterly

September 20, 2023 | December 20, 2023

March 20, 2024 | June 19, 2024

8:00 p.m. Mountain | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 964 2285 1563 | Passcode: 433 552

Terry A. Harris

Midwest National Vice-Commander

REGIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

Fourth Wednesday Quarterly

September 27, 2023 | December 27, 2023

March 27, 2024 | June 26, 2024

7:00 p.m. Mountain | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 924 0402 2733 | Passcode: 371 685

Linwood A. Moore

Southeast National Vice-Commander

REGIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

First Wednesday Quarterly

September 6, 2023 | December 6, 2023

March 26, 2024 | June 5, 2024

8:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 945 1723 1230 | Passcode: 58543

BE THE ONE

If you're a veteran in crisis or concerned about one, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive 24/7 confidential support. Dial 988 then Press 1, chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat or text 838255.

National Commissions and Committees

Chairmen wishing to have reports published should email them to jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com to be included. All meeting information subject to change.

100th Anniversary Committee

Part of CENTCOM

Kevin Winkleman (TX), Chairman

Advisory Committee

Joe Mayne (MN), Chairman

Americanism Commission

Chris Casey (NE), Chairman

Third Monday Bi-Monthly

November 16, 2023 | December 18, 2023

February 19, 2024 | April 15, 2024

June 17, 2024 | August 18, 2024

7:30 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 935 4066 0918 | Passcode: 571 659



Century Committee

Jeff Vrabel Sr. (OH), Chairman

Second Tuesday Bi-Monthly

November 10, 2023 | December 12, 2023

March 13, 2024 | April 9, 2024

June 11, 2024 | August 13, 2024

7:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 919 4714 3789 | Passcode: 241 429

Child Welfare Foundation Committee

Mark Nave (PA), Chairman

Third Tuesday Bi-Monthly

September 21, 2023 | November 16, 2023

January 18, 2024 | March 21, 2024

May 16, 2024 | July 18, 2024

7:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 984 7031 4786 | Passcode: 780 858

Children & Youth Committee

Joseph Lohman (MD), Chairman

Second Monday Bi-Monthly

September 11, 2023 | November 13, 2023

January 8, 2024 | March 11, 2024

May 13, 2024 | July 8, 2024

7:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 951 1622 6587 | Passcode: 799 095



Finance Commission

William G. Hill (MD), Chairman

Third Thursday as scheduled

September 21, 2023 | February 15, 2024

April 18, 2024 | July 18, 2024

8:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 966 1733 0121 | Passcode: 463 702

Internal Affairs Commission

William Clancy III (NY), Chairman

Fourth Thursday Bi-Monthly

October 26, 2023 | December 28, 2023

February 22, 2024 | April 25, 2024

June 27, 2024 | August 22, 2024

6:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 932 2650 4089 | Passcode: 725 519

Legislative Commission

Blair Miles (AL), Chairman

Second Thursday Bi-Monthly

October 12, 2023 | December 14, 2023

February 8, 2024 | April 11, 2024

June 13, 2024 | August 8, 2024

7:30 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 937 1376 7924 | Passcode: 172 912

Member Training & Development Committee

Michael Cotton (DE), Chairman

First Monday Bi-Monthly

September 4, 2023 | November 6, 2023

January 1, 2024 | March 4, 2024

May 6, 2024 | July 1, 2024

8:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 957 9605 2218 | Passcode: 528 704

Membership Committee

Daryl VerStreate Jr. (NY), Chairman

Third Tuesday Bi-Monthly

September 19 2023 | November 21, 2023

January 16, 2024 | March 19, 2024

May 21, 2024 | July 16, 2024

8:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 989 3388 3350 | Passcode: 546 900

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

SAL Online Renewal - members can login and renew direct via www.myLegion.org or quick renew by clicking here [SAL Online Renewal](#).

SAL New Member Kit is now online and ready for purchase. [New Member Kit \(SAL\) - American Legion Flag & Emblem](#).

Additional membership information appears later in this edition.

[How to use the Online Transmittal Process](#)



**RENEW
ONLINE
TODAY**

National Convention Committee

Christopher Byrd (NC), Chairman

Second Tuesday Bi-Monthly

September 12 2023 | November 14, 2023

January 9, 2024 | March 12, 2024

May 14, 2024 | July 19 2024

7:30 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 953 4866 3402 | Passcode: 670 002

National Executive Committee Liaison Committee

Jim Stewart (NV), Chairman

National Vice-Commander Selection Committee

James Hartman (MD), Chairman

David Stephens (IN), Co-Chairman

Paid Up For Life (PUFL) Adhoc Committee

Kevin Winkleman (TX), Chairman

Public & Media Communications Committee

Kevin Chaplin (VA), Chairman

Fourth Tuesday Bi-Monthly

November 24 2023 | December 26, 2023

February 27, 2024 | April 23, 2024

June 25, 2024 | August 27, 2024

7:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 914 4414 8114 | Passcode: 977 759

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Subcommittee on National Appointments

William Matoska (MD), Chairman

Subcommittee on Resolutions

Ned Fox (CA), Chairman

2024 IS NOW
SONS OF THE

RENEW TODAY!!!

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

Bruno Williamson (IL), Chairman

Second Monday Bi-Monthly

November 29, 2023 | December 11, 2023

February 12, 2024 | April 8, 2024

June 10, 2024 | August 12, 2024

8:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 971 3717 7471 | Passcode: 712 824



A remembrance for all POW/MIAs

The American Legion | September 13, 2023

National POW/MIA Recognition Day, held each year on the third Friday of September, is Sept. 15. Of the 81,409 servicemembers who still remain unaccounted for, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) estimates that about 38,000 are recoverable, with about 200 identifications made a year.

The American Legion remains committed to achieving a full accounting of all U.S. servicemembers from all war eras who are either imprisoned or listed as missing in action. As part of this commitment, it encourages a return of living POWs, repatriation of the remains of the fallen from war zones abroad, or a determination through convincing evidence that neither is possible, as per [Resolution 22](#) from the 99th National Convention.

As part National POW/MIA Recognition Day, Americans are asked to pause and reflect on the sacrifices made by the military men and women who are imprisoned or unaccounted for as a result of their military

service. Individuals and businesses should also fly their POW/MIA flags.

A few POW/MIA stories of interest to you:

- Fern Sumpter Winbush, principal deputy director for the DPAA, spoke to the National Security Commission during the Legion's 104th national convention in Charlotte, N.C., last month about progress the DPAA is making with accounting for those who remain unaccounted for. [Read the story here.](#)
- American Legion Tango Alpha Lima podcast [welcomes POW/MIA League of Families CEO Ann Mills-Griffiths](#)
- [How POW/MIAs became a national priority](#)

American Legion Family members are encouraged to share how they observe POW/MIA Recognition Day by posting stories on the popular Legiontown website, www.legiontown.org.



Alice Stratton and other wives of American POWs made the prisoners' plight publicly known. Her husband, Navy pilot Richard Stratton, survived years of torture until his release in 1973.

Photo courtesy Stratton family

How POWs, MIAs became a national priority

Taylor Baldwin Kiland | September 8, 2023

Ann Mills-Griffiths was at the home of her parents in Bakersfield, Calif., when she received the news. It was September 1966. A chaplain and the local high school football coach, also a Navy reservist, knocked at the family's front door in uniform. Ann, then 25, escorted them inside.

"I looked at them with dread. And they said, 'Yes, it's about Jimmy. But he's only missing.'" Only missing? Jimmy and Ann had been born 11 months apart: "We were very close."

Navy Lt. (j.g.) James Mills, a radar intercept officer, and his pilot, Navy Lt. Cdr. James Bauder, had been flying an F-4B Phantom over North Vietnam when they disappeared from radar in the dead of night. No flak, missiles or anti-aircraft artillery were in the area. No explosions were seen or heard. Search-and-rescue aircraft saw nothing. Bauder and Mills had vanished. Thus began Ann's five-decade search for answers, a crusade initiated during the Vietnam War by many other women just like Ann: sisters, mothers, daughters, and wives of missing and captive men in Southeast Asia.

This small sorority did what few women in the 1960s could. They bravely marched up to enemy headquarters on the outskirts of Paris, insisting on a seat at the diplomatic table. They defied the Pentagon, the State Department and the White House edict instructing them to keep quiet and leave diplomacy to the professionals.

Bucking tradition to fight for the men they loved, this cadre of ladies formed an organization called the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia. Armed with elbow grease, its members became accidental activists during one of the most tumultuous times in U.S. history. And in October 1969, they secured a meeting with the North Vietnamese at a small house just outside Paris. Invited for afternoon tea, the five women found themselves staring down the enemy.

As they tried to still their shaking teacups, a stone-faced North Vietnamese diplomat stood up, pulling from his pocket a folded *New York Times* article emblazoned with a photo of POW wife Sybil Stockdale. Pushing it in her face, he said, "We know all about you, Mrs. Stockdale." Sybil blinked, staring back at him. The ticking of a clock in the background mimicked her pounding heart.

Leering at her, he asked, "Does it not seem strange to you that for so many months the government was not concerned and talking about the prisoners and missing? And then the government started talking about them and women started coming to Paris. Your government is using wives and families to draw attention away from the crimes and aggressions they are committing."

Sybil could almost feel the blood congealing in her veins. The diplomat continued. "We know you are the founder of this movement in your country, and we want to tell you we think you should direct your questions to your own government."

This was what the U.S. government had been warning the wives for years: talking in public might hurt their husbands and hamper the government's ability to negotiate their release.

Composing herself, Sybil ticked off a list of government offices she and other wives had visited on Capitol Hill and elsewhere. Beseeching them for information on the whereabouts and welfare of their men, they handed over a thick stack of letters – some 700 – from 500 families of missing and captive men, and requested delivery. The North Vietnamese diplomat reluctantly took the bundle but made no guarantees. He then questioned why the women claimed they were receiving so little news from their men. “I believe that letters from your husbands are being confiscated by the Pentagon or the State Department.”

With only a verbal promise from the North Vietnamese and no real expectation it would be fulfilled, let-down settled in following the two-hour meeting. Were they wives or widows? Perhaps it was the gloomy weather in Paris, or the pressure had taken its toll. The growing din of anti-war sentiment – from the media, from fellow Americans – was drowning out the women's voices. Why wouldn't the Nixon administration, the State Department and the most powerful military in the world do more to secure better treatment for the men and get them released?

Yet this strange tea party signaled a shift in the attention given to these women, both in the United States and overseas. Unlike the previous four years during which they suffered in silence and obscurity, by 1969 they were receiving national and international media attention. And the U.S. government and its leaders took note. Between 1969 and 1973, when the Paris Peace Accords were signed, the members of the National League of Families traveled around the world and to the United Nations, pounding the pavement and their fists in the halls of Congress, the State Department, the Pentagon, and the Oval Office. They did what military family members had never before done: they became the face of international diplomacy.

Domestically, they rallied a nation behind their cause with the wildly popular POW/MIA bracelets and the iconic black-and-white flag that now flies at the White House, the Capitol, and every U.S. post office. Amid the din and confusion of the Vietnam War, the anti-war movement, civil rights marches and the Watergate scandal, these women unintentionally made the POWs and MIAs so valuable that getting them home became the only victory left for our nation. Bringing home a small group of men who represented

a fraction of the 58,000 war casualties became the focus of the peace negotiations in Paris.

And at the war's end, these women pressured the Pentagon to create a permanent government agency whose sole task was to resolve the still-lingering issue of missing men from the Vietnam War. Established in 1973, the Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) went through several name changes before becoming the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), which today has an annual budget of \$130 million and a staff of 700.

Ann Mills-Griffiths took the reins of the National League of Families in 1977 and has served as a loud voice for those still missing from the Vietnam War. Not knowing what happened to her older brother for five decades was her motivation. Uncertainty is so much worse than death; it is a lifetime sentence. Yet she was also realistic: “I knew the possibility of finding his remains was remote,” she says. Until 2018, when she received a call from DPAA on a hot day in August. They called that morning, asking to see her in person. “I didn't think anything of it because I talk to them all the time.”

This time, they had news for her. They had retrieved a few tiny bone fragments from the shallow, muddy waters off the coast of the fishing village of Quynh Phuong, north of Vinh. Using DNA samples, she had given DPAA, they confirmed that the osseous material was her brother's.

Staring at the officials, Ann admitted, “I never expected to get this news.”

Between 1993 and 2003, the case of Bauder and Mills was investigated 15 times. Then, in 2006 in the shallows of the South China Sea, a fisherman's net snagged on something solid. Squinting over the side of his sampan, the old man saw a large piece of metal wedged in the muck. The scrap might be worth something if he could get it ashore. What he pulled out of the water was a large canopy frame of a plane. Five underwater investigations uncovered the rest of the wreckage. After that, DPAA sent divers four separate times looking for remains. They found some of Bauder, but none of Jimmy.

“When Bauder's remains were recovered in 2017, I knew my brother was there,” Ann said. “I knew he had died and where.” But DPAA did not give up. Driven in part by the movement spawned by the League to leave no one behind and account for those missing, DPAA insisted on a final dive. “This is the last time,” Ann

insisted. “I don’t want any more resources spent on my brother’s case.”

Tasked with the mission to find and repatriate all missing men, DPAA vows to stay the course until its mission is complete. On their 20th search, a diver emerged from the murky waters with buckets of sediment. Working from a nearby barge, forensic archeologists poured the muddy silt through a sieve, hoping it would catch what had been hiding in this watery grave for half a century. And it did. One of the specialists held up a tiny piece of osseous material. It was a rib bone belonging to Jimmy.

Ann’s brother was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery in 2019. But she continues to head the National League of Families, 45 years after taking the helm, because it was never just about her brother.

Before Jimmy disappeared, and long before there was DPAA, there was the U.S. Graves Registration Service, established in 1917. This unit was responsible for identifying remains after the Great War and burying them, mostly using dog tags and the accounts of fellow soldiers.

Those who were missing in war, though, were left missing – until the Vietnam War, when a small group of women changed all that and made the fate of the missing a national priority.

This same group of women also fundamentally altered how the United States considers prisoners of war, who now have national value. Consequently, the nation fights its wars in ways to minimize the potential of capture by the enemy. It was no accident that the United States ended its longest conflict in 2021, in Afghanistan, without a single POW or MIA. The nation can still tolerate those killed in action, but not POWs nor MIAs.

Likewise, this policy shift has also influenced other countries. The families of missing and captive servicemembers in Kuwait, Israel and Australia have all pressured their governments to follow America’s lead and “leave no man behind.” And Vietnamese families, having witnessed the substantial media coverage given to missing U.S. troops, have demanded their government do the same for their wartime missing.

There are 1,579 husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers still missing from the Vietnam War. Their wives, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, daughters, sons and now grandchildren continue to hold the United States and foreign governments accountable for

determining the fate of each one. While the mission stipulates the United States will make every conceivable effort to leave no servicemember behind, the reality differs. The total number of missing Americans will never be zero. The job will never be finished.

Yet the endeavor is noble, uniquely and quintessentially American, and the return of long-lost servicemembers always celebrated. These exhaustive efforts to find just one missing soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine are just part of the work DPAA continues to do: combing the globe searching for remains of our missing from all wars. It is the enduring legacy of a promise made to a handful of military wives 50 years ago: “Leave No Man Behind.”

Taylor Baldwin Kiland is the co-author of three books about American POWs, including [“Unwavering: The Wives Who Fought to Ensure No Man is Left Behind”](#) (Knox Press), from which this article is adapted. She is a Navy veteran and member of American Legion Post 10 in Barre, Vt.



VA breaks 1 million mark in PACT Act benefits claims filed

The American Legion | September 14, 2023

Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that veterans and their survivors have filed more than 1 million claims for toxic exposure-related benefits under the [PACT Act](#) since President Biden signed it into law Aug. 10, 2022. VA has processed more than 551,000 of these claims, granting 77.9% of them and awarding more than \$2.2 billion in earned benefits to veterans and survivors.

Thanks to the largest outreach campaign in VA history, veterans and survivors are applying for their earned benefits at record rates. In this fiscal year alone, veterans and survivors have submitted 2.29 million total claims (PACT and non-PACT) — 40.4% more year-to-date than last fiscal year, which was the previous all-time record. Veterans have also submitted more than 2.1 million [“intentions to file”](#) during this

fiscal year — 53.1% more than all of last fiscal year and also an all-time record.

The PACT Act is the biggest expansion of veteran health care and benefits in decades. VA encourages all [eligible](#) veterans and survivors to [file a claim](#) — or [submit their intent to file a claim](#) — for PACT Act-related benefits now.

Partly due to the PACT Act, VA is delivering more care and more benefits to more veterans than ever before.

Key results to date include:

- **Delivering benefits to veterans and their survivors:** VA has processed 1.85 million total veteran claims (PACT and non-PACT) thus far in this fiscal year — 15.7% more to date than last fiscal year and already surpassing last year's all-time record total of 1.7 million claims processed.
- **Increasing veteran access to health care:** Since Aug. 10, 378,995 veterans have enrolled in VA health care. This includes more than 158,691 enrollees from the PACT Act population (Vietnam, Gulf War, and Post-9/11 era Veterans).
- **Screening veterans for toxic exposures:** More than 4.4 million enrolled veterans have received 5-minute screenings for toxic exposures from VA under the PACT Act. Right now, there is also a [special enrollment period](#) for veterans to enroll directly in VA health care without first applying for VA benefits. Specifically, until 11:59 p.m., local time, Sept. 30, veterans who deployed to a combat zone, never enrolled in VA health care, and left active duty between Sept. 11, 2001 and Oct. 1, 2013, are eligible to enroll in VA health care without first applying for disability compensation benefits. VA encourages all of these veterans to visit [VA.gov/PACT](#) or call 1-800-MYVA411 to learn more and sign up for VA health care before the deadline.

For more information on VA's implementation of the PACT Act, visit the [PACT Act Dashboard](#). VA is publishing this dashboard every other Friday to document the implementation of this legislation and showcase its impact on veterans and survivors. The next dashboard, which will reflect the data in this release, will publish on Sept. 15.

Veterans and survivors may apply or learn more about the PACT Act by visiting [VA.gov/PACT](#) or calling 1-800-MYVA411.

Veterans Employment & Education Commission

Jim Coates (NY), Chairman

Third Tuesday Bi-Monthly

November 19, 2023 | December 21, 2023

February 15, 2024 | April 18, 2024

June 20, 2024 | August 15, 2024

7:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

(877) 853-5257

Meeting ID: 989 2627 5747 | Passcode: 26060



SONS OF THE
AMERICAN
LEGION

Remembering 9/11

[Rusty Myers](#) | September 15, 2023

September 11th, 2001 touched the lives of each and every one of us.

In New York, it cost us the lives of over 3,000 of our friends, neighbors, family, and heroes. The tragedy of such a devious and deadly attack galvanized American resolve over the next few – if not 22 – years, and is remembered each year in Patriot's Day memorials around the country. Names are read, bells are tolled, salutes are given, and tears are shed ... proclaiming in perpetuity the words "9/11: Never Forget".

Everyone can remember where they were that day – not unlike any other watershed moment in American history. Most can tell you where they were when JFK was assassinated, what channel they watched as man landed on the moon, and where they were when the Challenger exploded. 9/11, especially for my generation, defined our adulthood – and is a date where we all can tell you exactly what we were doing and where we were.

We in New Jersey have a much more unique – perhaps even more personal – recollection of the day, due to our states proximity to New York City. The college

I attended was 12 miles away from Wall Street in Manhattan, and the towns and cities many of us grew up in where on train lines that ended up in New York City. So many people could watch the towers fall in New Jersey from their front steps, and had family and friends who commuted into the City every day for jobs located in Lower Manhattan for whom they were terrified for. 750 New Jerseyans died on 9/11, with at least 96 of them residing in Essex County, which is within sight of the Manhattan skyline.

The town I grew up in Central New Jersey lost 18. The town I live in now – 11 miles from the Battery - lost six. Belleville, NJ – where American Legion Post 105 is located – lost three. Towns throughout the state lost scores more.

Each of these communities was gutted with the news that they lost a son or a daughter that Tuesday morning. A community that suffered the loss of a neighbor in this terrorist attack mourns that loss for years and years and years – which is why, in towns in New Jersey like Basking Ridge, Nutley, and Belleville, ceremonies are held at memorials amongst steel girders from the World Trade Center. New Jersey American Legion Posts in towns like Atco, Lodi, Cherry Hill, Mount Holly, Lodi, Gibbonsboro, and Rochelle Park participate in remembrances where veterans, Sons, and Auxiliary members honor the those lost on that morning, and the public servants who would lose their lives in the days, weeks, and months to come.

“The call went out to all first responders, and Belleville’s bravest and finest heeded the call,” Belleville Michael Melham said in a speech.

The ceremonies always include our police and fireman, veterans, and family members ... with color guards holding waving flags, and taps being played by high school students. Names on walls, bronze plaques, and etched onto flagpoles are read. In Belleville, a rose is placed by the students of St. Peters School on each of names of the three killed that day in the North and South Towers, while the fire department places a red, white, and blue wreath. At Hopewell Valley Post 339, the American Legion Family makes a donation to help the families of fallen veterans from 9/11 through the present. Post 348 of Neptune mourns the fallen at their town, and Toms River Post 129 hosts a “Never Forget” Ceremony at their Post. Waterford Township American Legion Post 311 “lights candles and prays for our nation” in a remembrance, and Branchville’s Post 157 Veterans and Sons escort “The Remembering Our Fallen” rolling memorial through the hills of Sussex County.

All of these memorials are a tribute to words spoken by President George W. Bush that September in 2001, which are emblazoned on a stone in Belleville’s memorial park ... “Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings. But they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.”



Belleville, NJ Color Guard



Belleville, NJ Post 105 memorial for Antionette Duger, who was lost in the towers.





Steel girder from the World Trade Center Twin Towers in Belleville, NJ.



Belleville, NJ



Branchville Post remembers the fallen.



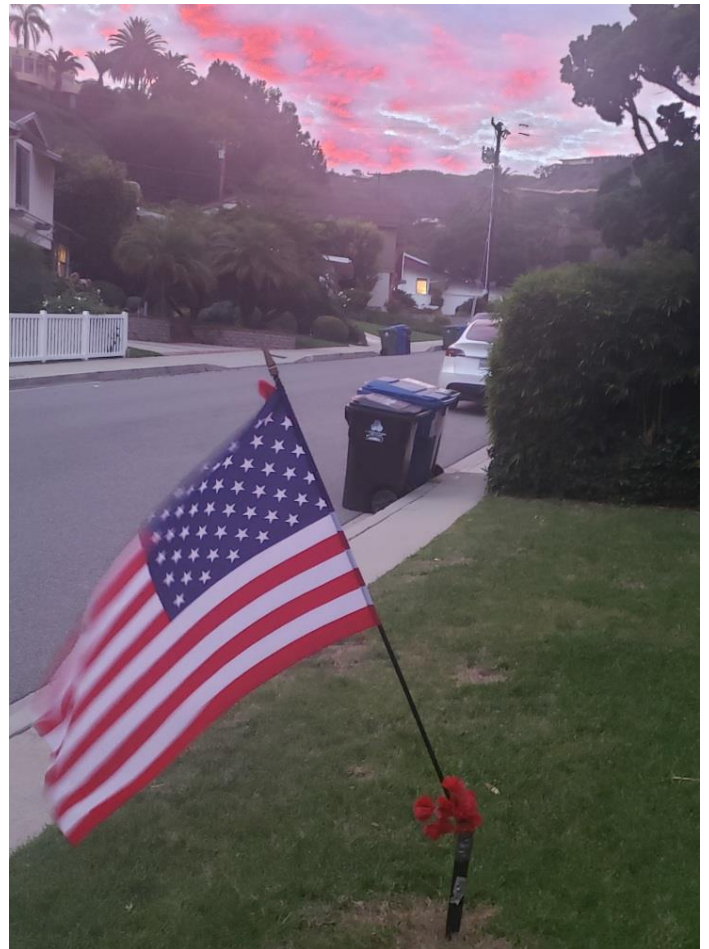
Mount Holly Post 11 in Burlington County, NJ.



Candle lighting at Waterford, NJ Post 311

Patriots Day at Los Angeles National Cemetery

Hank Elder | September 13, 2023



In this amazing shot, poppies can be seen in the sky over the Memorial at Hank's house. "It truly looks like God is forming poppies in all their honor," said Hank. Elder is Commander of Ronald Reagan-Palisades Squadron 283.





AMERICAN
LEGION
AUXILIARY



Lisa Williamson, National President
The American Legion Auxiliary

September is
Suicide Prevention
and Awareness
Month

BE **THE**
ONE

The American Legion Auxiliary is joining forces with The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion to promote the Be the One initiative, which destigmatizes asking for mental health support, provides peer-to-peer support and resources, and educates everyone on how they can Be the One.

How can you Be the One?

- Ask veterans in your life how they are doing.
- Listen when a veteran needs to talk.
- Reach out when you think a veteran might be struggling.
- Increase awareness about the veteran and military suicide epidemic.

Those needing help are encouraged to call the Veterans Crisis Line at 988.

A checkered
flag to signal
the conclusion
of another year



2023 ALA National Convention wrap-up

We celebrated one year and ushered in the next at the ALA's 102nd National Convention. Here's a look at some takeaways:

- National president hands off the checkered flag: Enjoy this [blog post](#) on newly elected 2023-2024 National President Lisa Williamson of Alaska. And be sure to read this [swansong](#) from outgoing President Vickie Koutz if you haven't already.
- ALA and our people in the spotlight: [Visit our blog](#) for stories on recipients of the Public Spirit Award, Salute to Servicemembers, and Unit Members of the Year. See a listing of the 2022-2023 committee awards [here](#). Check out future ALA media for additional convention coverage, including the November issue of *Auxiliary* magazine.
- Recordings of the livestreamed general sessions and installation of officers will be available at a later date on our [YouTube channel](#).

New for 2023-2024: Program Engagement Plans. Now is a good time to log in to the [member portal](#) and learn how you can get involved in serving our veterans, military, and their families.

2023-2024
American Legion
Family
Leadership



Meet the new American Legion Family leadership

The 2023-2024 administrative year is in full swing! New national leaders were elected during National Convention in Charlotte. Lisa Williamson, Alaska, was installed as ALA national president, Daniel Seehafer, Wisconsin, was elected national commander of The American Legion, and Donald "JR" Hall Jr., Maryland, was elected Sons of The American Legion national commander. You can read more about each of the leaders in our November issue of *Auxiliary*.



A one-day commitment can amp up your service to veterans, military, and their families

We invite you to spend a Saturday learning, connecting with fellow members, and enjoying one of five cities. This one-day, interactive ALA event will allow attendees to share ideas, learn more about working the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary, and network with others who share the same passion for service.

The informative content will focus on:

- Service for veterans and active duty
- Family support
- Community
- Youth development

Past attendees have returned home with a renewed sense of purpose, creative ideas, and new friends in the ALA.

[Register](#) for an ALA Mission Training today!



Have fun while developing leadership skills

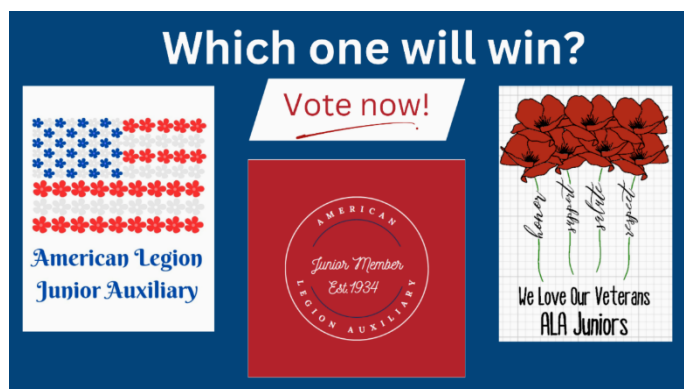
ALA Juniors have the opportunity to increase their leadership skills, meet other Juniors, and have a fun Saturday learning more about the ALA mission.

This meeting is unlike a school day. It's a Saturday to make new friends, do crafts, play games, and more. Juniors will have so much fun, they won't realize they are building skills.

And here's something to get excited about: **NEW THIS YEAR** — therapy dogs and their handlers will be on site to talk about how canines assist veterans!

Don't let your ALA Junior member miss out on this opportunity. [Register](#) for one of the five national Junior meetings today! The events are held at the same time and in the same city as Mission Trainings, so while Mom or Grandma attends a Mission Training, their granddaughter can go to the national Junior meeting.

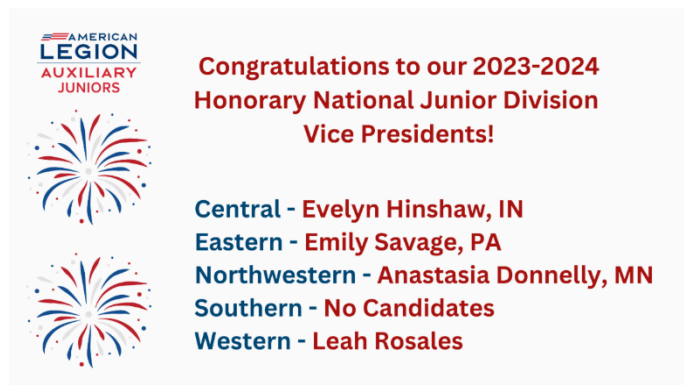
[Register now!](#)



T-shirt design contest still open for Junior members

Juniors who register for a national Junior meeting get a free T-shirt designed by a Junior! You can help choose the winning design — [vote here!](#)

Voting closes Sept. 16, and the winning design will be announced Sept. 20.



Camp Lejeune Justice Act

Important Update from Our Partners at Bergmann & Moore

Recent updates on the Camp Lejeune Justice Act (toxic water litigation)

On Sept. 6, 2023, the Dept. of Justice/Dept. of Navy announced a settlement program called the “Elective Option” to evaluate and potentially settle CLJA claims. The government’s proposal applies to a small subset of Camp Lejeune water contamination claims — nine compared to over 40 diagnoses most law firms are pursuing. The “Option” applies to the following nine (9) diagnoses, which must include evidence of both a diagnosis and an exposure at Camp Lejeune: cancers of the bladder, liver, kidney; leukemia; multiple myeloma; Parkinson’s disease; scleroderma; Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma; and kidney disease/end-stage renal disease.

Bergmann & Moore, the law firm selected by The American Legion and the ALA to help assist their members in determining whether to file a CLJA claim, believes the government’s offer falls far short of adequately valuing the harm caused by the contaminated water and fails to consider many factors that would warrant additional compensation (e.g., multiple injuries, lost wages, age at diagnosis, etc.). What the elective option does importantly make clear is that **any settlement offer will not be offset by any VA disability award, payment, or benefits.** Claimants who believe they were exposed to toxic water at Camp Lejeune may speak to someone personally by calling 800-898-9450, or by filling out the form online at www.camplejeunelitigationteam.com/al. If you have any questions before filing a claim, please call Elizabeth Hartman, B&M’s CLJA liaison with The American Legion, at 202-497-7255. The Legion encourages veterans/claimants to reach out to a CLJA attorney for any condition they think may be related to toxic water exposure while at Camp Lejeune.

Fundraising 4-1-1

SEPTEMBER 5 - 15, 2023

FREE
Logo and
Shipping



LANDS' END
BUSINESS

AMERICAN
LEGION
AUXILIARY

Lands' End Business has a special offer for ALA members! Until Sept. 15, get free logo embroidery and free standard shipping. Use code **EMTFLFS**. Full details below.

*Free Logo Embroidery Application Fee on first logo embroidery of each item (up to a \$7.95 value for logos under 16,000 stitches. Application fees over 16,000 stitches will be reduced by \$7.95). Additional logos at regular retail price. Free Standard Shipping to a single address in the contiguous United States. Excludes face masks, any item identified as “Promotional Product”, furniture, screen print T-shirts and other promotional products with existing quantity discounts, excluded styles as marked, logo setup fees, monogramming, gift boxing, program certificates, gift cards, taxes and duties, or other fees. Online promotions may differ from catalog. Discount will be applied at checkout. This offer has no cash value and is not redeemable for cash. Promotional savings may be deducted from returns. Valid on Business Outfitter orders only. Not valid on previous orders or at Lands' End, LandsEnd.com or when combined with any other promotional offer or program discount. Offer valid through 11:59 p.m. Central, Sept. 15, 2023.

WITH AN AMERICAN
LEGION AUXILIARY
ALLEGIANCE ACCIDENT
INSURANCE PLAN,
YOU'RE COVERED FOR
ACCIDENTS WHEREVER
YOU GO.

While in your car, in
someone else's car, as a
pedestrian, on a bus, train,
cruise ship, or taxi.

AMWINS
GROUP BENEFITS



Allegiance Accident Protection Plan is a guaranteed issue plan that pays a policy holder when they have an accident. It will pay an amount per day spent in the hospital up to 365 days. Choose from three different plans to fit your budget. This policy also includes a six time per-year outpatient benefit related to an accident, a recuperation benefit, and a loss of life benefit. Learn more about how AmWins can help you by visiting the Member Benefits page.



Good to know



awareness of the ALA and our important mission to

Fall is just around the corner and so is **Halloween!** Which means it's a great time to [order](#) or [download](#) ALA Halloween coloring books! These easy-to-use publications are a great way to spread

families in your community while also giving Halloween treats to kids!

Exciting scholarship news! The ALA Spirit of Youth Scholarship will now award \$1,000 to each of the 52 department winners. Previously, department winners did not receive funds; only the five division winners were awarded \$5,000 scholarships. [Learn more](#) about ALA scholarships.

American Legion Auxiliary 2024 dues are now available to pay. Renew your annual membership dues in three easy ways: by phone, online, or mail. Go to www.ALAforVeterans.org, call (317) 569-4570, or mail in your renewal notice.

Looking for an article from a past issue of Auxiliary magazine? You can find copies dating back to 2010 on our [website](#). For older issues, contact history@ALAforVeterans.org.

Increase your knowledge of the ALA quickly and conveniently! The ALA Academy is an easy way for all ALA members to learn about topics related to serving our mission. The Academy includes recordings of previously held live webinars and self-paced courses. Get started today! Log in with your member ID at www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Academy.

Request to join the official ALA program and committee groups on Facebook

Discover what your fellow ALA members are saying in the committee Facebook groups! These easy-to-access forums provide an arena for organic discussion about your local programs or services and present the opportunity to cultivate brand awareness. [Find the list of groups here.](#)

On the ALA Blog

[Iowa district exceeds expectations to help heroes heal](#)

Iowa's Fifth District Auxiliary President Jacki Bolen from Deep River Unit 296 wanted to do a unique project that would truly make a difference in the lives of veterans in her community. A nonprofit veterans organization called HERO — Healing at the English River Outfitters — really spoke to her. Bolen reached out to the HERO group to discuss their needs, and it was clear that they desperately needed a side-by-side vehicle to transport disabled veterans and conduct

maintenance on the grounds. Learn more about the project on the blog.



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Sports

Palou closes out championship season like he spent most of 2023 INDYCAR SERIES — on the podium

The American Legion | September 10, 2023

Sunday in the Firestone Grand Prix of Monterey at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca in California, Alex Palou closed the 2023 NTT INDYCAR SERIES standing where he'd spent much of the season — on the podium, and again in the No. 10 American Legion Honda.

Driving the chrome version of the Legion livery featuring the Be the One message, Palou finished third to

claim his 10th podium finish of his championship season. The Chip Ganassi Racing driver had clinched the INDYCAR SERIES season title and Astor Cup a week ago in Portland but showed no signs of holding back on Sunday.

"It's been an amazing year: five wins and 10 podiums," said Palou, who won his second season championship in three seasons. "Everybody at Chip Ganassi Racing did an awesome job getting us the cars we needed. And I'm happy to get our second championship together."

With his showing on Sunday, Palou recorded an average finish of 3.71 this season — the best figure in INDYCAR since 2006. "This was an amazing race," Palou said. "I can't wait to celebrate with the team. Thank you to all our partners, especially The American Legion. It's been a tremendous year. On track, it's been nothing but good times, and I cannot wait for next season to start."



Penske Entertainment: Joe Skibinski

Palou started the race fifth but took over first place on the seventh lap and again on the 10th. He was dominant from that point on, leading 51 of the first 59 laps before bad luck got in the way.

On Lap 58, David Malukas and Devlin DeFrancesco made side-by-side contact, with Malukas spinning into the gravel adjacent to Turn 3 to trigger the fifth of a race record-tying eight caution periods. Palou was nearing the end of one of his fuel stints when the incident happened, but he couldn't make it into the pits before the caution lights illuminated. He made his second and final stop on the next lap, Lap 59, and re-entered the race in 15th place with 37 laps to go.

He still was able to make up 12 spots by the end of the race. "The yellow didn't help us, but we got our hands on the second ring," Palou said. "We were close today, as well. I'm happy with a P3 today and super stoked

about a second championship. We have the Astor Cup now.”

Prior to the race, [Palou talked with NBC Sports](#) about representing The American Legion and, specifically, Be the One. He shared how an active duty service-member attending the opening race of the season spoke with American Legion staff working at the organization’s activation display about thoughts of suicide. He was put in touch with mental health specialists and connected with members of the American Legion Family.

“He’s now surrounded by all The American Legion folks. We saved that life,” Palou said. “I’m so proud and privileged to be racing for a cause ... with The American Legion and the Be the One campaign. I think that we’re raising the awareness of the issue. It all starts by just asking our veterans if they need help. You never know. You can be the one to save a veteran’s life today.”

Chip Ganassi Racing’s Scott Dixon won the race, his third victory in four events, and finished second in the points race. And CGR rookie Marcus Armstrong, whose liveries this year included the No. 11 American Legion Honda, ran near the top of the pack much of the race before closing in the eighth spot.

Armstrong’s finish earned him the series’ Rookie of the Year honor, despite only competing on street and road courses this season. He’ll become a full-time CGR driver in 2024. It was the first time in INDYCAR history a racing team has produced the series championship and runner-up, and the rookie of the year.

“We came home with the Rookie of the Year title,” Armstrong said. “I’m pretty happy about it, considering we missed five races, the ovals. Now I have my first oval test on Wednesday, so let’s go.”

Driving the No. 8 Huski Ice Spritz Honda that featured American Legion branding, Marcus Ericsson closed out his time with Chip Ganassi Racing with a 15h-place finish. The 2023 Indy 500 winner and 2023 runner-up finished the season in sixth place in the points race.

“It was a very messy race,” Ericsson said. “The No. 8 Huski Ice Spritz Honda was feeling amazing all day. Unfortunately, I fell on my own mistake. I was trying to make an overtake and misjudged it. I spun, lost a lap, and from then on, it was just trying to get that lap back all day.”

“I’m thankful, though, for the four years with Chip Ganassi Racing and the No. 8 crew. There were a lot of emotions. It’s not the finish we wanted, but congratulations to Scott on the win.”

In the INDY NXT doubleheader over the weekend, CGR developmental driver Kyffin Simpson – also carrying American Legion branding – finished fourth on Saturday after qualifying fifth and then took home 17th on Sunday. Simpson wound up 10th in the series point standings.



DEVOTION TO MUTUAL HELPFULNESS

by Jeff Vrebal, Sr.

ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP



by Jeff Vrebal, Sr.

Squadron Everlasting

to have a member's information listed here, please send to jeffrabelsr@gmail.com

Keith Paul Sherfy



Keith Paul Sherfy, 70, of Festus died Sept. 10, 2023, at Crystal Oaks in Festus. Mr. Sherfy worked

as an embossing pressman for the Fort Dearborn Co. He was a member of Knights of Columbus in Festus, Sons of the American Legion, NRA and GCCIBT Graphic Arts. He enjoyed hunting, camping, bowling, and losing to his son at pool. He is remembered as a one-of-a-kind man who was the life of any party. Born, July 15, 1953, in St. Louis, he was the son of the late Virginia (Noto) and Harry Sherfy.

He is survived by his wife: Vicki Sherfy of Festus; a son: Michael Sherfy of Festus; a sister: Gail Spink of Webster Groves; a granddaughter: Jocelyn Sherfy; and numerous other family members and friends. He was preceded in death by a brother: Mark Sherfy.

A memorial gathering is scheduled from 4-8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 15, at Mahn Twin City Chapel, 515 Collins, in Festus. Memorials may be made to the Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation. Arrangements are under the direction of Mahn Twin City Chapel.

Harry Curtis Hartsock



Harry Curtis Hartsock, 64, of Waverly passed away on Friday, September 8,

2023 at his residence. He was born on September 30, 1958 in Chillicothe, Ohio to the late Joe Abb Hartsock and Alta Prater Hartsock. On May 6, 2006 he was united in marriage to Elizabeth Gilmore Hartsock. In addition to his wife, Harry is survived by his children; Derek Hartsock of Minford, Ohio and Joey (Janell Pisegna) Hartsock of Fort Collins, Colorado; siblings; Gary (Tonna) Hartsock of Jasper, Tom (Bena) Hartsock of Pikeville,

Kentucky, Judy (Karl) Foster of Lima, Ohio, Janie (Frank) Hardin of Florida, Beaulah Louise Smith of Chillicothe, Kay Hartsock of Ashville, Ohio, Wanda Brenner of Waverly and Glenda (Larry) Ward of Gallipolis; step-children, Matthew (Tamara) Criner of Columbus and Kelly (Robert) Myers of Lucasville; several nieces and nephews; and the mother of his children, Jane Hartsock of Portsmouth. Harry was a member of the Sons of the American Legion, the Moose Lodge of Waverly and the Piketon VFW.

Arrangements in care of Botkin Hornback Funeral Home in Waverly. A memorial service will be scheduled at a later date. In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made to the [American Cancer Society](http://www.american-cancer-society.org).

www.botkinhornbackfuneralhomes.com.

To plant Memorial Trees in memory of Harry Curtis Hartsock, please click here to visit our Sympathy Store.

To plant trees in memory, please visit the [Sympathy Store](http://www.sympathy.com).

Obituary published on Legacy.com by Botkin Hornback Funeral Home - Waverly on Sep. 11, 2023.

David John Mackereth



David J. Mackereth, age 58, of Kimball, died Friday, September 8, 2023 at Hilltop Health Care Center in Wat-

kins.

Memorial Services will be held 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at Kimball United Methodist Church with Pastor Lori Artner officiating. Burial will follow at the Kimball Cemetery. Visitation will be held from 4-7 p.m. on Monday and 10-11 a.m. on Tuesday, both at the church, with a prayer service at 7:00 p.m. on Monday.

David John Mackereth was born June 17, 1965, in Litchfield to Leslie and Geraldine (Iverson) Mackereth. He grew up in Kimball,

where he was baptized and confirmed at the Kimball United Methodist Church and graduated from Kimball Area High School. He was married to Missy Luebke, and they were blessed with three children. Dave was a member of Kimball United Methodist Church, the South Haven Sportsman Club, the Kimball and Watkins Lions, the Kimball American Legion Sons of the American Legion, and was the unofficial doorman at Hilltop Health Care Center. He enjoyed NASCAR, deer hunting, farming, goofing off, making people laugh, and tending to his garden at Hilltop. Dave was a kid at heart that loved to spend time with his grandchildren and to carry on a conversation with anyone that would listen.

He is survived by his children, Brian (Gabi) Mackereth, Megan Mackereth, and Kristina (Johnny) Knox, all of Kimball; six grandchildren, Hunter, Olivia, Charlie, Owen, Ryker, and Paityn; brothers, Bruce (Michelle) Mackereth, Wayne (Molly) Mackereth, and Kalvin (Kim) Mackereth, all of Kimball; and many nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, Leslie and Geraldine Mackereth; grandparents, Bryan and Mae Mackereth, and Conrad and Helena Iverson.

Arrangements are entrusted with Dingmann Funeral Care Burial and Cremation Services of Kimball. Obituary, Guestbook, Video Tribute and Service Webcast online at www.dingmannfuneral.com

To send flowers to the family or plant a tree in memory of David John Mackereth, please visit our floral store.

To plant trees in memory, please visit the [Sympathy Store](http://www.sympathy.com).

Obituary published on Legacy.com by Dingmann Funeral Care - Kimball on Sep. 11, 2023.

Jacob Nathaniel Torgeson



Jacob Nathaniel Torgeson, 18, Roscoe, passed away on Monday, September 11, 2023, due to injuries from a car accident.

He was born June 30, 2005, in Rockford, the son of Jeffery Torgeson and Michelle Mattingly. Jacob was a 2023 graduate of Hononegah High School. He enjoyed studying history and was ready to attend Rock Valley College and then

Michigan State University to become a History Professor. He was a member of the Sons of the American Legion for 15 years.

Survived by his parents, Jeffery M. Torgeson and Michelle (Jim Lafray) Mattingly; his paternal grandmother and paternal step-grandfather, Donna (Richard) Torgeson Heerdt; his maternal grandmother, Linda DeGroff; many aunts, uncles and cousins and his brotherly friends, Ayden, Colton, Donald, Ethan, and Anthony. Predeceased by his step father, Henry Mattingly; his maternal grandfather, Hugh DeGroff, his paternal grandfather, Ralph Torgeson, Jr, his uncle, Richard DeGroff, and his auntie, Pauly.

Graveside services will be held at 11:00 A.M. on Saturday, September 16, 2023, at Scandinavian Cemetery, 1700 Rural St. Rockford. There will be a Celebration of Life on Saturday, September 16, 2023, from 12:30 P.M. until 4:30 P.M. at the American Legion Carlson Post #1207, 1011 S. Alpine Rd. Rockford. Fitzgerald Funeral Home and Crematory assisted the family. Share online condolences at www.fitzgeraldfh.com.

To plant trees in memory, please visit the [Sympathy Store](http://www.sympathy.com).

Obituary published on Legacy.com by Fitzgerald Funeral Home & Crematory LTD - Mulford Chapel on Sep. 14, 2023.

RENEW



AMERICAN LEGION



Daniel J. Seehafer,
National Commander
The American Legion



Steven Sobel/The American Legion

The case for U.S. engagement in the world

Alan W. Dowd | September 8, 2023

A central element of the mission of [The American Legion](#), according to its founding document, is “to make right the master of might; to promote peace and goodwill on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy.”

This mission is as important and relevant today as it was in 1919, and it requires an America that’s engaged in the world. That doesn’t mean America should be hyperactive on the world stage. But to promote peace and safeguard freedom, America definitely needs to be on the world stage – active and engaged.

Headwinds. There are strong headwinds pushing against engagement. Just [20%](#) of Americans favor engagement overseas; nearly 42% “favor greater isolationism.” Fully [51%](#) of Americans say the United States should pay less attention to problems overseas and concentrate on problems at home, up from 30% in [2002](#).

We see evidence of these headwinds in the most important polls of all: elections. In 2008, 2012 and 2016, Americans elected candidates who advocated and implemented policies of disengagement: President Barack Obama [announced](#), “It is time to focus on nation-building here at home.” Likewise, President Donald Trump [declared](#), “We have to build our own nation” and “focus on ourselves.” And today, there are growing [blocs](#) in the [party](#) of Roosevelt, Eisenhower and Reagan *and* in the [party](#) of FDR, Truman and Kennedy that want America to pull back from the world.

President Joe Biden has [made efforts](#) to reverse this drift toward disengagement, arguing that America should “defend democracy around the world,” “stand in solidarity with those beyond our shores who seek freedom and dignity,” “[champion](#) liberty and democracy,” and “rally the free world.” By coming to the aid of democratic Ukraine, Biden lived up to those words. But Afghanistan serves as a grim reminder that policy hasn’t always matched rhetoric. Recall that Afghanistan held [seven free and fair elections](#) in the 20 years before the withdrawal from Kabul in August 2021 – a withdrawal [negotiated](#) by the Trump administration and [carried out](#) by the Biden administration. But again, this was a reflection of the national mood: In the spring 2021, [69%](#) of Americans supported completely pulling out of Afghanistan and leaving its flawed and feeble democracy to fend for itself.

All of this is evidence of an enduring, if sometimes overlooked, truth: How a president defines and pursues the national interest must have national support, which means that policymakers and organizations of influence need to make a new and better case for engagement.

Tension. The Biden administration, it seems, is trying to carve out a middle-ground path between the Obama-Trump policies of disengagement and the sweepingly ambitious policies of President George W. Bush, who [declared](#), “It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.”

This is just the latest example of the tension that has long existed between the American people’s desire to spread free government and their desire to avoid the headaches and heartaches that come with engagement. At its core, this is a tug-of-war between interests and ideals.

Americans have always embraced the ideal of promoting freedom and justice in the world.

Consider the Declaration of Independence, which declared that “*all* men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” The primary author of these words, Thomas Jefferson, saw America maturing into “an empire of liberty” that would serve as a driving force for the “freedom of the globe.”

President Theodore Roosevelt, foreshadowing the Legion’s constitution, [declared](#), “The steady aim of this nation ... should be to strive to bring ever nearer the day when there shall prevail throughout the world the peace of justice.”

President Woodrow Wilson [argued](#) that America should “fight ... for the ultimate peace of the world,” for “the liberation of its peoples,” for a world “made safe for democracy.”

President Franklin Roosevelt [envisioned](#) “a world founded upon four essential human freedoms ... freedom of speech and expression – everywhere in the world ... freedom of every person to worship God in his own way – everywhere in the world ... freedom from want ... everywhere in the world ... freedom from fear ... anywhere in the world ... the supremacy of human rights everywhere.”

Good advice. These words represent America’s ideals, and at the heart of these ideals is promoting freedom. But as history repeatedly reminds us, that’s a thankless, endless task in a world shackled down by the two main enemies of freedom: tyranny and chaos. Promoting freedom in such a world requires the American people to invest time, treasure, and blood. That understandably forces the American people to weigh and temper their ideals against their interests. And that leads to periods of disengagement (post-Iraq and post-Afghanistan), doubt (post-Vietnam) and isolationism (post-World War I).

The challenge for policymakers and organizations of influence is to remind the American people that turning inward seldom serves the national interest.

We hear about the costs of engagement – and they are many – but we seldom contemplate the costs of disengagement: Pearl Harbor in 1941; Korea in 1950; post-Soviet Afghanistan, which birthed the Taliban, which provided safe haven to al-Qaida, which maimed Manhattan; Iraq in 2011, which spawned the Islamic State

and chemical warfare; Afghanistan in 2021, which is [birthing](#) another generation of nightmares.

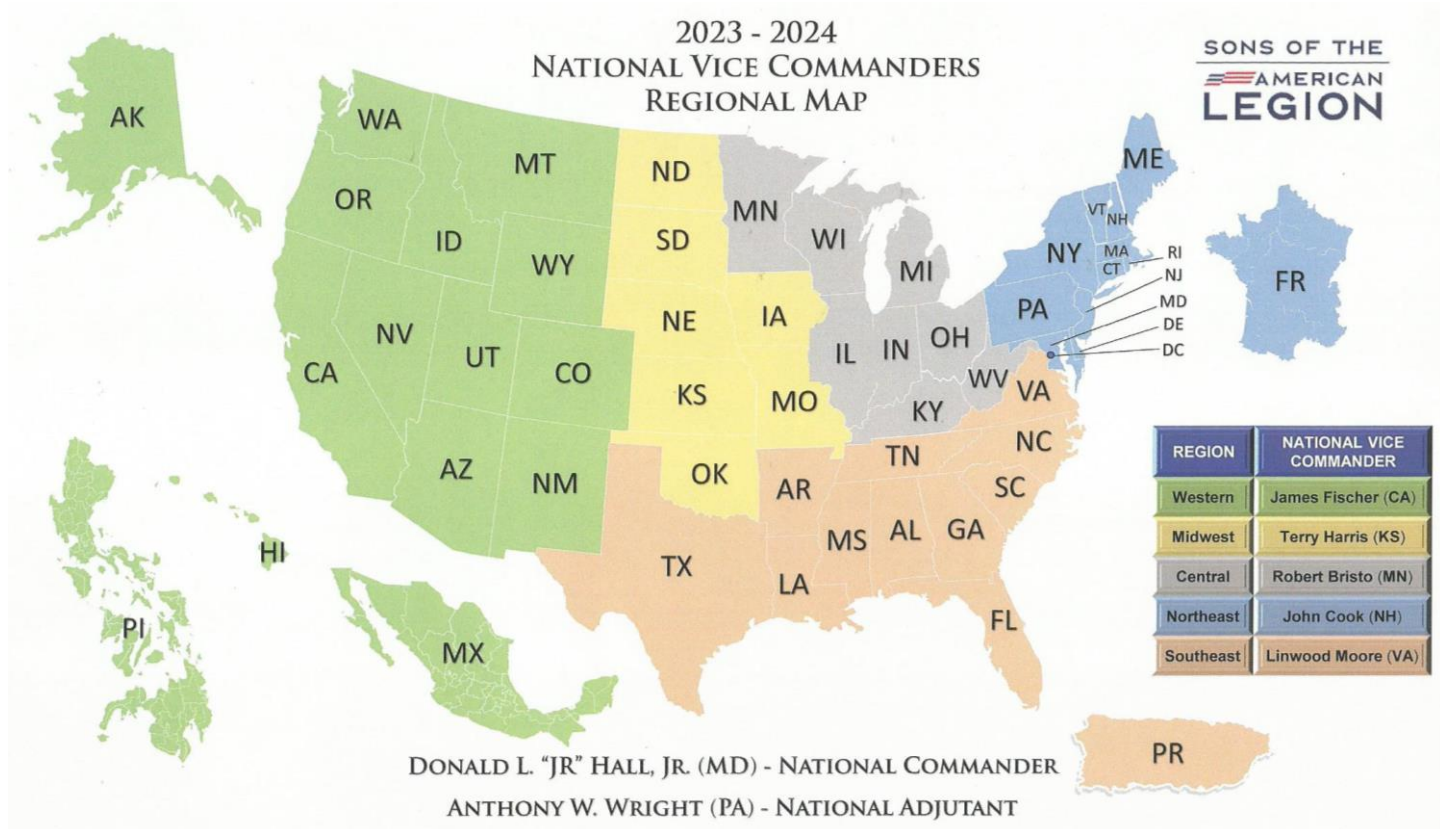
Public support for planting and nurturing democracy may ebb and flow, but the benefits of engagement and the dangers of disengagement are constant. “In each cycle of retreat,” as former National Security Council official Henry Nau [observes](#), America “leaves the world at its own peril.”

America engages the world not only – and arguably not primarily – to promote freedom, but to keep the enemies of freedom at bay. America engages the world – and maintains a military with global reach and global presence – not to go looking for problems, but to address problems before they explode into something unmanageable or unthinkable. That was the lesson of 1941 – a lesson many Americans have overlooked in the wake of the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. In an earlier period of disengagement and doubt, President Gerald Ford challenged both the idealists and the realists by urging Americans to “accept the responsibilities of leadership” and reject the notion that “if we do not succeed in everything everywhere, then we have succeeded in nothing anywhere.”

That’s good advice for today.

With the American people wearied by the burdens of engagement, hyperactive interventionism isn’t politically sustainable. But with aggressive authoritarian regimes literally trying to roll back the free world, inward-looking isolationism isn’t an option, either. Next month’s [Landing Zone column](#) will explore a possible solution to this conundrum: “free world defense.”





SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION DON GENTILE SQUADRON 532
1571 Demorest Road | Columbus, Ohio 43228

STEAK FRY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2023
4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

\$15.00
includes baked potato
and salad

Stop by for dinner and stay for the
Ohio State vs. Notre Dame game

by Jeff Vrabel, Sr.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

OHIO STATE

ND

PROUD POSSESSORS
OF A PRICELESS HERITAGE

2024 SAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT AS OF: SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

#	DETACHMENT	2024 DET. YEAR END GOAL	NEEDED TO MEET 10% TARGET 9/13/2023	2024 ACTUAL MBRSHP	% OF YEAR END GOAL	2024 RENEWAL %
1	HAWAII	120	-60	72	60.00%	55.46
2	FRANCE	168	-61	78	46.43%	40.61
3	LOUISIANA	1,821	-650	832	45.69%	42.34
4	GEORGIA	4,887	-1,394	1,883	38.53%	34.87
5	WISCONSIN	4,398	-984	1,424	32.38%	29.77
6	NORTH CAROLINA	2,770	-593	870	31.41%	26.52
7	IDAHO	659	-140	206	31.26%	26.12
8	ALABAMA	2,100	-430	640	30.48%	27.04
9	ILLINOIS	13,716	-2,656	4,028	29.37%	28.77
10	SOUTH DAKOTA	1,611	-239	400	24.83%	22.01
11	MISSISSIPPI	736	-100	174	23.64%	22.16
12	MONTANA	1,091	-145	254	23.28%	21.83
13	UTAH	460	-60	106	23.04%	22.39
14	NORTH DAKOTA	1,075	-136	243	22.60%	19.39
15	SOUTH CAROLINA	1,570	-194	351	22.36%	95.08
16	FLORIDA	23,066	-2,836	5,143	22.30%	17.93
17	WYOMING	1,248	-123	248	19.87%	17.53
18	MISSOURI	3,337	-323	657	19.69%	17.72
19	TEXAS	5,783	-535	1,113	19.25%	17.38
20	OREGON	1,534	-140	293	19.10%	100.00
21	NEVADA	387	-34	73	18.86%	15.52
22	TENNESSEE	1,792	-154	333	18.58%	15.56
23	ARKANSAS	406	-34	75	18.47%	14.25
24	IOWA	4,914	-392	883	17.97%	16.83
25	PUERTO RICO	156	-12	28	17.95%	16.99
26	KANSAS	6,055	-457	1,062	17.54%	16.07
27	MARYLAND	16,803	-1,262	2,942	17.51%	15.25
28	VIRGINIA	4,367	-321	758	17.36%	14.01
29	RHODE ISLAND	348	-23	58	16.67%	13.99
30	CALIFORNIA	11,292	-733	1,862	16.49%	14.09
31	INDIANA	37,244	-2,202	5,926	15.91%	14.39
32	NEW JERSEY	9,662	-485	1,451	15.02%	13.61
33	OKLAHOMA	1,430	-71	214	14.97%	13.38
34	MASSACHUSETTS	5,432	-238	781	14.38%	12.49
35	VERMONT	3,920	-144	536	13.67%	12.66
36	COLORADO	2,952	-94	389	13.18%	12.19
37	ARIZONA	8,595	-271	1,130	13.15%	10.50
38	CONNECTICUT	1,865	-47	233	12.49%	10.25
39	DELAWARE	2,596	-58	318	12.25%	8.33
40	NEW HAMPSHIRE	6,027	-125	728	12.08%	11.13
41	NEBRASKA	6,992	-145	844	12.07%	11.43
42	OHIO	31,690	-585	3,754	11.85%	10.48
43	KENTUCKY	2,399	-36	276	11.50%	9.58
44	NEW YORK	30,663	-249	3,315	10.81%	9.68
45	MICHIGAN	26,236	96	2,528	9.64%	7.61
46	MINNESOTA	11,435	123	1,021	8.93%	8.34
47	ALASKA	1,740	27	147	8.45%	6.71
48	NEW MEXICO	1,582	43	115	7.27%	5.74
49	WEST VIRGINIA	2,593	74	185	7.13%	5.31
50	PENNSYLVANIA	62,746	2,068	4,207	6.70%	5.63
51	WASHINGTON	2,682	89	179	6.67%	3.71
52	MEXICO	33	1	2	6.06%	6.25
53	PHILIPPINES	79	5	3	3.80%	2.53
54	DIST OF COL	91	7	2	2.20%	1.14
55	MAINE	2,757	232	44	1.60%	0.96
Grand Totals:		382,111	-17,206	55,417	14.50%	12.71

2024 SAL REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

WESTERN REGION - JAMES A. FISCHER, SR. (CA)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
HAWAII	120	72	60.00%
IDAHO	659	206	31.26%
MONTANA	1,091	254	23.28%
UTAH	460	106	23.04%
WYOMING	1,248	248	19.87%
OREGON	1,534	293	19.10%
NEVADA	387	73	18.86%
CALIFORNIA	11,292	1,862	16.49%
COLORADO	2,952	389	13.18%
ARIZONA	8,595	1,130	13.15%
ALASKA	1,740	147	8.45%
NEW MEXICO	1,582	115	7.27%
WASHINGTON	2,682	179	6.67%
MEXICO	33	2	6.06%
PHILIPPINES	79	3	3.80%
Totals:	34,454	5,079	14.74%

SOUTHEAST REGION - LINWOOD A. MOORE (VA)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
LOUISIANA	1,821	832	45.69%
NORTH CAROLINA	2,770	870	31.41%
ALABAMA	2,100	640	30.48%
MISSISSIPPI	736	174	23.64%
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,570	351	22.36%
FLORIDA	23,066	5,143	22.30%
TEXAS	5,783	1,113	19.25%
TENNESSEE	1,792	333	18.58%
ARKANSAS	406	75	18.47%
PUERTO RICO	156	28	17.95%
VIRGINIA	4,367	758	17.36%
Totals:	44,567	10,317	23.15%

MIDWEST REGION - TERRY A. HARRIS (KS)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
SOUTH DAKOTA	1,611	400	24.83%
NORTH DAKOTA	1,075	243	22.60%
MISSOURI	3,337	657	19.69%
IOWA	4,914	883	17.97%
KANSAS	6,055	1,062	17.54%
OKLAHOMA	1,430	214	14.97%
NEBRASKA	6,992	844	12.07%
Totals:	25,414	4,303	16.93%

NORTHEAST REGION - JOHN R. COOK (NH)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
FRANCE	168	78	46.43%
MARYLAND	16,803	2,942	17.51%
RHODE ISLAND	348	58	16.67%
NEW JERSEY	9,662	1,451	15.02%
MASSACHUSETTS	5,432	781	14.38%
VERMONT	3,920	536	13.67%
CONNECTICUT	1,865	233	12.49%
DELAWARE	2,596	318	12.25%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	6,027	728	12.08%
NEW YORK	30,663	3,315	10.81%
PENNSYLVANIA	62,746	4,207	6.70%
DIST OF COL	91	2	2.20%
MAINE	2,757	44	1.60%
Totals:	143,078	14,693	10.27%

CENTRAL REGION - ROBERT L. BRISTO (MN)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
GEORGIA	4,887	1,883	38.53%
WISCONSIN	4,398	1,424	32.38%
ILLINOIS	13,716	4,028	29.37%
INDIANA	37,244	5,926	15.91%
OHIO	31,690	3,754	11.85%
KENTUCKY	2,399	276	11.50%
MICHIGAN	26,236	2,528	9.64%
MINNESOTA	11,435	1,021	8.93%
WEST VIRGINIA	2,593	185	7.13%
Totals:	134,598	21,025	15.62%

09/07/23		NATIONAL Donald "JR" Hall (MD) National Commander						
	Region	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Quota Date	105% Date
1	Southeast	44,567	10,317	(34,250)	23.15%	#REF!		
2	Midwest	25,414	4,303	(21,111)	16.93%	#REF!		
3	Central	134,598	21,025	(113,573)	15.62%	#REF!		
4	Western	34,454	5,079	(29,375)	14.74%	#REF!		
5	Northeast	143,078	14,693	(128,385)	10.27%	#REF!		
TOTALS		382,111	55,417	(326,694)	14.50%	#REF!		



09/07/23	CENTRAL REGION Robert L. Bristo (MN) National Vice-Commander									
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	National Rank	Renewal Rate	Quota Date	105% Date	
Wisconsin	4,398	1,424	(2,974)	32.38%	#REF!	5	29.77%			
Illinois	13,716	4,028	(9,688)	29.37%	#REF!	9	28.77%			
Indiana	37,244	5,926	(31,318)	15.91%	#REF!	31	14.39%			
Ohio	31,690	3,754	(27,936)	11.85%	#REF!	42	10.48%			
Kentucky	2,399	276	(2,123)	11.50%	#REF!	43	9.58%			
Michigan	26,236	2,528	(23,708)	9.64%	#REF!	45	7.61%			
Minnesota	11,435	1,021	(10,414)	8.93%	#REF!	46	8.34%			
West Virginia	2,593	185	(2,408)	7.13%	#REF!	49	5.31%			
TOTALS	129,711	3,734	(125,977)	2.88%	#REF!					

09/07/23	WESTERN REGION James A. Fischer Sr. (CA) National Vice-Commander									
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	National Rank	Renewal Rate	Quota Date	105% Date	
Hawaii	120	72	(48)	60.00%	#REF!	1	55.46%			
Idaho	659	206	(453)	31.26%	#REF!	7	26.12%			
Montana	1,091	254	(837)	23.28%	#REF!	12	21.83%			
Utah	460	106	(354)	23.04%	#REF!	13	22.39%			
Wyoming	1,248	248	(1,000)	19.87%	#REF!	17	17.53%			
Oregon	1,534	293	(1,241)	19.10%	#REF!	20	100.00%			
Nevada	387	73	(314)	18.86%	#REF!	21	15.52%			
California	11,292	1,862	(9,430)	16.49%	#REF!	30	14.09%			
Colorado	2,952	389	(2,563)	13.18%	#REF!	36	12.19%			
Arizona	8,595	1,130	(7,465)	13.15%	#REF!	37	10.50%			
Alaska	1,740	147	(1,593)	8.45%	#REF!	47	6.71%			
New Mexico	1,582	115	(1,467)	7.27%	#REF!	48	5.74%			
Washington	2,682	179	(2,503)	6.67%	#REF!	51	3.71%			
Mexico	33	2	(31)	6.06%	#REF!	52	6.25%			
Phillippines	79	3	(76)	3.80%	#REF!	53	2.53%			
TOTALS	34,454	5,079	(29,375)	14.74%	#REF!					

09/07/23	SOUTHEAST REGION Linwood A. Moore (VA) National Vice-Commander								
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	National Rank	Renewal Rate	Quota Date	105% Date
Louisiana	1,821	832	(989)	45.69%	#REF!	3	42.34%		
Georgia	4,887	1,883	(3,004)	38.53%	#REF!	4	34.87%		
North Carolina	2,770	870	(1,900)	31.41%	#REF!	6	26.52%		
Alabama	2,100	640	(1,460)	30.48%	#REF!	8	27.04%		
Mississippi	736	174	(562)	23.64%	#REF!	11	22.16%		
South Carolina	1,570	351	(1,219)	22.36%	#REF!	15	95.08%		
Florida	23,066	5,143	(17,923)	22.30%	#REF!	16	17.93%		
Texas	5,783	1,113	(4,670)	19.25%	#REF!	19	17.38%		
Tennessee	1,792	333	(1,459)	18.58%	#REF!	22	15.56%		
Arkansas	406	75	(331)	18.47%	#REF!	14.25	23.00%		
Puerto Rico	156	28	(128)	17.95%	#REF!	25	16.99%		
Virginia	4,367	758	(3,609)	17.36%	#REF!	28	14.01%		
TOTALS	4,523	786	(3,737)	17.38%	#REF!				

09/07/23		MIDWEST REGION Terry A. Harris (KS) National Vice-Commander								
	Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	National Rank	Renewal Rate	Quota Date	105% Date
1	South Dakota	1,611	400	(1,211)	24.83%	#REF!	10	22.01%		
2	North Dakota	1,075	243	(832)	22.60%	#REF!	14	19.39%		
3	Missouri	3,337	657	(2,680)	19.69%	#REF!	18	17.72%		
4	Iowa	4,914	883	(4,031)	17.97%	#REF!	24	16.83%		
5	Kansas	6,055	1,062	(4,993)	17.54%	#REF!	26	16.07%		
6	Oklahoma	1,430	214	(1,216)	14.97%	#REF!	33	13.38%		
7	Nebraska	6,992	844	(6,148)	12.07%	#REF!	41	11.43%		
TOTALS		25,414	4,303	(21,111)	16.93%	#REF!				

09/07/23		NORTHEAST REGION John R. Cook (NH) National Vice-Commander								
	Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	National Rank	Renewal Rate	Quota Date	105% Date
1	France	168	78	(90)	46.43%	#REF!	2	40.61%		
2	Maryland	16,803	2,942	(13,861)	17.51%	#REF!	27	15.25%		
3	Rhode Island	348	58	(290)	16.67%	#REF!	29	13.99%		
4	New Jersey	9,662	1,451	(8,211)	15.02%	#REF!	32	13.61%		
5	Massachusetts	5,432	781	(4,651)	14.38%	#REF!	34	12.49%		
6	Vermont	3,920	536	(3,384)	13.67%	#REF!	35	12.66%		
7	Connecticut	1,865	233	(1,632)	12.49%	#REF!	38	10.25%		
8	Delaware	2,596	318	(2,278)	12.25%	#REF!	39	8.33%		
9	New Hampshire	6,027	728	(5,299)	12.08%	#REF!	40	11.13%		
10	New York	30,663	3,315	(27,348)	10.81%	#REF!	44	9.68%		
11	Pennsylvania	62,746	4,207	(58,539)	6.70%	#REF!	50	5.63%		
12	Dist. of Columbia	91	2	(89)	2.20%	#REF!	54	1.14%		
13	Maine	2,757	44	(2,713)	1.60%	#REF!	55	0.96%		
TOTALS		143,078	14,693	(128,385)	10.27%	#REF!				

09/07/23		2023 SUPER SIX STANDINGS								
	Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	National Rank	Renewal Rate	Quota Date	105% Date
1	Indiana	37,244	5,926	(31,318)	15.91%	#REF!	31	14.39%		
2	Florida	23,066	2,836	(20,230)	12.30%	#REF!	16	17.93%		
3	Ohio	31,690	3,754	(27,936)	11.85%	#REF!	42	10.48%		
4	New York	30,663	3,315	(27,348)	10.81%	#REF!	44	9.68%		
5	Michigan	26,236	2,528	(23,708)	9.64%	#REF!	45	7.61%		
6	Pennsylvania	62,746	4,207	(58,539)	6.70%	#REF!	50	5.63%		
TOTALS		174,401	16,640	(157,761)	9.54%	#REF!				

National Totals	382,111	55,417	(326,694)	14.50%	#REF!	12.71%				
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2024 National Membership Target Dates			
1	September 13, 2023	10%	6 ❤️ February 14, 2024 ❤️ 75%
2	October 18, 2023	25%	7 March 13, 2024 80%
3	November 15, 2023	35%	8 April 10, 2024 90%
4	December 13, 2023	45%	9 May 15, 2024 100%
5	January 18, 2024	60%	10 July 24, (DSTG) 105%

2023 FALL MEETINGS AGENDA FLYER
OCTOBER 6 - 8, 2023

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2023

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE AND OTHER MEETING TIMES & LOCATIONS

MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (MT&D)	MICHIGAN ROOM, 21st FL	8:00 AM - 6:00 PM
100th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE	PANORAMA B, 21st FL	4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION COMMITTEE (CWF)	OHIO ROOM, 21st FL	4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
CHILDREN & YOUTH COMMITTEE (C&Y)	CIRCLE EAST, LOWER LEVEL	4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION	CIRCLE CENTER, LOWER LEVEL	4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
PUBLIC MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (PMCC)	ILLINOIS ROOM, 21st FL	4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION COMMISSION (VA&R)	MERIDIAN EAST, LOWER LEVEL	4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
SUB-COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL APPOINTMENTS (SONA)	PANORAMA A, 21st FL	4:00 PM - 8:00 PM
CENTURY COMMITTEE (CENTCOM)	CIRCLE CENTER, LOWER LEVEL	6:00 PM - 7:30 PM
CONVENTION COMMITTEE	OHIO ROOM, 21st FL	6:00 PM - 7:30 PM
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE	CIRCLE EAST, LOWER LEVEL	6:00 PM - 7:30 PM
PAID-UP FOR LIFE AD-HOC COMMITTEE (PUFL)	ILLINOIS ROOM, 21st FL	6:00 PM - 7:30 PM
VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION COMMISSION (VE&E)	MERIDIAN EAST, LOWER LEVEL	6:00 PM - 7:30 PM
PAST NATIONAL COMMANDERS	LIBRARY ROOM, 21st FL	6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2023

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE AND OTHER MEETING TIMES & LOCATIONS

AMERICANISM COMMISSION	CIRCLE EAST, LL	8:00 AM - 9:30 AM
FINANCE COMMISSION	PANORAMA B, 21st FL	8:00 AM - 9:30 AM
INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION	MERIDIAN EAST, LL	8:00 AM - 9:30 AM
SUB-COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS	OHIO ROOM, 21st FL	8:00 AM - 9:30 AM
NATL OFFICER/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN FORUM	CIRCLE CENTER / WEST, LL	8:00 AM - 10:00 AM
MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (MT&D)	MICHIGAN ROOM, 21st FL	8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
NATL VICE COMMANDER SELECTION COMMITTEE (NVCSC)	ILLINOIS ROOM, 21st FL	8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
SUB-COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL APPOINTMENTS (SONA)	PANORAMA A, 21st FL	8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

OPENING SESSION - NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MERIDIAN WEST / CENTER, LOWER LEVEL 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER
POSTING OF COLORS
INVOCATION
POW/MIA EMPTY CHAIR CEREMONY
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
BLUE STAR BANNER CEREMONY
READING OF THE CALL
ROLL CALL
READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
GREETINGS BY KEVIN MOOK (MD), NATIONAL SAL LIAISON

COMMISSION / COMMITTEE REPORTS

AMERICANISM COMMISSION - CHRIS CASEY (NE)

- CHILDREN AND YOUTH COMMITTEE - JOE LOHMAN (MD)
- CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION COMMITTEE - MARK NAVE (PA)

CENTURY COMMITTEE (CENTCOM) - JEFF VRABEL, SR (OH)

FINANCE COMMISSION - BILL HILL (MD)

PUBLIC MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION - KEVIN CHAPLIN (VA)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECESS

As of: 9/07/23 ** MEETING TIMES / LOCATIONS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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2023 FALL MEETINGS AGENDA FLYER
OCTOBER 6 - 8, 2023

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2023

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

MERIDIAN WEST / CENTER, LOWER LEVEL

5:00 PM - 7:30 PM

REIMBURSEMENT / EXPENSE CHECK DISTRIBUTION

LOWER LEVEL LOBBY / FOYER

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2023

RELIGIOUS SERVICE

MERIDIAN WEST / CENTER, LOWER LEVEL

7:45 AM - 8:30 AM

GENERAL SESSION - NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MERIDIAN WEST / CENTER, LOWER LEVEL

8:45 AM - 11:30 AM

RECONVENE

CALL TO ORDER

SALUTE COLORS

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

ROLL CALL

INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKERS:

- THE AMERICAN LEGION, NATIONAL COMMANDER, DANIEL J. SEEHAFFER (WI)
- AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, NATIONAL PRESIDENT, LISA WILLIAMSON (AK)
- THE AMERICAN LEGION, CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT, ROBERT MORRILL (NY)

COMMISSION / COMMITTEE REPORTS (CONT'D)

INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION - BILL CLANCY, III (NY)

- CONVENTION COMMITTEE - CHRIS BYRD (NC)
- MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - MIKE COTTEN (DE)
- MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE - DARYL VERSTREATE, JR. (NY)

LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION - BLAIR MILES (AL)

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION COMMISSION - BRUNO WILLIAMSON (IL)

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION COMMISSION - JIM COATES (NY)

SUB-COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS - NED FOX (CA)

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

FOR THE GOOD OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

BENEDICTION

RETIREMENT OF THE COLORS

ADJOURNMENT