

THE AMERICAN LEGION

Dispatch

February 2014

A National Headquarters Publication

MEMBERSHIP



Alexander Bajovek receives a visit from a member of American Legion Post 1451 in Wheatfield, N.Y., as part of the post's revitalization efforts.

Photo by Amy C. Elliott

CONVEY THE LEGION'S MESSAGE

New membership public relations guide helps with recruiting members, building the organization's image and creating brand awareness.

By The American Legion

"There was a time when you said the words 'American Legion' and people knew exactly who we were and what we stood for," said newly appointed American Legion National Membership & Post Activities (M&PA) Committee Chairman Kenneth Orrock to committee members during their annual meeting last month. "When we look at brand awareness in the (Legion's) five-year membership plan, at what point in time did we as an organization surrender our position as the dominant voice of the American veteran? We cannot serve our communities, our nation and our fellow veterans without a robust membership program."

Brand awareness was one of several topics discussed during the M&PA meeting where members re-evaluated the viability of each tactic within the Legion's five-year strategic plan for sustained membership growth to

ensure the plan's overall mission of building and sustaining a culture of growth is achieved.

"The five-year plan has laid the foundation for a culture of growth within every facet of The American Legion," Orrock said. "We have to integrate membership and membership recruitment into everything that we do. Everything we do is an invitation to talk to eligible veterans about this organization and what they can do to join."

National Headquarters is helping Legionnaires build and sustain a culture of growth through a new publication, which shows members how to convey the Legion's message on the many ways in which the organization fulfills its mission to assist veterans, military personnel, families and communities. The booklet, "The American Legion Membership Public Relations Guide," can be ordered by

See *Convey the Legion's message* on Page 4

NEWS ALERT

2014 Eagle Scout application available

The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year will receive a \$10,000 scholarship and three runner-up scholarship awards will be granted in the amount of \$2,500 each. Applications are due to department headquarters by March 1. Review eligibility requirements and download an application: www.legion.org/scouting/resources

Upcoming career fairs

As servicemembers come home from deployments in record numbers, The American Legion is doing all it can to help them find jobs. In 2013, the Legion participated in more than 150 job fairs and hiring events in conjunction with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Recruit Military. Keep track of job fairs and career events by visiting the Legion's online database of veterans career fairs: www.legion.org/careers/jobfairs

Celebrate the Legion's 95th birthday

March 15 is the designated birthday of The American Legion. A speech is available for posts to use during the hosting of private or public events that commemorate this anniversary. The speech is located on the Legion's publication web page under the Public Relations section: www.legion.org/publications

Legion launches TBI/PTSD survey

The Legion is conducting the voluntary survey during February to gather information about the care and treatment received for the two conditions. <http://surveys.questionpro.com/a/t/AKtnPZQqKR>

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

The COLA war



Dan Dellinger
National Commander

For the past several weeks, American Legion National Headquarters staff has been visiting with senators and representatives on Capitol Hill, urging them to repeal cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) cuts for military retirees.

The Legion has repeatedly pointed out to members of Congress that the measure would reduce cost-of-living retirement benefits for military retirees by 1 percent per year until they reach the age of 62. There are published estimates that the potential loss of income is about \$70,000 on the low end to \$120,000 on the high end, depending on retired rank and years of service.

In the 2014 Omnibus Appropriations Act, just passed by the House and on the verge of Senate passage, an amendment in the bill would restore COLA benefits to veterans who were medically discharged – about 96,000 of America's 903,000 military retirees aged 62 or younger. For more than 800,000 military retirees, the amendment inserted into the omnibus bill means nothing. While several members of Congress have touted their support for veterans by engineering this amendment, they remain mute on why so many other veterans must bear the burden of reduced benefits by themselves.

The COLA decrease would be disrespectful to America's men and women who have devoted their careers at great personal cost to the safety and welfare of our nation. And I have made many public statements, sent letters to Congress, and issued two legislative action alerts to the Legion's membership – all to make clear this organization's strong opposition to taking away benefits from military retirees.

The American Legion is urging veterans to voice their concerns about the COLA cuts to the district offices of their congressional representatives.

To get contact information for congressional district offices, visit the Senate website at www.senate.gov and the House of Representatives website at www.house.gov/representatives/.

MEMBERSHIP

Recruiters to be honored with 'Building for Tomorrow Today'

During the 2013-2014 membership year, American Legion National Commander Dan Dellinger will award his national commander pin to any Legion Family member who obtains five new members.

A new member is any eligible person joining for the 2014 membership year who was not a member of The American Legion during the 2013 membership year.

Each member listed must be eligible for membership in The American Legion. Forward names of Sons of the American Legion members or Auxiliary members to your detachment or unit for use in their respective incentive programs.

To maintain the integrity of the national commander's pin program, only one pin will be awarded per individual.



June 30, 2014, or when supplies are exhausted.

Also, National Commander Dellinger will award his "Building for Tomorrow Today" coin to any Legion Family member who recruits 15 new members.

www.legion.org/commanderpin

FUNDRAISING PROGRAM

NEF goal: \$1 million



The American Legion's National Emergency Fund (NEF) program is National Commander Dan Dellinger's primary fundraiser this year.

A natural disaster can strike at any time, devastating the lives of men and women who honorably served their country. While we can't prevent a natural disaster, the Legion does provide relief to veterans and their families affected by devastation.

Since 1989, the NEF program has provided more than \$8 million in direct financial assistance to posts, Legionnaires and their families. The program helps with out-of-pocket expenses, including but not limited to, food, temporary housing and clothing. All donations made to NEF go directly toward the program.

To donate: www.legion.org/nef

NEF Commander's Challenge

American Legion department commanders are challenged to assist in fundraising efforts for the Legion's National Emergency Fund. The departments currently in first place for their respective membership category include:

- Category 1 (100,000+): New York
- Category 2 (65,000+): Indiana
- Category 3 (40,000+): Maryland
- Category 4 (25,000+): Nebraska
- Category 5 (10,000+): New Mexico
- Category 6 (9,999-): Hawaii

www.legion.org/emergency/challenge

NATIONAL ADJUTANT'S MESSAGE

A tribute to four Army chaplains

Michigan post hosts annual Four Chaplains Day service to keep their story of heroism and diversity alive.

By Daniel S. Wheeler

Feb. 3 marked the historic 71st anniversary of the sinking of the U.S. Army Transport *Dorchester*, as well as the legendary acts of selflessness of four Army chaplains who were aboard. The *Dorchester* was torpedoed by a German U-boat while crossing the icy North Atlantic, and the four chaplains, Rev. George Fox (Methodist), Jewish Rabbi Alexander Goode, Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed) and Father John Washington (Roman Catholic), comforted the wounded, directed others to safety, and surrendered their life jackets to save four young men. As the *Dorchester* sank, the chaplains were seen linked arm in arm, praying.

American Legion Post 459 in Grand Rapids, Mich., has honored the diversity and the heroism of the four chaplains for the past 10 years by hosting an annual service in their honor. The post's recent two-hour Four Chaplains Day service was held at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in Grand Rapids where Legion Family members and the community attended free of charge.

"We have great love for the four chaplains, and we feel it's our obligation to uphold their legacy," said Harriet Sturim, Post 459's Auxiliary chaplain and the Fifth District Auxiliary chaplain. "The service is not only a place to retell the story, but a place to move ahead and learn from these four men, their sacrifices and mutual respect despite their religious differences."

Post 459's Four Chaplains Day service featured four chairs that were draped with life jackets, photos of the chaplains and liturgical garments and Bibles. Retired Army Col. Herman Keiser told the story of the four chaplains; Sturim gave a speech about unity and diversity; patriotic music was performed by Grand Rapids & District Pipe Band; a local honor guard conducted the three-volley salute and the folding of the American flag; and a representative from Heroes to Heroes Foundation (a non-profit organization that provides support to veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress) was the keynote speaker.

"With our keynote speakers, we try to be informative with



Michigan Post 459's Four Chaplains service at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum.

Photo by Wanda Torres

things that are happening for our servicemembers and for the Legion," Sturim said. "We feel the four chaplains would want us to convey the message of helping our veterans, convey the message of diversity and welcoming people in their lives.

"I always like to say that in 1943, the chaplains didn't know what the word diversity was. It wasn't really invented, but they invented it."

Refreshments were served and time was given for attendees to quietly or verbally pay their respects. "The service becomes a very emotional experience when people pay homage to the chaplains," Sturim said.

Preparations for the service began eight months in advance in an effort to identify speakers, send out invitations and promote the event through flyers and social media. Personal invitations were mailed to the speakers and the department commander and president; an event flyer and letter was mailed to every Michigan post; local news channels were informed of the event; flyers were disbursed throughout the local community; and promotional material was posted on Post 459's Four Chaplains Facebook page. Sturim said she asks new Legion Family members every year to be involved with the service because "the more people we involve, the more people will take the legacy of the four chaplains back with them to their post," she said. "People always say they want to do this (host a Four Chaplains service) at their post, and I tell them to jump in and do it, and it will grow."

**Share what
your post is
doing! Email:**

✉ dispatch@legion.org

Dispatch

Published monthly.
Printed by HNE Printers, Columbus, Ind.

All American Legion publications are entitled and encouraged to reproduce all staff-written stories within, but please credit *Dispatch* as the source.

A proud member of The National American Legion Press Association.

Correspondence and letters to the editor:
The American Legion Dispatch
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Subscriptions/Customer Service:
(317) 630-1221

Email: dispatch@legion.org

Fax: (317) 630-1280

Online: www.legion.org/dispatch

EDITOR

Cameran Richardson

CONTRIBUTORS

Andy Romey

Matt Grills

Jeff Stoffer

Henry Howard

DESIGNER

Jason Reed

From *Convey the Legion's message* on Page 1

emailing ✉ pr@legion.org. A PDF version of the document can also be downloaded on the Legion's publications web page under Public Relations: 🌐 www.legion.org/publications

"We need to share stories of success and excitement for the culture of growth," Orrock said. "Because at the end of five years, we don't stop working membership. We don't stop growing this organization. The five-year plan is our guide as we work our way through building and a sustaining a culture of growth."

Committee members also shared best practices that their respective departments have implemented as part of their five-year membership plan, such as:

- Appointing a Direct Mail Solicitation (DMS) chairman to help monitor the DMS list on mylegion.org and to help with post and district revitalization efforts.
- Soliciting membership to veterans who received VA claims assistance from an American Legion-accredited service officer.

Additionally, each member of the M&PA Committee has been assigned a group of departments to offer assistance and support in their recruitment programs. Each committee member will act as the subject matter expert on their assigned departments, will know the status of their department's five-year plan and what help it may need, and will relay information from M&PA meetings to the departments, as well as provide feedback from the field.

Orrock reiterated to the committee members that to keep the Legion relevant for years to come, the five-year membership plan is vital as is the Legion symbol.

"When I wear the Legion symbol, whether it's on a shirt or cap, it's an invitation for veterans to speak to me," he said. "It's an invitation to those who want more information about this organization, and I think it's so important that we show this proud symbol and make that invitation for veterans to talk to us about this organization whether they join us or not."

🌐 www.legion.org/membership

ASK A SERVICE OFFICER

Children buried at national cemeteries



Tracy L. Davis
Department Service
Officer, Missouri

Q. Can children of veterans be buried at national cemeteries?

A. Children of an eligible veteran may be buried at a national cemetery if they meet the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) dependency criteria. According to VA, a minor child of an eligible veteran may be buried at a national cemetery if they are unmarried and:

- Under 21 years of age, or
- Under 23 years of age and pursuing a full-time academic course at an approved educational institution.

Also, an unmarried adult child of any age of an eligible veteran may be buried at a national cemetery if they are permanently physically or mentally disabled and incapable of self-support before reaching 21 years of age, or before reaching 23 years of age if they are pursuing a full-time academic course at an approved educational institution. You will need to provide supporting documentation that shows you are an eligible veteran, that your child is related to you, and that he or she has been incapable of self-support prior to their 21st birthday or 23rd birthday if they are a full-time student. Medical documentation confirming your child's inability to be self-sufficient is needed; written lay statements can also be used.

To schedule a burial in a VA national cemetery, please visit 🌐 www.cem.va.gov/CEM/burial_benefits/need.asp for instructions on how to submit eligibility documentation.

Find a Legion service officer in your state: 🌐 www.legion.org/serviceofficers

TAPS

Michael J. Miller

Mishawaka, Ind.

Michael J. Miller of Post 161 (Department of Indiana) passed away Jan. 13 at age 64. He was a Vietnam War Air Force veteran. Mr. Miller served as department commander from 2011-2012, department vice commander from 2005-2006, National Americanism Council vice chairman from 2006-2013, National Distinguished Guests Committee chairman from 2001-2006 and National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Council member from 2013 to his passing.

Roland E. Patnode Jr.

Somersworth, N.H.

Roland E. Patnode Jr. of Post 7 (Department of New Hampshire) passed away Dec. 27, 2013 at age 71. He was a Vietnam War Marine Corps veteran. Mr. Patnode served as department commander from 2003-2004, department vice commander from 2001-2003, National Executive Committee alternate member from 2007-2011, National Americanism Council vice chairman from 2001-2003, National Foreign Relations Council vice chairman from 2005-2006 and National Public Relations Commission member from 2004-2012.

John C. Thomas

Freedom, Ind.

John C. Thomas of Post 136 (Department of Kansas) passed away on Dec. 31, 2013 at age 64. He was a Vietnam War Air Force veteran. Mr. Thomas served as department commander from 2010-2011, department vice commander from 2009-2010 and National Americanism Council vice chairman from 2012-2013.

AMERICANISM

A second chance

By Bob McCullough

Many of the students enrolled at Greystone Prep School were rebuffed in their initial attempts to earning appointments to one of the five U.S. military academies. But over the past 10 years, 153 Greystone students received second chances and earned congressional nominations to military academies.

Greystone Prep School is located on the campus of Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas, and was established in 2004 by Cmdr. David Bailey. Bailey was turned down in his bid 37 years ago to attend the U. S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. However, he refused to give up and is now an alumnus of the Naval Academy.

Bailey established the civilian prep school to give high school graduates another chance at earning an appointment to a military academy, as well as prepare them for the rigors of academy life. The name Greystone is attributed to famed New Zealand explorer Sir Edmund Hillary who always looked for the grey stone when climbing because the granite composition was strong and would never let him down.

As its name implies, Greystone demands strength and resolve from its students. Full-time Greystone students must commit to 38 semester hours, physical conditioning, dorm-room inspections, community service projects that average 100 hours a year per student, intramural sports and the Greystone Toastmasters Club to hone communication skills. Leadership training and character development also stand at the core of the Greystone experience, resulting in the students developing an honor code and standards of conduct. This occurred



Greystone student Brandon Parmley (right) participates in intramural sports with other students. Photo courtesy of Schreiner University

under the guidance of Pat Tinley, a longtime American Legion member who recently passed away.

Military academies are “leadership institutions creating the generals and admirals that will be leading us 25 or 30 years down the road,” Bailey said. “I take great pride in knowing Greystone is helping some of our future military leaders get off on the right trajectory.”

Another Legion stalwart, retired Air Force Col. Bill Crum, serves as chairman of the Greystone Board of Directors and often leads mock interviews in preparation for congressional or senatorial interviews leading to academy appointments. “The American Legion is based upon the theme ‘For God and Country,’” Crum said. “Greystone might be considered the poster child for that theme.”

At Schreiner University, “we don’t stress what credentials students bring to Greystone,” said Dr. Summerlin, president of Schreiner University. “Instead, we’re more concerned about what they leave with. After all, the motto of Schreiner University is, ‘Enter with hope; leave with achievement.’”

<http://greystoneprepschool.org>



HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE

A leader beyond New York

As department adjutant for four decades, Richard M. Pedro was a longtime American Legion leader in New York. But that influence didn’t stop at the state line.

Pedro – who passed away Jan. 10 at age 87 – was one of the Legion’s top national leaders for years, enough so that the membership voted to bestow upon him the title of honorary past national commander during the 2012 National Convention in Indianapolis.

A World War II U.S. Navy veteran and 68-year member of Post 401 in Tioga, N.Y., Pedro took over as acting department adjutant in 1984, became the permanent adjutant two months later and served in that position until retiring last July. Upon his retirement, the department passed a resolution naming Pedro “Department Adjutant Emeritus with all the rights and privileges that such an honor entails for his dedicated and unselfish service to his community, state (and) nation.”

In addition to working for IBM for 33 years, Pedro served as department commander, as Alternate and National Executive Committeeman (NEC), as well as on various commissions and committees.

North Carolina NECman Jerry Hedrick presented Pedro with a plaque during his national commander ceremony in 2012. “These plaques are usually given to men who are about to do great things, but you have already done great things, a lifetime full of great things for your fellow veterans, your country and The American Legion,” Hedrick told Pedro.

Did you know?



In 2013, the first year of The American Legion’s five-year membership strategic plan, 747 post revitalization efforts were conducted, compared to 421 in 2012. www.legion.org/membership/newposts

Nearly 210 floral arrangements from the National Commander’s Banquet, which was held during the 95th National Convention in Houston, were delivered to the local Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

MEMBERSHIP

Download new Legion app

A new American Legion mobile app offers several reasons to join the nation's largest veterans service organization, along with a direct route to join, renew, donate or find a local post from any smartphone or electronic tablet. The app is now available through iTunes and the Google Play Store. **Download the app:**

 www.legion.org/mobileapps

The new app includes the following channels:

- **“About Us.”** The app features our mission in simple terms; how we help veterans, military personnel, families and communities; a list of membership benefits from discounts on hotels to a one-year subscription to *The American Legion Magazine*; how to find a post by ZIP code or by allowing your phone to find your current location; and how to join the Legion or renew membership through its online membership application platform.
- **“Donate.”** The app offers easy access to The American Legion Charities mobile giving page and the ability to make fast, secure, tax-deductible donations.
- **“Follow Us.”** There is no faster, easier way to access American Legion Facebook and Twitter pages than through the new app. Under “Follow Us,” you can keep up with the latest news and information and jump into the social media conversation.
- **“Images.”** A variety of photos and videos housed on the organization's YouTube channel flow into the app.
- **“Renew.”** Anyone with a current membership number can easily renew with a credit or debit card.
- **“Contact Us.”** All three American Legion National Headquarters locations – Indianapolis, the Geiger Operations Center and 1608 K Street in Washington – are listed and mapped with contact phone numbers and website links.



Brett P. Reistad,
Chairman, National
Legislative Commission

DATELINE: CAPITOL HILL

Congress seeks to restore COLA cuts

The American Legion has been working with members of Congress for the past several weeks to correct an unfair provision contained in the recently passed budget bill (**Public Law 113-67**) directed at military retirees. The provision in question would reduce the annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) for retired pay on some working-age military retirees by a 1 percent reduction each year until age 62. Although the COLA provision does not go into effect until 2016, House Budget Chairman Paul Ryan, R-Wis., has remained open to finding a way to restore COLA.

When President Barack Obama signed **P.L. 113-76**, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for the remainder of fiscal year 2014, it contained a provision to restore the COLA reduction to disabled military retirees and their survivors. However, it left in place the annual COLA cut for all other retirees, resulting in the need for further legislation to restore the COLA reduction for all military retirees. The Senate is focusing on two measures to restore the veteran retiree COLA: **S. 1963** and **S. 1982**.

S. 1963 would repeal the section of **P.L. 113-67** regarding the retiree COLA reduction. The measure does not contain any fiscal offsets, which some senators were seeking as a way to pay for the COLA repeal. Sens. Paul Begich, D-Alaska, Kay Hagen, D-N.C., and Jean Shaheen, D-N.H., – the bill's original sponsors – are examining other portions of the federal government for potential offsets. This bill is narrowly focused on the COLA reduction.

S. 1982, introduced by Senate Veterans Affairs Chairman Bernie Sanders, D-Vt., would improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans. The bill's main thrust is expansion of health-care services, education and employment for veterans, and it also includes a complete repeal of the COLA reduction. Unlike **S. 1963**, Sanders' bill contains offsets for the restoration of COLA, but the measure's supporters believe that cuts in overseas contingency operations within the defense department could be used.

Two Legion resolutions support these two bills: Resolution 29, “Oppose lowering of cost-of-living adjustments,” and Resolution 25, “Support for military quality of life standards.”

House approves in-state tuition for veteran students

On Feb. 3, the House of Representatives voted 390-0 to pass **H.R. 357**, the GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013. This measure would mandate that public universities participating in VA educational assistance programs charge veterans, at the most, the in-state tuition rate regardless of the veterans official state of residence. The bill seeks to further refine the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act (**P.L. 110-252**), informally known as the Post 9/11 GI Bill, which went into effect in 2009. The bill would help veterans who move to a new state after their service and find that the federal government's reimbursement will not fully cover the higher tuition rates that generally apply to students from out of state. The measure now goes to the Senate for further action.

American Legion Resolution 27, “Veterans GI Bill Education Improvement,” supports this bill.

MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVES AND AWARDS

EAGLE INCENTIVE

Six American Legion departments showing the highest percentage of membership gain in their respective size categories between Oct. 9 and May 8 of this year will receive eagle statues (pictured below).

The Commander Dellinger Eagle Award will be awarded to the top department in each Big Twelve category showing the largest percentage of membership growth between the 55 and 100 percent target dates. A seventh eagle will be presented to the national vice commander whose region displayed has the highest percentage of membership gain during the same period.

The Big Twelve categories are:

- Category I – departments of 100,000 or more members
- Category II – departments of 65,000 - 99,999 members
- Category III – departments of 40,000 - 64,999 members
- Category IV – departments of 25,000 - 39,999 members
- Category V – departments of 10,000 - 24,999 members
- Category VI – departments of 9,999 or less members



BIG TWELVE COMPETITION

The Big Twelve Competition recognizes departments that meet or exceed their pledged membership goal percentage by the March target date. The percentage does not include members gained through DMS.

The competition is broken down into six categories. The winner in each category will be reimbursed for computer equipment purchases of up to \$2,000, while the runners-up in each category will be reimbursed for computer equipment purchases of up to \$1,000.

The six categories in the Big Twelve Competition are:

- Category I – departments of 100,000 or more members
- Category II – departments of 70,000-99,999 members
- Category III – departments of 40,000- 69,999 members
- Category IV – departments of 25,000-39,999 members
- Category V – departments of 10,000-24,999 members
- Category VI – departments of 9,999 or fewer members

Read more about the Big Twelve Competition by downloading the online National Membership Points Award Manual publication located under Internal Affairs.

 www.legion.org/publications

DISTRICT COMMANDERS RACE-TO-THE-TOP

The District Commander Race-to-the-Top award is given to district commanders who attain at least 100 percent of the district's assigned membership objective by March 31, 2014. Competition is divided into five categories based on the membership of the district without regard to geographic locations.

Race-to-the-Top categories are:

- Category I – districts of 15-1,499 members
- Category II – districts of 1,500-2,999 members
- Category III – districts of 3,000-4,999 members
- Category IV – districts of 5,000-7,499 members
- Category V – districts of 7,500 or more members

First Place Award is a trip to the 2014 National Convention in Charlotte, N.C. The award will be presented to the top district commander and guest in each category whose district membership on March 31 represents the greatest percentage over the final previous year membership of that district. Cannot be less than 100 percent to qualify. This entitles each winner and guest to a trip to attend the National Convention as a distinguished

guest of the National Commander, including round-trip airfare, tickets to the National Commander's Banquet, and hotel accommodations for six days/five nights. These district commanders will also be awarded a Legion cap that signifies they are a Race-to-the-Top winner that will be awarded on stage at the National Convention. Plus Race-to-the-Top ribbons for each of the district's posts.

Second Place Award is presented to the district commander in each category whose district membership on March 31 represents the second highest percentage over the final previous year membership of that district. Cannot be less than 100 percent to qualify. Winners will receive a \$500 check.

Third Place Award is presented to the district commander in each category whose district membership on March 31 represents the third highest percentage over the final previous year membership of that district. Cannot be less than 100 percent to qualify. Winners will receive a \$375 check.

Dispatch

February 2014

A National Headquarters Publication



THE AMERICAN LEGION
P.O. BOX 1055 • INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46206

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
THE AMERICAN
LEGION

WHAT'S INSIDE

FEATURE STORY: CONVEY THE LEGION'S MESSAGE

Page 1

Commander's Message: The COLA war

Page 2

Adjutant's Message: A tribute to four Army chaplains

Page 3

Ask a Service Officer: Burial eligibility for children at national cemeteries

Page 4

Americanism: Students earn second chance to military academies

Page 5

Membership: Download new Legion app

Page 6

MEMBERSHIP & POST ACTIVITIES

Arizona post wins national award

American Legion Post and Auxiliary Unit 132 of Oro Valley, Ariz., are the recipients of the U.S. National Guard's Family Program Community Purple Award for 2013 – a national award presented to a community group or organization that works with Army and/or Air Guard activities.

The post and unit were nominated for the award by Arizona Army National Guard 1st of the 285th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion (ARB) for their "outstanding support to the battalion's soldiers and families." For the award, Post and Unit 132 were credited with raising more than \$13,000 for 285th ARB activities and for contributing more than 1,500 volunteer hours in support of the servicemembers and their families. The Legion Family members showed their support by attending deployment meetings, sending monthly care packages to the deployed soldiers, staffing battalion family picnics, participating in battle update briefs for family members and more.

"Our relationship with the dedicated and professional men and women of the Arizona National Guard for the past several years has been especially rewarding," said Ed Davis, commander of Post 132. "To receive their gratitude in this manner is truly heartwarming. Some of the (battalion's) family activities would not have been possible without (Unit 132's) support. We have found that a team approach yields better results."



Arizona National Guard Chief of Staff Col. Len Dyer (left) presented the award to Post 132 Commander Ed Davis and Auxiliary Unit President Onita Davis on Dec. 8, 2013.

Photo courtesy of Tony Plattner

PLANNER

MARCH

- 1 Eagle Scout of the Year applications due to department headquarters
- 10 Department certification of Oratorical Contest winner due to National Headquarters
- 12 90 percent membership target date
- 15 American Legion's 95th birthday
- 19-26 Department Service Officer school/Washington Conference

 www.legion.org/dispatch/calendar