

THE AMERICAN LEGION

# Dispatch

September 2013

A National Headquarters Publication

NATIONAL COMMANDER



## 'BUILDING FOR TOMORROW TODAY'

*Membership growth, NEF top the agenda for new national commander.*

By Cameran Richardson

Daniel M. Dellinger of Vienna, Va., was elected The American Legion's 2013-2014 national commander on Aug. 29 during the 95th national convention in Houston. Dellinger, a U.S. Army Vietnam War veteran and a member of Dyer-Gunnell Post 180 in Vienna since 1982, told convention delegates that the Legion must continue to adapt to a changing world and a changing group of veterans.

"Two years ago, at the beginning of my campaign, I adopted my slogan for this year – 'Building for Tomorrow Today.' With my background in construction, I know you need a good set of plans and a solid foundation if you are going to build a structure to last. We have a rock-solid foundation in The American Legion, our 95 years of service to our veterans, our communities and our nation, so what we

need is a plan to get us to the next level and above.

"We have passed resolutions that set in motion the changes we need to stay relevant to our servicemen and women, our veterans, our communities and our nation. There is a change in the air ... a new culture of growth in membership. One that is desperately needed if we are to continue to grow our programs and membership, taking care of those under the charge of our four pillars upon which our great organization was founded. Some voices in the media say that we are a dying organization. I disagree, and I know you do, too. If we're going to grow, we need to step it up. We need everyone on this construction team to lend a hand and build our membership back to our all-time high."

See *Building for Tomorrow Today* on Page 4

## NEWS ALERT

### New Jersey wins World Series

Brooklawn (N.J.) Post 72 has won The American Legion Baseball World Series for the third time. On Aug. 20, the 2012 ALWS runner-up defeated Petaluma, Calif., 10-0 at Keeter Stadium in Shelby, N.C. Read more about the championship game:

[www.legion.org/baseball](http://www.legion.org/baseball)

### 2013 Annual Report available online

The American Legion's 2013 Annual Report is now available online, illustrating in photos, words and numbers the many ways the Legion has made a difference this year.

[www.legion.org/publications](http://www.legion.org/publications)

### Stories by Medal of Honor recipients

Recipients of the nation's highest military honor sat down with The American Legion to tell their stories of how they achieved the Medal of Honor and what it means to them.

Watch the videos online:

[www.legion.org/medalofhonor](http://www.legion.org/medalofhonor)

### National Convention coverage online

If you missed the Legion's 95th National Convention in Houston, you can read extensive story coverage and watch videos online of all the daily events, awards presented and distinguished speakers.

[www.legion.org/convention](http://www.legion.org/convention)

## COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

# My fundraising program: NEF



**Dan Dellinger**  
National Commander

What will 50 cents get you these days? Maybe a small cup of coffee, perhaps a gumball for a grandchild or a stamp. Fifty cents, however, will go a long way toward helping members of The American Legion Family or posts that are struck by natural disasters such as tornadoes, hurricanes, flooding or wildfires.

During my national commander's acceptance speech last month in Houston for the 95th National Convention, I set a \$1 million fundraising goal for the Legion's National Emergency Fund (NEF) program. It's a lofty goal, but it comes down to just 50 cents per member.

We don't know when or where the next disaster will occur, nor do we know how severe it will be. We do know that Legionnaires, posts and family members will need assistance as they recover from a tragedy. NEF donations help Legion Family members pay bills, such as temporary housing, food and clothes, while they wait for insurance money to kick in. NEF has also helped posts rebuild after disasters.

In the past year, the NEF program has granted nearly \$750,000 in assistance to qualified veterans. Money has gone to victims of Superstorm Sandy in New York and New Jersey, as well as those recovering from tornadoes in Moore, Okla., and flooding in Marseilles, Ill.

Posts are encouraged to take an active role in raising funds for NEF. There are many easy ways to drive donations, such as motorcycle rallies, fish fries or golf outings. Posts should also consider partnering with Auxiliary units, Sons squadrons or Riders chapters in order to receive greater participation and to promote events more effectively.

And remember, as you hold fundraisers or ask for contributions, be sure to let prospective donors know that 100 percent of donations go toward grants for Legionnaires, posts and family members who are dealing with the after-effects of an emergency situation. All marketing and promotional costs are paid for by National Headquarters.

Final touches are being put on a new series of NEF media materials that aim to assist department and post leaders on best practices before, during and after emergencies. When the materials are completed, review the documents and identify NEF coordinators who can familiarize themselves with what can be done ahead of time and how to respond when disaster strikes. Part of those efforts include distributing the checks to those in need. Their payout is our organization's payoff for a successful fundraising campaign.



## FUNDRAISING PROGRAM

# NEF goal: \$1 million

The American Legion's National Emergency Fund (NEF) program is National Commander Dan Dellinger's primary fundraiser program 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, NEF 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](http://www.legion.org/nef)

## 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 SAL 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.



Upon receipt of the certification form, national membership staff will confirm the names and mail the pin directly to the person who earned it. Commander Dellinger's "Building for Tomorrow Today" pin incentive program will end 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](http://www.legion.org/commanderpin)

## NATIONAL ADJUTANT'S MESSAGE

# PSAs increase Legion awareness

California Legionnaire earns on-air interview to promote the Legion.

By Daniel S. Wheeler

We, as Legionnaires, often fall short when it comes to promoting the good of The American Legion at the local and national level. It is known that Legionnaires and posts are very humble and do not tout the positive efforts they are doing year-round to assist veterans and their families, active-duty servicemembers, youth and community members. However, it's time for us to change that.

As we embark on our five-year membership plan, one key component is to improve communication at the local and national levels through public service announcements (PSAs), social media sites, and other forms of outreach.

James McMann, a member of and service officer for Post 318 in San Jose, Calif., can attest to the positive impact a PSA can have.

McMann submitted a PSA about a Hiring Our Heroes event that Post 318 was hosting to San Jose radio station 94.5 KBAY. KBAY producer Sam Van Zandt contacted McMann, proposing an on-air interview with him during the station's "Salute to Military and Veterans" in May. During the interview, McMann discussed the history of The American Legion, the four pillars, our many children and youth programs, and how accredited American Legion service officers, like him, are specially trained to provide expert assistance on VA benefits, free of charge, to veterans and their families.

"It was a wonderful opportunity to convey what the Legion has done for our veterans, our communities and our children," McMann said. "And (it was an opportunity) to promote the Legion as an organization worthy of joining."

"Van Zandt offered his future help if there was anything we wished to promote. This only proves that opportunities like these and the relationships they create can be used to further the Legion's goals, increase non-veterans' public awareness of the Legion and show that we are a strong and relevant voice in the veterans community. The American Legion has a long



KBAY radio producer Sam Van Zandt, left, James McMann and Post 318 Adjutant Gene Fanucchi. Photo courtesy of James McMann.

history of service that most people are sadly unaware of."

The Legion provides a host of ready-made PSAs, from youth programs to membership promotions, that you can download online for free: [www.legion.org/presscenter/psacopy](http://www.legion.org/presscenter/psacopy)

You can also download the Legion's Public Relations Toolkit online for free: [www.legion.org/prtoolkit](http://www.legion.org/prtoolkit)

With ideas from the PR Toolkit, Legion posts can get noticed by newspaper editors and other media. For example, it is important to use pictures and video to highlight the human side of things when submitting a story to a newspaper. The key to making a compelling story is to keep it local and unique and show how it affects the community.

When emailing newspaper staff, target the city or news editor, make the subject line compelling, and place the press release in the body of the email and not as an attachment. Additionally, make local news personalities your Twitter or Facebook friends so they can stay updated on what is happening within your post.

McMann said that PSAs are one of the main communication tools that Legionnaires have to connect to people outside of the normal scope of communications.

"The next time you have something you want to publicize, don't forget that your local radio stations offer free PSAs," McMann said. "All you have to do is ask. And you never know what else you may get from your efforts."

"In our case, we received the wonderful gift of airtime to educate our community and solicit new members that we could never afford to buy."

## Share membership recruiting tips

How did you help your post recruit or retain new members? Email:

✉ [dispatch@legion.org](mailto:dispatch@legion.org)

# Dispatch

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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](mailto:dispatch@legion.org)

Fax: (317) 630-1280

Online: [www.legion.org/dispatch](http://www.legion.org/dispatch)

EDITOR

Cameran Richardson

CONTRIBUTORS

Andy Romey

Matt Grills

Jeff Stoffer

Henry Howard

DESIGNER

Jason Reed

From *Building for Tomorrow* on Page 1

Doing so will require buy-in from the entire Legion, Dellinger explained.

“We have requested that every department formulate a five-year-and-beyond membership plan to grow our membership to an all-time high,” he said. “That plan will be used in monitoring our growth as we move towards our 100th anniversary date and beyond.”

Dellinger testified before a joint session of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs Sept. 10, but he said the Legion didn’t earn the full credit it is due during that testimony.

“I reported on the hours donated, the monies raised and expended to serve our veterans and our programs, but unfortunately, the numbers didn’t depict the true picture of who we are,” he said. “Only 57 percent of all posts this past year submitted their Consolidated Post Reports.

“I have already had a discussion with most of the department commanders requesting their assistance in obtaining 100 percent reporting this year. Remember, post commanders, the job is not done until the paperwork is filed. I will continue to reinforce this message as I travel to departments this year.”

Dellinger applauded the efforts of outgoing National Commander Jim Koutz for raising more than \$1 million for Operation Comfort Warriors. The Legion’s National Emergency Fund (NEF) will be Dellinger’s fundraising project during his tenure, with a donation goal of \$1 million.

Donate to NEF: [www.legion.org/donate](http://www.legion.org/donate)

For nearly 25 years, NEF has provided more than \$8 million in direct financial assistance to Legion Family members and posts that have been affected by natural disasters. The fund has kept posts from closing and enabled Legion Family members to begin to rebuild their homes and their lives.

“I am very excited about the opportunities before us as we start building for tomorrow today,” Dellinger said. “I look forward to working with each and every one of you along with the rest of The American Legion Family as we promote and grow our great organization.

“Again, thank you for your vote of confidence as we move into our 96th year.”

## ASK A SERVICE OFFICER



**Cajun Comeau**  
Department Service  
Officer, North Carolina

# Service-connected disability

**Q. How can I know if my disability is service-connected?**

**A.** There are five ways to establish if a disability is service connected. They are:

**1. Direct service connected.** This is the most straightforward way that a veteran can establish service connection for his or her current disability. The best approach is to provide medical evidence of your current disability and evidence that the disease or injury occurred in service.

**2. Pre-existing injury aggravated by time in service.** With this claim, normally a veteran would have some evidence, such as an entrance examination, that a condition existed before entering military service. And then accompanied by evidence of an incident occurring in service and again, linking evidence between the two.

**3. Service connection by legal presumption.** Meaning, certain diseases or injuries presumed to be service-connected. An example would be a veteran developing cardiovascular disease due to service-connection amputation of a lower limb.

**4. Secondary service connection.** This is when one disability is the result of another service-connected disability.

**5. Connection due to injury caused by treatment in the VA health-care system.** If a veteran is injured because of VA hospitalization, treatment, rehab or therapy that is not the fault of the veteran, and the injury is treated as service-connected.

Find an American Legion accredited service officer in your state:

[www.legion.org/serviceofficers](http://www.legion.org/serviceofficers)

Have a claims question? Email it to: [askso@legion.org](mailto:askso@legion.org)

## TAPS

### Ronald D. Martin

*Rensselaer, Ind.*

Ronald D. Martin of Post 29 (Department of Indiana) passed away July 9 at the age of 67. He was a Vietnam Air Force veteran. Mr. Martin served as department commander from 2005-2006, National Americanism Council vice chairman from 1990-2009, National Distinguished Guests Committee vice chairman from 1987-1990, and National Legislative Commission member from 2009-2013.

### Albert M. Robotti

*Rocky Hill, N.J.*

Albert M. Robotti of Post 280 (Department of New Jersey) passed away Aug. 13 at the age of 92. He was a Korean War Navy veteran. Mr. Robotti served as department vice commander from 1969-1970, department commander from 1972-1973, national vice commander from 1996-1997, National Executive Committee alternate member from 1985-1989, National Executive Committee member from 1989-1995, National Employment Committee member from 1997-2001, National Employment Committee chairman from 2001-2013, National Citizens Flag Alliance Committee member from 1994-1995, National Foreign Relations Council vice chairman from 1975-1989 and 1995-1996, National American Legion Magazine Commission Liaison Committee member from 1989-1992, National Public Relations Commission Liaison Committee chairman from 1992-1995, National Resolutions Subcommittee member from 1992-1993, National Subcommittee on Committees member from 1993-1995.

### William N. Shipley

*Fredericksburg, Pa.*

William N. Shipley of Post 227 (Department of New Jersey) passed away July 26 at the age of 91. He was a World War II Army veteran. Mr. Shipley served as department vice commander from 1982-1983, department commander from 1989-1990, National Americanism Council vice chairman from 1986-1987, and National Foreign Relations Council vice chairman from 1995-2007.

## NATIONAL CONVENTION

# Legion presents honors for patriotism, heroism

## National Recruiter of the Year:

Edgar J. Johnson. A member of Samuel G. Cooke American Legion Post 267 in Columbus, Ga. Johnson recruited 724 new members into the organization.

## Spirit of Service Award:

U.S. Marine Sgt. Man Chan; U.S. Army Sgt. Edwin Garcia; U.S. Navy IT2 Komlan Agbagba; U.S. Coast Guard AMT2 Shawn Pugmire; and U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Beau A. Vore.

## Patriot Award:

A multinational electronics leader, Samsung received the award for endowing a \$5 million educational scholarship fund to the Legion for administration to direct descendants of U.S. war veterans. It was a gesture of appreciation from Samsung to U.S. military veterans for coming to the aid of South Korea in its war against invading forces from China and North Korea.

## Fourth Estate Awards (outstanding achievement in the field of journalism).

**Print category:** USA Today won for a second time.

**Broadcast category:** Hawaii's KITV-TV. The station brought closure to a long and dark phase of history with the production of a one-hour documentary on the life of Marianne Cope, recently canonized by the Vatican for her work on the Kalaupapa peninsula in the mid-1800s.

**Internet category:** Alex Quade. A freelance war correspondent, Quade won her second consecutive Fourth Estate Award for her video report, "Chinook Down," for the New York Times website. Her short documentary revealed the full story and human toll behind a WikiLeaks headline of a Chinook helicopter shot down by a surface-to-air missile in Afghanistan, killing all onboard. Quade was supposed to be on that helicopter. She instead reported firsthand on the firefight and recovery.

## James V. Day "Good Guy" Award:

George Foreman. The two-time heavyweight boxing champion was praised by the Legion for his patriotism and his service to the community.

## Distinguished Service Medal:

Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders. Since 1979, the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders have made 75 USO tours to more than 200 locations worldwide and have conducted cheerleading classes for the children of military families.



Spirit of Service Award winners, Sgt. Beau A. Vore, Sgt. Man Chan, IT2 Komlan Agbagba, Sgt. Edwin Garcia and AMT2 Shawn Pugmire.

Photo by Tom Strattman

They also spend time supporting charities and visiting hospitals, including many VA facilities. The Distinguished Service Medal is the Legion's highest honor.

**National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year:** Deputy Miste M. Strickland. Strickland is from Nash County Sheriff's Office in Middlesex, N.C.

## Firefighter of the Year:

Deputy Chief Leslie Young. Young is from Mahoning Township Fire Department in Danville, Pa.

**Employer of the Year Awards for Hiring Veterans:** CIAN, Inc, in Peoria, Ill., Strategic & Homeland Defense Division in Colorado Springs, Colo., and L-3 Stratis in Fayetteville, N.C.

## Employer of Older Workers Award:

AARP Foundation in South Atlanta, Ga.

**Local Veterans Employment of the Year:** Bobby Bryant, Stillwater Workforce Center, Oklahoma.

## Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist of the Year Award:

Jerome A. Billups of Fargo, N.D.

**Enhance the Lives of Disabled Persons Award:** Precinct 2 Harris County in Highlands, Texas.

**Employment Service Local Office Award:** Ottawa One Stop Center in Ottawa, Ill.

**Homeless Veterans Outreach Award:** Craig Tillman, American Legion Homeless Veterans Task Force chairman from Dearborn, Mich.

## NATIONAL CONVENTION

## Did you know?

During the 95th American Legion national convention in Houston, Aug. 23-29, the Legion Family raised thousands of dollars for many Legion programs.

**Operation Comfort Warriors:** **\$400,000.** This brought the total donations for the 2012-2013 year to more than \$1.1 million.

[www.legion.org/ocw](http://www.legion.org/ocw)

**National Emergency Fund:** **\$158,000.** This included \$54,474 from the Department of Pennsylvania and \$37,248 from the Department of New York.

[www.legion.org/nef](http://www.legion.org/nef)

**Child Welfare Foundation:** **\$26,000.** This included \$15,000 from the Department of Ohio Charities Inc.

[www.legion.org/childwelfare](http://www.legion.org/childwelfare)



## Legacy Scholarship:

**\$764,000.** Nearly 400 American Legion Riders raised \$334,000 to benefit the children of fallen U.S. servicemembers during the eighth annual Legacy Run. Donations during and on the floor of the Legion's national convention brought the donation total to more than three quarters of a million dollars. The Run left Indianapolis on Aug. 18 and traveled through Illinois, Missouri and Oklahoma before ending up in League City, Texas, on Aug. 22. Legionnaires from Minnesota and South Carolina each donated more than \$50,000; three other Legion states contributed at least \$26,000 each.

[www.legion.org/riders](http://www.legion.org/riders)

## NATIONAL CONVENTION

# 'The greatest generation: Vietnam veterans'



Photo by Eldon Lindsay

After serving in Iraq, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. David Bellavia was walking through the Atlanta airport wearing his protective combat uniform when he was approached by

two crying men — Vietnam veterans. They said to Bellavia, “Welcome home.” And then they said three words that Bellavia “never expected to hear from another veteran. They said, ‘I love you.’”

Bellavia is the recipient of the Silver Star for his actions during the Second Battle of Fallujah, as well as the recipient of the Bronze Star, three Army Commendation Medals, two Army Achievement Medals and the New York State Conspicuous Cross. He is the vice chairman of Vets for Freedom, and he published a memoir in 2007, “House to House: An Epic Memoir of War.” Bellavia shared with attendees at the Legion’s national convention why he believes Vietnam War veterans are the greatest generation.

“I think the greatest generation is an 18-year-old kid, who can’t even spell the country he was drafted to serve in,” Bellavia said. “The greatest generation would turn on the radio and be told that they were baby killers by popular culture. They were told by Hollywood that they were ignorant and a fool for doing what their country asked of them. The greatest generation was a generation that stood shoulder to shoulder and protected Iraq and Afghanistan veterans from the same unwashed ignorant classes that choose to put the soldier behind the foreign policy. The greatest generation is a generation of veterans who were treated with dishonor and shame and made sure that their sons and daughters would never be treated like they were treated.”

To all Vietnam veterans, Bellavia says, “Welcome home. We love you.”



DATELINE: CAPITOL HILL

## Airport screening bill signed



**Brett P. Reistad,**  
Chairman, National  
Legislative Commission

On Aug. 9, President Barack Obama enacted **Public Law (P.L.) 113-27**, the Helping Heroes Fly Act. This measure updates the Wounded Warriors Screening Program established in 2005 to let disabled veterans and severely injured servicemembers request expedited screening from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

The bill would direct the assistant secretary of Homeland Security for TSA to develop ways of easing airport screenings. Nothing in the bill prohibits more security screening of a servicemember if law-enforcement officials deem it necessary. As amended by the Senate, the bill will not allow expedited screening for family members accompanying the veterans and servicemembers.

Under the amendment by Sen. Mark Pryor, D-Ark., family members could still contact the TSA to make arrangements for the military personnel covered by the program. The Senate passed the amended bill on Aug. 1, with the House agreeing to the Senate version on Aug. 2.

■ On Aug. 9, Obama also signed into law **P.L. 113-26**, the **FOR VETS Act of 2013**. The bill was introduced by Rep. Dan Benishek, R-Mich.

This legislation adds veteran services to the list of eligible uses for surplus federal property offered to not-for-profit groups through the Federal Surplus Personal Property Donation Program. When federal agencies no longer need property such as office supplies, furniture or motor vehicles, the surplus items are eligible to be donated to public service organizations for education or health-care related services.

In 2010, Congress added veterans service organizations to the list of eligible organizations. However, under current law, veteran service organizations cannot receive surplus property to use toward the full range of services they provide to veterans.

■ Ten of 12 fiscal year 2014 spending measures have been approved by the House Appropriations Committee, while its Senate counterpart has approved 11 to date. The House has passed four of those 10 measures – two of them being Defense and the Military Construction/Department of Veterans Affairs spending bills – but the Senate has not acted on any of their measures.

Much of the delay can be attributed to debate over possible rising of the debt ceiling, which allows the U.S. government to borrow funds to pay its bills. The current debt ceiling is scheduled to be reached sometime in October.

It too is becoming apparent that Congress will rely on the passage of a series of continuing resolutions (CRs) to keep the government funded. These CRs will keep the government funded for a certain period of time, but at the same level of funding that was approved for the current fiscal year.

American Legion Family members are encouraged to contact their members of Congress and ask them to pass all 12 appropriations bills as stand-alone measures to avoid the use of CRs.

# MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVES AND AWARDS

## GOLD AND SILVER BRIGADE

The Gold and Silver Brigade program will honor 2013 Gold and Silver Brigade Award recipients who bring an increased number of members in 2014. For every additional member a 2013 Gold or Silver Brigade recipient obtains in 2014 over his or her 2013 total, he or she will receive a monetary award. Gold Brigaders will receive \$3 per member they obtain over last year's total; Silver Brigaders will receive \$2 per member they obtain over last year's total.



National Headquarters will continue to accept submissions for the traditional Gold and Silver Brigade award program, but hopes that those trying for either award will push themselves extra hard to get new members into The American Legion with this cash incentive. National Headquarters will also offer certificates, coins and lapel/cap pins to those who exceed last year's goals.

The program will be continued through 2019, so any Legionnaires who want to participate in next year's enhanced Gold and Silver Brigade can participate in 2014 for the new members they signed up during the 2013 membership year.

For more information, contact the Membership Division:

☎ (317) 630-1327 or ✉ [ksingleton@legion.org](mailto:ksingleton@legion.org)



## DISTRICT LEADERS REWARDED FOR POST VISITS

The District Commander Post Visitation Award is an incentive for personal visits to posts by district commanders and vice commanders. Personal contact at this level sets the example for post membership workers to make the personal contacts necessary for a successful membership program.

**Criteria.** The district commander and/or vice commanders must visit each post in the district during their year. For districts with more than 30 posts, the district vice commanders can assist in making visits, but the district commander must visit at least 30 of the posts personally.

**Certification.** A list of posts in each district can be obtained with the assistance of department headquarters. At the completion of the 100 percent visit requirement, the district commander will send the completed spreadsheet to the department, which will forward it to National Headquarters by Aug. 1, 2014.

### Awards.

- Category 1 (up to 20 posts), \$100
- Category 2 (21 to 35 posts), \$200
- Category 3 (36 to 50 posts), \$300
- Category 4 (51 to 65 posts), \$400
- Category 5 (65 or more posts), \$500

🌐 [www.legion.org/commander/districtpost](http://www.legion.org/commander/districtpost)

## POST EXCELLENCE AWARD CONTINUES

The Post Excellence Award program honors posts that show excellence in membership participation, youth activities, community service, and support to veterans and U.S. troops.

### Criteria

- **Membership.** Post membership must be at least one member more than the previous year. A post officer must attend district meetings.
- **Youth activities.** The post must sponsor and actively participate in at least one primary youth program: Boys State, Legion Baseball, the Oratorical Contest, Boy Scouts of America or Junior Shooting Sports.
- **Community service.** The post must organize a community service project that involves members of the Legion, Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion. A monetary donation may only be one part of a project.
- **Service to troops or veterans.** The post must organize a project supporting troops or veterans (example, Family

Support Network or Operation Comfort Warriors), that involves members of the Legion, Auxiliary or SAL outside the post. A monetary donation may only be one part of a project.

**Certification.** District commanders must certify posts as having fulfilled the four specified criteria, and submit a list of the post's name, number, address and commander's name to department headquarters. If possible, accompany with copies of press releases submitted to local media that raise awareness for the projects and enhance the Legion's public image.

**Awards.** Each qualifying post, as well as district commanders whose districts have at least 50 percent of posts reach certification, will receive a certificate of recognition.

🌐 [www.legion.org/commander/postexcellence](http://www.legion.org/commander/postexcellence)

# Dispatch

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## 100th ANNIVERSARY

# Celebrating 100 years of service



One of the highlights of the 95th American Legion National Convention in Houston was the official launch of the Centennial Celebration website, the first step of the journey toward the Legion's 100th anniversary in 2019.

American Legion 100th Anniversary Honorary Committee Chairman Theodore Roosevelt IV mentioned the website, created and maintained by National Headquarters in Indianapolis, during his speech to the assembled delegates. The site –

 [www.legion.org/centennial](http://www.legion.org/centennial) - offers local posts

the opportunity to start individual pages detailing their histories and laying out their visions for the next 100 years of service.

The process of setting up an account and the basics of a post history page takes only around five minutes, as was proven by numerous Legionnaires during the convention. A Centennial Celebration booth was set up in the exhibit hall, and national staff – as well as members of the national centennial committee – were on hand to help. Around 50 post pages were started on site in Houston; the first was Post 200 of Boiling Springs, S.C. In addition to historical information, posts can upload photos, future events, links to their own social media presences and more.

Download the "Legacy & Vision" brochure and Centennial Celebration Workbook from the Centennial Celebration website or from

 [www.legion.org/publications](http://www.legion.org/publications), and get started now.

## PLANNER

### OCTOBER

**14-15** Commanders & Adjutants Conference, Indianapolis

**14-17** National Executive Committee Fall Meetings, Indianapolis

**26-Nov. 1** National American Legion College, Indianapolis

### NOVEMBER

**1** National Legion College, Indianapolis

**11** Veterans Day

**17-23** American Education Week

**28** Holiday donor blood drive

 [www.legion.org/dispatch/calendar](http://www.legion.org/dispatch/calendar)