Digest of Proceedings

Monday, October 14, 2019
The meeting of the Americanism Commission was called to order by Chairman Richard W. Anderson (CT) at 8:30 a.m., Monday, October 14, 2019 in the Circle Suites Lower Level of the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana. Chairman Anderson led those attending in the Salute of the Colors.

Victor DeSloover (IA) gave the Invocation and had a moment of silence in remembrance for two prominent American Legion members who recently passed - George Buskirk (IN), National Treasurer; and James Brouillette (VT) who previously served as a member of the Americanism Commission and as a representative on the Committee on Youth Education.

Chairman Herbert Petit (LA), Committee on Children and Youth, led the Pledge of Allegiance. Respect was paid to those who are listed as a POW or MIA. Chairman Anderson led the recitation of the Preamble to the Constitution.

Chairman Anderson called upon Jill Druskis (NE), Director of Americanism Division for roll call. Roll call was taken and a quorum declared. Sixty-five members were present from the Americanism Commission, Americanism Council, Committee on Children and Youth, Committee on Youth Education, American Legion Baseball Committee and the Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Committee.

Chairman Anderson next brought greetings and reflected upon a thank you note received from a 2018 Samsung American Legion scholarship winner, Mattilyn Winburn. A welcome was given to all in attendance, and all past national commanders were recognized and welcomed.

Chairman Anderson introduced Nicole Clapp (IA), National President of the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA). President Clapp’s remarked on receiving a Children and Youth appointment four years ago, and the history of the 100th year anniversary of the ALA. President Clapp handed out her national president pins, remarking on the representation on the pin of the poppy fields of the past giving way to a sky of fireworks. President Clapp commented on the youth programs she has supported in her department. She pledges to serve veterans, military and their families. President Clapp introduced Denise Conrad (OH) as the new ALA Americanism Chairman.

Chairman Anderson next recognized all members of the National Americanism Liaison Committee, and then recognized all of the committee chairmen in attendance: Herbert Petit (LA), Committee on Children and Youth; Michael Westergren (AR), Committee on Youth Education; Mark Nave (PA) Sons of The American Legion (SAL) Child Welfare Foundation; William Clancy (NY), SAL Children and Youth Committee; Denise Conrad (OH), ALA Americanism Committee; and Donald Hall (MD), SAL Americanism Commission.

Chairman Herbert J. Petit Jr., (LA), Chairman, Committee on Children and Youth, brought greetings and words of appreciation for support of children and youth, and American Legion youth programs.

ALA Americanism Committee Chairman Denise Conrad (OH) offered remarks about ALA commitment of furthering Legion Family by supporting youth programs such as Oratorical, Girls State, Boys State, Legion
Baseball, and Shooting Sports and legislative issues. Together with the American Legion Riders and the Sons of the American Legion, Chairman Conrad wants to help move programs into another century of service to come.

The Digest of Proceedings for the 2019 spring meetings of the Americanism Commission and a copy of the Report of the Americanism Commission conducted prior to the 2019 National Convention were presented; a motion to receive and file both reports was made and the motion carried.

Chairman Michael Westergren (AR), Committee on Youth Education (COYE), reported on the fall meeting of the committee conducted on October 12-13, 2019. (Exhibit “A”). The report on 2019 fall meeting on The Committee on Youth Education was received and approved.

The Commission voted to recommend approval of Updated Eligibility for Samsung American Legion Scholarship that seeks to update the scholarship eligibility to match the recently enacted LEGION Act. With enactment of the 2019 LEGION Act this summer, two major war eras are now recognized – that of April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918; and from December 7, 1941 to a later time that will eventually be determined by the federal government. With this change, U.S. service members who had served during previously undeclared periods of war are now recognized. This resolution amends Resolution No. 28 of the National Executive Committee, May 2019, titled “Updated Rules and Conditions for the Samsung American Legion Scholarship Program” so as to establish Samsung scholarship eligibility for the descendants of previously unrecognized war-era veterans. It is important to note that all other rules and conditions of Resolution No. 28 of the 2019 May NEC are of the unaffected and remain the same.

Report of the Oratorical Department Chairman’s Conference conducted as a segment of the annual national Combined Americanism Conference on September 28-29, 2019 was presented by Bill Megnin, Youth Activities Program Manager. (Exhibit “B”). A motion was made to approve the report of the 2019 Oratorical Department Chairman’s Conference, seconded, and carried.

The Americanism Commission next voted to recommend approval of a resolution titled National Oratorical Contest Of The American Legion. At the 2019 Spring meetings the Americanism Commission held this resolution that initially originated as Resolution No. 82 from the Department of New York, for further study. The Commission asked the Oratorical department chairmen who were being called-in to the annual Oratorical conference this past September to develop a possible schedule that could accommodate the additional time it would take to advance double the number of oratorical contestants from the quarter-final round to the semi-final round as proposed in the resolution – the proposed resolution sought to advance the top two winners in each quarter-final round for a total of 18 contestants in the semi-final round instead of 9. A recommended schedule was discussed, developed and recommended to the Americanism Commission. Having been present for those discussions, Chairman Anderson felt a workable schedule had been developed for doubling the number of contestants advancing to the semi-final round of the national contest. This resolution also calls to increase the Oratorical scholarship awards to a total of $188,000 for 2020, and another increase effective in 2021 for just the top three contestants, for a total of $203,500 – the current scholarship amounts have not been changed in the last 22-years.

Loren Sperry (WA), having served as chairman of the Junior Shooting Sports Program (JSSP) department chairman’s segment of the annual national Combined Americanism Conference held September 21-22, 2019, delivered the conference report. (Exhibit “C”). A motion was made to approve, seconded, and the motion carried.

The Commission voted to recommend approval of a resolution titled American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Air Rifle National Championship Award. Originally, traveling trophies had been established that were awarded the top performers competing in the annual National Junior Olympic Air Rifle Championship that is sponsored
by the Civilian Marksmanship Program and who were members of clubs and teams affiliated with the American Legion shooting program. Rather than recognizing those Legion youth competing in another organization’s championship, this resolution seeks to give greater emphasis to recognizing those youth who compete in the Legion’s top national tournament. The Department Junior Shooting Sports chairmen who were in attendance at their 2019 conference recommend approval of the resolution. It has concurrence of the Internal Affairs Commission – that is the commission who recommends policies and procedures relating to trophies and awards given by the national organization in connection with American Legion activities.

Americanism Deputy Director Jeff Hendricks (IN) provided a report on the Department Scouting Chairman’s Conference segment of the annual national Combined Americanism Conference conducted on September 27-29, 2019. (Exhibit “D”). A motion was made to approve the 2019 Department Scouting Chairman’s Conference report, seconded and the motion carried.

The Americanism Commission voted to hold Resolution No. 49 (OR) Changes to the American Legion Eagle Scout for further study. The ten department Scouting chairmen who participated in the 2019 Scouting conference gave discussion to this resolution and those chairmen representing 1/5 of all total Legion departments expressed the recommendation to not adopt the resolution. Additional feedback was also recently received by the Department of Colorado via Americanism Commission member and Alternate NECman Jay Bowen. A very articulate, detailed perspective was provided by the Colorado Department Scouting Committee Chairman, in which it is felt the resolution does not appear viable, and asked that the detailed feedback be shared with the Youth Activities Sub-Committee of The Americanism Commission for discussion. The Youth Activities Subcommittee is scheduled to meet next Spring and will receive the feedback for consideration.

The Commission next voted to hold Resolution No. 8 (CO) Compliance with Flag Code for Flying the Flag at Half Staff for further study, citing the complexity of the U.S. Flag Code and the need for deeper assessment of the authorities it currently bestows.

The Commission then voted to recommend approval of a resolution titled 100th Anniversary Remembrance of Our Comrades in the 1919 Centralia Tragedy. In 1919 the International Workers of the World (IWW), also known as Wobblies, was an international union organization linked with communism. It had a reputation as being radical and was in the midst of a long-standing feud with authorities and business figures in the region of Centralia, Washington. On November 11th in 1919, during a parade in Centralia that was celebrating the very first anniversary of Armistice Day, members of the local IWW chapter shot and killed four Legionnaires, including the commander of American Legion Grant Hodge Post No. 17, and wounded three other Legionnaires. This year marks the 100th anniversary of that tragedy which became known as the Centralia Tragedy, and this resolution seeks to give poignant remembrance of those Legionnaires who lives were so appallingly lost that day so that their memories do not fade.

The Commission voted to recommend approval of a resolution titled Extension of Agreement with Baseball Factory, that seeks to extend the same agreement that is currently in place for another five years. Chairman Anderson called upon Vice Chairman of the American Legion Baseball Committee, Mark Avis (MA), to read the report of the Baseball department chairman’s conference held as a segment of the annual national Combined Americanism Conference on September 27-29, 2019. Forty-six (46) departments were present with sixty-nine (69) attendees (Exhibit “E”). A motion was made to approve report, seconded and carried.

Vice Chairman Mark Avis (MA) read the report of the 2019 fall meeting of the American Legion Baseball Committee meeting held on September 29, 2019 (Exhibit “F”). A motion was made to approve report, seconded and carried.
Chairman Anderson gave recognition to the Americanism staff of National Headquarters. A second roll call was taken for those who may not have been present for the first roll call. Chairman Anderson led the Salute to the Colors. The Americanism Commission Meeting recessed at 10:07 a.m., with the 2019 fall meeting of the Committee on Children & Youth convening 15 minutes after the recess.

**Tuesday, October 15, 2019**
The 2019 fall meeting of the Americanism Commission meeting reconvened at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, October 15, 2019 in the Meridian West Ballroom, Lower Level, Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana. Americanism Chairman Richard Anderson (CT) called the meeting to order. Chairman Anderson led the Salute to the Colors. Jill Druskis (NE), Director of Americanism Division, took roll call and a quorum declared.

Chairman Anderson introduced Clint Bolt (VA), National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion. Commander Bolt remarked on Memorial Day and when growing up going to the cemetery with flowers and learning how to place these on the graves just right. It was the flags on the graves that made an indelible impression upon his life. Commander Bolt said his first lessons in Americanism were prayers, the Pledge of Allegiance, and flags. Commander Bolt’s theme this year is “Serving Those Who Served.” Commander Bolt reported that the SAL sent 1,773 delegates to Boys State, 964 delegates to Girls State, conducted 1,444 for flag etiquette programs and 9,067 flag retirement ceremonies. President Bolt represents 371,000 proud members of Sons of The American Legion.

Eddie Holbrook is Chairman of the Cleveland County ALWS Committee in Shelby, NC, and a consultant to the American Legion Baseball Committee. Eddie Holbrook’s wife Millie Holbrook serves as the director of special events on the Cleveland County ALWS Committee and took opportunity to provide an overview of 2019 highlights. Of particular note, the Cleveland County ALWS Committee is working on a renewal contact with ESPN. The 2020 year is the 10th anniversary of Shelby becoming the home of The American Legion World Series. Shelby is planning more progressive promotion and seeking more sponsorship to provide free admission to all veterans and senior citizens.

Chairman Anderson introduced Chairman Robert Crandaal, Compliance and Risk Manager of American Legion National Headquarters, for an update of Senate Bill 534 titled *Youth Protection Act*. On February 14, 2018, Senate Bill was signed into law. The bill amends two federal statutes; the first is *Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990* and the second is *The Amateur Sports Act of 1978*. The new legislation amended the victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 to extend the duty for one to report suspected child abuse within twenty four hours to an authorized adult representing the authorizing sports organization up to and including the US Olympic Committee. The bill was also amended to increase civil remedies as it relates to the time allowed for the minor victim to report a prior incident. The new legislation extends the reporting time to ten years from the date of the incident or from ten years from the time the minor reaches the age of eighteen. Previously the statute of limitations was three years. The new legislation also amends *The Amateur Sports Act of 1978* to designate an organization titled *The United States Center for Safe Sport* to serve as an independent national safe sports organization for the responsibility for developing policies and procedures to prevent the emotional, the physical, and sexual abuse of the amateur athletes.

- The new organization has the responsibility to administer first the process for reporting an event to the proper authorities.
- A mechanism that allows a complainant to easily report an abuse allegation.
- Reasonable procedures to limit one on one interaction between a minor and an adult.
- Procedures to prohibit retaliation.
- Overview of oversite of procedures to include audits to ensure that policies and procedures are followed correctly. Consistent training is offered to adults involved in the sport activity.
- A mechanism for national governing body to share reports of suspected child abuse.

The scope of the new legislation is aimed at any or all amateur sports that fall under the umbrella of the US Olympic committee. For the American Legion programs it means the junior and senior baseball programs as well as, the Junior Shooting Sports competition. Crandall is working with the program managers of these two programs in incorporating the sexual abuse awareness training as part of the background checks process in place at this time. The American Legion uses a third party background check called Protect Youth Sports (PYS). It is mandatory for all baseball coaches, managers, and volunteers involved in the teams to go through a background check on an annual basis. PYS is also used to do background checks for anyone involved in a national youth program event. The enhancement that comes with this new program is the fact there is an education piece. There is a sexual abuse and molestation education piece that goes along with the background check by doing an online training with a quiz for successful training of that program. They receive a certificate to turn in to show that person is in compliance. The alternative to that is a company called USA Baseball also provide a training program very similar to what PYS does. It is also for free with a certificate for evidence for compliance.

A mechanism is being created for national governing bodies to share reports of suspected child abuse. Currently, for the Legion, it is up to a post or the department level to keep track of this. That information needs to be passed on to the national organization. Then it our responsibility to pass this on to Safe Sports. They have a clearing house where they are collecting all this information so this prevents a problem area of an offender going from one sports program or organization to another. A third risk management guide will be created to provide and address the needs for the JSSP competition. This program would fall under the umbrella of the US Olympic Committee. It was felt it should have its own guide to address specific needs relating to the sport and program. They are working with the US shooting organization to coordinate so we are doing the right things in this program.

Discussion was addressed about insurance changes. The American Legion insurance went into a review process with a request for proposal sent out and a review was undertaken of six different insurance agencies that specialize in serving non-profit organization, as well as the incumbent provider Van Dyke agency. A decision was made by the Insurance Working Committee of the Finance Commission to make a recommendation that a change be made in the insurance agent. The baseball insurance just renewed for the 2020 season and rates have been reduced with liability, accident, and health insurance. The National Organization is now with NFP in Indianapolis, working together with them to review what the National Organization currently has in place and make renewals going into the future.

Dale Barnett addressed to have something sent to the departments as quickly as possible with points of contacts because they are in the budget process. Crandall advised that he is working with Kevin Bartlett, the National Judge Advocate, for distribution of this information.

The report of the 2019 Children and Youth Department Chairmen’s Conference (Exhibit “G”) was delivered by Herbert Petit (LA), who served as conference chairman of the Children and Youth Conference on Sept 21-22, 2019. There were 64 American Legion family representatives and guests in attendance discussing current children’s issues and programs on the Committee of Children and Youth. The American Legion Auxiliary presented four Good Deed awards to children who have contributed to their community. Staff were provided information on the Samsung Alumni program for each department to look at starting their own Alumni program. An update was provided on Senate Bill 534 and how it will affect the Legion programs in the future. Training was provided on Temporary Financial Assistance program and submitting an application packet. Motion to approve the report for 2109 Children & Youth Department Chairmen’s Conference was made, seconded, and carried.
Committee and Youth Chairman Herbert Petit (LA) presented the report for the 2019 fall meeting of the Committee on Children and Youth (Exhibit “H”). The committee heard updates on the Youth Cadet Law Enforcement committee, the American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation, and the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. Discussion was held and a recommendation to the Americanism Commission to reject Resolution No. 5 (CO) titled School Safety was put forth. Motion to approve the 2019 fall meeting report on the Committee on Children and Youth, seconded, motion carried.

The Commission voted to reject Resolution No. 5 School Safety. Hesitation was expressed for recommending implementation of an initiative at the national level that has not yet been fully implemented or has demonstrated sustained success at a post, district or department level, whereby that post, district or department would then be able to serve as a source of insight and guidance for others seeking to implement the initiative.

Jill Druskis, Director of Americanism Division, introduced the division’s new Youth Education Program Manager, Scott Wynn. Wynn presented on behalf of PNC Dale Burnett the report for the Boys State Director’s Conference segment of the annual national Combined Americanism Conference conducted on September 27-29, 2019 (Exhibit “I”). Motion to approve the report was made, seconded, and carried.

Jim Willis (OR), a member of the Youth Cadet Law Enforcement (YCLE) Committee provided the Americanism Commission a brief update of the YCLE program. There is currently twenty-one states participating in Youth Cadet Law Enforcement, with the Departments of California and Washington looking to hold their first academy in the summer of 2020. The vision is to see youth champions on the stage at the National Convention – the youth champ delegate is considered one of the most motivational things about going to National Convention.

National Chaplain Edward Harris (IN) presented the annual Americanism Post Everlasting Remembrance and gave the report of the 2019 Department Chaplain’s Conference (Exhibit “J”). A motion was made to approve the 2019 Department Chaplain’s Report, and a second, motion carried.

Chairman Anderson asked for any further business and any new business to come before the commission. Chairman Anderson sought a technical motion to authorize staff to make technical corrections to all resolutions, minutes, and commission reports to ensure proper spelling, wording, and format without changing the substance of meaning or intent of the Americanism Commission. Motioned made, seconded, and carried.

Closing remarks were given by Chairman Anderson thanking all who were present for their commitment and dedication in celebration of the 2019 programs that came to a great success by the dedication of your people back home. The vision for 2020 is to have increased program participation. Chairman Anderson thanked all for their great service to community, state and nation.

National Chaplain Edward Harris (IN) gave the Benediction.

Chairman Anderson led Salute to the Colors.

The 2019 fall meeting of the Americanism Commission recessed at 10:04 a.m.
2019 American Legion Committee on Youth Education

The Fall Conference of the Committee on Youth Education (COYE) was held October 13-14, 2019, at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana. Eleven representatives were present for Fall Meetings to include committee members Chairman Michael Westergren (AR), Vice Chairman James Davis (WV); Member Robert Munhall (PA); Member Robert Perham (VT); Member Carl Radosevich (NM); Americanism Commission Representative Victor DeSloover (IA); Member Hugh Holmes (SD); Americanism Commission Representative Roberta Poulos (SC); American Legion Auxiliary Consultants: Linda Feezer (WY); Deb Albers (NE); Amanda Washburn (NE).

Saturday, October 12, 2019

Samsung American Legion Scholarship Revisions and Report

Scott Wynn (IN), Staff Liaison, briefed the COYE on the 2019 Samsung American Legion Scholarship. Wynn discussed the methodology and process of the scholarship, as well as quantitative data on completed applications. Applications for the Samsung Scholarship were down 2% from the previous year. Out of the 4,661 scholarship applications for 2019: 156 were a member of or related to someone in The America Legion Family, and 265 were related to a Korean War service veteran.

Additional data from the Samsung Scholarship application:

- Amount of American Legion Boys State scholarships complete – 2,672
- Amount of American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Scholarships complete – 1,989

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys State</th>
<th>Girls State</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
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<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Missouri</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
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<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
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2019 Samsung American Legion Scholarship Selection

The COYE recommended the following winners for the 2019 Samsung American Legion Scholarship based on the scoring system used for evaluating applications. There were 98 total applications.
### 10 National Scholars - $10,000

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Region</th>
<th>Midwest Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sadie DeShon (AZ)</td>
<td>Henry Heiberger (SD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mason Whitaker (AZ)</td>
<td>Caitlin Murphy (NE)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Central Region</strong></td>
<td><strong>Southeast Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethan Roos (IN)</td>
<td>Cambri Driskell (GA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nathan Wolf (WI)</td>
<td>Chandler Quaile (GA)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Northeast Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vada Kirsch (NY)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Kirdahy (MA)</td>
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### 10 Runners-up - $5,000

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<tr>
<th>Western Region</th>
<th>Midwest Region</th>
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<tr>
<td>Brandon Chapko (CA)</td>
<td>Jacob James (IA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethan Sage (ID)</td>
<td>Samuel Fullbright (MT)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Central Region</strong></td>
<td><strong>Southeast Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant DeBruin (OH)</td>
<td>Maximilian Safranek (TX)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alayna Westernberg (WI)</td>
<td>Michael Brown (TN)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Northeast Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Emma Hughes (MA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Bradley (ME)</td>
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### Remaining Department Finalists - $1,250

| Abigail Taylor (AK)     | Caroline Searcy (NC)    |
| Jakob Wade (AK)         | Ira Wilder (NC)         |
| Lindsay Culpepper (AL)  | Dakota Tahir (ND)       |
| Wesley Lowman (AL)      | Macy Yahna (ND)         |
| Jacob Jarding (AR)      | Cooper Sheets (NE)      |
| Taylor Zimmerman (AR)   | Chloe Tardif (NH)       |
| Shannon Paulson (CA)    | Matthew Weimer (NH)     |
| Bradyn Tacha (CO)       | Kerrigan Donnelly (NJ)  |
| Emma Wrona (CO)         | Andrew Pasco (NJ)       |
| Abigail Pawlowicz (CT)  | Krystal Mailman (NM)    |
| Eli Wizevich (CT)       | Nathanael Mertz (NM)    |
| Thomas Kinservik (DE)   | Riley Blach (NV)        |
| Haley Miller (DE)       | Sara Gillett (NV)       |
| John Kirkley III (FL)   | Jonathan Picchione (NY) |
| Victoria Orcutt (FL)    | Erin Watters (OH)       |
| Taylor Coester (IA)     | Claire Levesque (OK)    |
| Edie Johnson (ID)       | Connor Walker (OK)      |
| Sophia Getz (IL)        | Mark Aldrich (OR)       |
| Benjamin Schneider (IL) | Anna Lacocca (PA)       |
| Rose Schnabel (IN)      | Levi Smith (PA)         |
| LyLena Estabine (KS)    | John Deresky (RI)       |
| Levi Hickert (KS)       | Alison McCadden (RI)    |
| Jasmine Whitehouse (NY) | Joshua Hughes (SC)      |
| Luke Wyatt (KY)         | Ansley Moe (SC)         |
| Carissa Kautz (LA)      | Katy Liester (SD)       |
American Legion Samsung Scholarship Annual Review
Discussion was had on possibly changing the survey questions for applicants. Consensus stood that the current questions are still producing quality answers; some having the potential of being used for marketing. The topic of whether scholarship applications should close on the first day or last day of Boys/Girls State was also discussed. After discussion, it was recommended to leave the application closure at its current state; midnight on the first day of each Boys/Girls State program.

Resolution Recommendations
Resolution: Updated Eligibility for Samsung American Legion
A proposed resolution seeking to update the scholarship eligibility to match the Legion Act was presented and approved. With enactment of the 2019 LEGION Act this summer, two major war eras are now recognized – that of April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918; and from December 7, 1941 to a later time that will eventually be determined by the federal government. With this change, U.S. service members who had served during previously undeclared periods of war are now recognized. This resolution amends Resolution No. 28 so as to establish Samsung scholarship eligibility for the descendants of those previously unrecognized war-era veterans. Vote was unanimous to move forward to the Americanism Commission.

American Legion Legacy Scholarship Review
The 2018 Legacy End of Year report was presented by staff liaisons Scott Wynn (IN) and Jeff Hendricks (IN); and accepted by the committee. The Policies and Procedures manual was brought forward with various staff recommended changes that were minor in nature, updating grammar, punctuation, etc. One substantive change included correcting an oversite in language that prevented the use of the American Legion Legacy Scholarship at United States military academies due to the language: “two party check no exceptions”. By removing the “no exceptions”, this would allow checks to be written to the US Treasury solely; as required by these academies. These changes were unanimously recommended for approval. COYE also reviewed and discussed information and policies contained in the governing Resolution No. 1: American Legion Legacy Scholarship Enhancement. The COYE will bring detailed recommendations to the Americanism Commission at the spring 2020 meetings.

Education Certificate Recognition
Chairman Michael Westergren (AR) brought forward discussions on revamping the Education Certificate Recognition with intent to improve the guidelines. An online certificate will be produced and made available to the Department level with the intention of collaborating with media and marketing. It was also discovered that the Education Certificate Recognition is not in the Adjutants Manual. National staff will work with Internal Affairs to have this added.
National Education Award
Chairman Michael Westergren (AR) led a conversation discussing how the award has been turned down by the recipients in the past two years. The COYE voted to keep the current criteria for selecting recipients; which consists of the COYE continuing to research, nominate and select an annual awardee. In that dialogue however, the topic of creating a National Educator award was proposed. The COYE directed staff to research the feasibility of creating this award, the results of which will be discussed at the next COYE meeting.

American Education Week – Recognizing Veterans in the Classroom
The COYE recommends to amend the criteria for this recognition to include all veterans serving within a school system vice “educators”. This opens the criteria to all who participate in the education process.

Education Development Guide
Chairman Michael Westergren (AZ) challenged the COYE to read and potentially redraft the Education Development Guide meant to be used by the Veterans in Community Schools program. Chapter two of this guide is meant to teach participants of this program how to create lesson plans. It is the opinion of the Chairman that this chapter should be reworked for the lay educator. Recommendations on this topic will be explored at the next COYE meeting.

National Education Organizations
Bob Munhall (PA) made a motion that national staff identify and evaluate quantifiable standards to measure the benefits of exhibiting at professional educational conferences. These standards would be used to justify the expense of exhibiting at these national educational conferences to the American Legion Finance Commission. The motion was unanimously approved.

Technical Motion
Vice Chairman Jim Davis (WV) made a motion that staff be authorized to make technical corrections to resolutions, minutes and commission report, to ensure proper spelling, wording and format, without changing the substance of meaning or intent of the Americanism Commission. Motion was moved unanimously.
The 50th annual Oratorical Chairperson Conference was held September 28-29, 2019, at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana, as a program segment of the annual national Combined Americanism Conference. David King (KY) served as the Oratorical Conference Chairman. There were 36 departments represented by their Oratorical chairman or designee; a total of 42 attendees were present.

Americanism Commission Chairman Richard Anderson (CT), and Americanism Division Director Jill Druskis (NE) brought welcome and greetings. Executive Director Lou Celli was introduced and had a few words of thanks/gratitude to the chairmen. Executive Director James Baca was also in attendance.

Three logo ideas from the Marketing Division were displayed as a proposed logo for the national oratorical contest. The current logo does not have the Legion emblem prominently displayed. There was discussion about the proposed logos presented; some felt it looked too much like the American Legion Baseball logo and the quills looked more like a winged bird than quills. It was also suggested to incorporate the word “scholarship” into the logo. Once it was realized that it was a logo for the national contest and not a program logo, it eased the concern that “scholarship” was not part of the logo. Another comment was the color of background. Another suggestion was to simply update the current national contest logo, however, according to Marketing that would not be feasible. Suggestions on the logo generated by discussion during the conference were given to the Marketing Division.

Topics discussed regarding last years’ contest included:

- Asking students and chaperones to provide separate email addresses. The current registration form states that they may be the same; recommendation is that this be updated to request two individual email addresses.
- Emphasis that moderators MUST make sure that everyone is aware of, and understand their assignments during a contest.
- It was suggested that there be some sort of confirmation provided to the Legion department once a department winner is registered for the national contest. According to the IT Division, when a copy of the email that goes to the department contestant and their parent from the national organization providing them an e-link and password information, an email also goes to the person from the department who certified their department winner information.
- Concern was expressed that the three finalists at the 2019 national oratorical contest didn’t have microphones attached quickly enough (for recording abilities), thereby causing delays in the contest schedule. National staff is meeting with Markey’s, providers of audio-visual support at the national oratorical contest, in October.

Duane Benton, Oratorical Chairman for the Department of Missouri, was introduced to discuss ways to promote the Oratorical program and contest – primarily by social media/websites. Mr. Benton brought together a panel of oratorical chairmen from the departments of Maryland, Mississippi, New Mexico, and Utah to assist in the discussion, so that those in attendance could view the several types websites that those department chairmen are currently using. While some of their websites are free, some had some nominal expense due to domain and / or other items that the particular website had on it. There was also conversation about using social media such as
Facebook and Twitter to promote the oratorical program. It was also suggested that all chairmen regularly check their department program links located on the Legion.org website to make sure the link is still functioning and report any problems to the national oratorical program manager. Mr. Benton was thanked for his presentation by Chairman King, and presented with a Certificate of Appreciation.

There was much discussion regarding Resolution No. 82 (NY) titled “Proposed Change To The National Oratorical Contest” introduced at the 2018 National Convention which seeks to allow double the number of contestants to advance from the quarter-final round to the semi-finals. The Americanism Commission requested development of a proposed schedule which would still allow the contest to conclude within the same time frame. It was suggested by several oratorical chairmen, and agreed upon, that the worship services could be moved from Saturday evening to Sunday morning, and discussion was also given to compressing the schedule during the day on Saturday to eliminate some of the lag time that has been observed. Oratorical chairmen agreed that these changes should allow enough extra time on Saturday to accommodate doubling the time that would be needed for the semi-final round if double the number of contestants were advanced. A copy of the proposed revised schedule is attached to this report, with recommended changes in red, for consideration by the Americanism Commission at the upcoming Fall meetings.

American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Program Manager Chrystal Daulton was introduced. Chrystal discussed ALA youth programs, and intentions for the Legion and ALA to seek more ways to collaborate together. She expressed the ALA’s interest in assisting with the oratorical program/contest as one of those ways. Several department chairmen shared how their local ALA is assisting within their state. Chairman King thanked Ms. Daulton for her presentation, and presented her with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Chairman Richard Anderson proposed that students be hosted at a local American Legion post for dinner, as is done with other youth programs. Most in their age group have never been inside an American Legion post and hosting an event, such as a dinner or pizza party, would allow youth opportunity to interact one-on-one with Legionnaires and Legion Family members. This in turn may spark further interest in our organization, and thereby promote greater involvement and generate Legion Family membership.

Oratorical chairmen next reviewed the American Legion Post Oratorical Chairman’s Guide for suggested updates and / or revisions since the Guide had not been reviewed in several years. Each chairman was provided a copy of the current version, as well as a draft incorporating suggested changes. The majority of the changes were to provide additional clarity and to update outdated forms. Substantive changes were the update to the current Risk Management Policy that all contestants under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or family member over the age of 21. Parental permission must be provided if parents are not accompanying the contestant. The preference of The American Legion for those over 18 also is to be accompanied by a parent. Also, the update of the Judges Talley Sheet. Current Talley Sheet does not reflect the way the questions are asked on the current Judges Score Card. The updated Talley Sheet and the Current Judges Score Card reflect the same verbiage. The suggested changes will be reported to the Americanism Commission.

Chairman King concluded the Saturday conference session by stepping through how to conduct an oratorical contest, discussing the responsibilities of each position and the importance of consistency.

On Sunday morning Chairman King reconvened the conference by leading a Post Everlasting memorial service, giving remembrance to Frank “Chic” Maldonado and Charles Armbruster.

There was discussion regarding prudent risk management principles, most specifically in regard to contestants traveling to the national oratorical contest with a parent/guardian as their chaperone versus traveling alone with a non-family member, such as a coach, teacher, etc. It was determined that both the Oratorical Rules and the Oratorical Chairman’s Guide need to be updated to reflect this.

Reminder was provided that the 51st annual American Legion Oratorical Chairmen’s Conference will be held next year in conjunction with the annual national Combined Americanism Conference on 26 – 27 September, 2020, in Indianapolis.

The 2019 Oratorical Chairmen’s Conference adjourned at 10:07 a.m. on Sunday, 29 September.
ATTACHMENT

Proposed Schedule for Advancing Double The Number of Semi-Final Contestants

Saturday

7:00 a.m.
⇒ Contest moderators report for final instructions.

7:30 a.m.
⇒ Time-keepers and assigned topic preparation room monitors report for assignments and briefing.
⇒ Ushers and contestant escorts report for assignments and briefing.
⇒ Contest moderators report for briefing.

8:15 a.m.
⇒ Quarter-final judges report for assignments and briefing.
⇒ Tabulator aides report for briefing.

8:15 a.m.
⇒ Quarter-final contestants and escorts report to respective contest rooms for final contest instructions/drawing of speaking order.

8:45 a.m.
⇒ Contest rooms opened for seating.

9:05 a.m.
⇒ Contest judges to respective contest rooms.
⇒ Contest moderators escort Judges to respective contest room

9:15 a.m.
⇒ Quarter-final contests begin.

10:45 a.m.
⇒ Tabulator aides report

11:15 – 12:00 – Scoring of Quarter Final Rounds

BREAK – LUNCH

1:00 p.m.
⇒ Time-keepers and assigned topic preparation room monitors report for briefing & contest instructions.
⇒ Ushers and contestant escorts report for briefing & contest instructions.
⇒ Contest moderators report for briefing and to meet with assigned contest staff.

1:30 p.m.
⇒ Semi-final judges report for assignments and briefing.
⇒ Tabulator aides report for briefing.
1:30 p.m.  
⇒ Semi-final contestants and contestant escorts report to respective contest rooms for final contest instructions & five-minute acoustic check for each contestant/drawing of speaking order.

2:00 p.m.  
⇒ Contest room opened for seating.

2:15 p.m.  
⇒ Contest judges to respective contest rooms.  
⇒ Contest moderators escort Judges to respective contest room.

2:30 p.m.  
⇒ Semi-final contests begin.

4:00 p.m.  
⇒ Tabulators aides report for briefing.

4:30 – 5:15 – Scoring of Semi Final Round

Sunday

7:00 a.m.  
⇒ Contest office opens.

7:00 a.m.  
⇒ Catholic Mass  
⇒ Interfaith Worship Services

7:45 a.m.  
⇒ Contest staff (timekeepers, assigned topic preparation room monitor, escorts, ushers) report for National Finals Contest briefing.

8:45 a.m.  
⇒ National Finalists and escorts report for final contest instructions & five-minute acoustic check for each contestant/drawing of speaking order.

9:00 a.m.  
⇒ National final judges briefing.

9:30 a.m.  
⇒ Auditorium opened for seating  
⇒ Contest staff in respective positions

9:55 a.m.  
⇒ Contest judges to Hall of Champions.  
    Escort: Tina Burney, Director of Tabulation and Judging

10:00 a.m.  
⇒ National Final Contest begins.
1:00 p.m.
Awards Luncheon Banquet

3:15 p.m. (time approximate)
Carey International out-bound transportation will depart from the back of the hotel, near the Golden Ballroom.
Exhibit “C”

REPORT TO THE NATIONAL AMERICANISM COMMISSION
FALL MEETING – October 14-15, 2019
Indianapolis, Indiana

Loren Sperry (WA)
Chairman, Junior Shooting Sports Program

Bill Megnin (IN)
Program Manager, Americanism Division

5th ANNUAL JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS (JSSP) CHAIRPERSON CONFERENCE

The 5th annual American Legion Junior Shooting Sports (JSSP) Chairperson Conference was held September 21-22, 2019, at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana, in conjunction with The American Legion Committee on Children & Youth 13th annual National Children & Youth Conference. Loren Sperry (WA) served as the Junior Shooting Sports Conference chairman. There were 13 departments were represented by either their Junior Shooting Sports department chairman or designee; there were a total of 14 attendees present.

Conference Chairman, Loren Sperry provided a review of the 29th national championships and congratulated the Departments of Texas and Tennessee for Precision shooter Makenzie Sheffield (TX) and Sporter shooter Jaden-Ann Fraser (TN) having captured national wins in their respective categories of The American Legion’s Junior 3-Position Air Rifle Championship at the Olympic Training Center’s USA Shooting Range in Colorado Springs, Colorado, this past July.

Chairman Sperry discussed several changes being proposed to the Americanism Commission for the 2019 – 2020 Official Match Program. Those changes are as follows:

- Affiliation form will need to be filled out and signed by the Post Commander at the beginning of every match season. Match season will be from 1 September to the following 31 August.
- Sporter competitors would be able to compete at the national competition every other year – no longer “one and done”.
- Changing the date for closing registration to December 15th from January 15th. Noticeable was clubs / teams waiting until January to order targets and then asking for an extension due to snow and unable to meet the 1 February deadline.
- Athletes will qualify for individual second round targets based on a predetermined score. The scores that are being recommended by the JSSP committee for the 2019 – 2020 Match Season are 530 for Sporter and 575 for Precision. This will engage more States in second round completion in each discipline. Scores for Second Round Targets will be reviewed on an annual basis by the JSSP Committee with recommendation to the Americanism Commission. State champions do not receive an automatic entry into the second round.
- Competitors under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or family member over the age of 21. Parent or guardian permission must be provided if parents/guardian are not accompanying the competitor.
- Target set cost will be $15.00 (up from $12.50) and payment will be received by credit card only.
- Once an athlete competes in the Precision category, they may not compete in the Sporter category.
- Requiring a verifying signature from a witness/officer from the affiliated post on 1st round targets. Previously this was only a requirement for second round targets.
- While will not be in the 2019 – 2020 Official Match Program, the committee would like registration for 2020 – 2021 to open 1 September 2020 instead of the 1 November date.
Registration process next year will more than likely need to go thru a Department process which necessitate the additional time.

There was an in-depth discussion regarding the resolution “American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Air Rifle National Championship Award”. The recommendation being forwarded to the Americanism Commission is this resolution be approved. Motion was made by Ida May Jewel (IN), seconded by Lawrence Behling (NY), and was passed.

Risk Management was discussed, including the new Senate Bill 534 – Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and the Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017. The bill amends two federal statues: (1) the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 and (2) the Amateur Sports Act of 1978. Another part of this bill is the Designation of the United States Center of SafeSport. Since JSSP is an athletic competition and aligns with USA Shooting similar to American Legion Baseball and USA Baseball, requirements for background checks and sexual abuse training documentation both of coaches and athletes based on USA Shooting and SafeSport requirements. These requirements and necessary training and documentation are under review with Mr. Bob Crandall, American Legion Risk Management.

Program Manager, Bill Megnin, stepped through the updated online registration process. It was suggested by Alabama Chairman, Anthony Kissik, that registration be streamlined so that registration form sends all necessary information to Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) for target ordering and shipment. That way there would not be the need to log in to two different websites. There was conversation that every competitor has a CMP number and maybe that number could be incorporated into the registration information.

Harry Flynn, Department Chairman of North Carolina, gave an inspiring presentation about how his department’s program was started. He shared information, including how to write a resolution to begin your program, how to build a program, and ways to fund a program. JSSP Chairman Loren “Bud” Sperry presented Chairman Flynn with a Certificate of Appreciation.

After review The American Legion National Judge Advocate requested that the Shooter’s Guide to Position Air Rifle and the Administrative Manual to be removed from the JSSP resource webpage due to content and the need for update. In review of several resources, CMP has several training items both free and nominal cost that could replace the Shooter’s Guide. National Judge Advocate has reviewed and approved the use of CMP web-links A Junior Shooter’s Guide to Air Rifle Safety, Rifle Safety Manual, and Teaching Rifle Positions to New Junior Shooters. These resources are free. The National Judge Advocate also approved the use of CMP web-link that has a nominal cost CD-ROM Rifle Safety & Marksmanship Training. The Administrative Manual will be replaced with a Chairman’s Guide. Guidelines and suggestions were requested to be emailed to Program Manager for review. Those resources will be reviewed, updated, and posted back to the website upon review from the Americanism Commission and the National Judge Advocate.

Sunday morning, all attending chairmen discussed best practices, fundraising ideas, stumbling blocks, getting posts involved, and growing the program.

Chairman Sperry thanked the attendees for their attention and participation during the conference. The 6th annual American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Chairperson Conference will be held in conjunction with the 14th annual National Children and Youth Conference, in Indianapolis.

Respectfully Submitted,

Loren Sperry
JSSP Conference Chairman
Two weeks ago we held our Department Scouting Conference here at the Sheraton City Center Hotel in Indianapolis, IN. We had 10 departments represented in the meeting room with another 4 who attended via teleconference.

Once we opened the meeting we quickly got down to business addressing old business. We updated Scouting Chairmen on the Community Organization Award (Square Knot) requirement changes that were discussed last year as well as the new allowance by Boys Scouts of American (BSA) for community organizations to apply a distinctive accoutrement to the award; signifying which community organization criteria the individual completed to receive it.

We then began a spirited discussion on recruiting opportunities across the country. We discussed the density of Scouting units (Troops, Packs, or Crew) across a state and challenged each department to determine why they are located where they are (i.e. what is the draw in that area?) as well as why are not in the rest of the state. This could be attributed to population density factors, or post/district involvement (or the lack thereof) in that area. Understanding these factors may assist in attracting leaders to the youth who need the mentorship that Scouting can provide.

We spoke about The American Legion posts subsuming the chartering responsibilities for Scouting units that are currently sponsored by local Latter Day Saints (LDS) wards (churches). This included the pros and cons of integrating them into existing Scouting units chartered by a post versus keeping them separate to maintain unit integrity, customs, and traditions. The discussion was equally split on this and no consensus was reached. It seems to be location or personal preference dependent.

We looked at the Family Scouting program and how many departments are taking the initiative to increase their population of Scouts by recruiting females into their ranks. This again led to discussions on the pros and cons of integrating them, to the extent possible, existing Scouting units chartered by a post versus keeping them completely separate by gender. Some expressed concerns about troops sharing committee leadership and the same Legion post, chartering more than one troop.

Additionally, we spoke about best practices to increase visibility of the BSA programs within a department. Department of Michigan is hosting a camporee for all of their troops this fall, showcasing all of the Legion Scouters across their state. Others found interesting ways to ensure that their media include a BSA program from their department. This was true whether it was highlighting an Eagle Scout service project, flag education, the training of color guards, or even BSA participation in a post dignified disposal ceremony. Each of these methods were found to increase visibility of the Legion within BSA units and BSA programs among Legionnaires.

After lunch on the first day Keith Walton, Community Relations Liaison with the Boy Scouts of America, provided an overview of what a potential financial reorganization in a non-profit looks like and what it could mean for abuse claims if the BSA were to do so in the future. He reiterated that no decision has been made, but made it clear that it would protect the future of the BSA as well as continue to provide assistance to abuse victims.
Discussing changes to the Eagle Scout of the Year application to ensure that it remains relevant to the Legion as well as to the Scouts. Recommendations include:

- Removal of the photo requirement.
- Allow all religious emblems earned from any BSA program (e.g. Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, or Venture) to satisfy the requirement and not solely Scouts BSA program award.
- Clarify the eligibility of the Scout as the location of their chartering organization versus the home address of the Scout. There are those living on state borders who are being discounted.
- Limit narratives by the number of words per document vice the number of pages. Creative Scouts are reducing the margins to nothing and using mini-font in an attempt over pack info.
- Indicate that school transcripts are required and not simply suggested.
- Remove that the Scout must be an active member of their religious institution as this term is too subjective. The award of the religious emblem alone accomplishes this intent.

We continued our day reviewing a national resolution that recommended changes to the Eagle Scout of the Year program. Resolution number 49, Changes To The American Legion Eagle Scout Of The Year, which came to us from the Department of Oregon. Those in attendance quickly came to the conclusion that the resolution should not be adopted by the national body as there is no way to objectively compare the pinnacle achievements for each three BSA programs listed; notably the ranks of Eagle Scout, Summit Award, and Quartermaster respectively. Additionally, the resolution would update the award to, “be extended to the female gender.” However, there is nothing in the current eligibility that limits the award to any one gender.

We concluded by having a small group discussion developing ideas for The American Legion support for the upcoming National Jamboree in 2021. While this is an ongoing discussion this year, we determined that the purpose of exhibiting at the jamboree should be to:

- Promote The American Legion family membership among attendees
- Promote the programs of The American Legion, such as Boy/Girls State/Nation, Oratorical, Baseball, Junior Shooting Sports Program, etc.
- Promote Legion awards that pertain to Scouting such as Eagle Scout of the Year and Community Organization Award (Square Knot).

We also found that there is a lack of understanding or even the existence of the Frank N. Belgrano award. While we discussed the requirements per the Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials Manual and then reminded them that there has been a serious decline of award application submissions in recent years. This is an area that we will work to correct in the next year.
REPORT TO THE AMERICANISM COMMISSION
FALL MEETING – October 14-15, 2019
Indianapolis, Indiana

Gary Stone (MO)
Chairman, American Legion Baseball Committee

Steve Cloud (IN)
Assistant Director, Americanism Division

59th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF DEPARTMENT BASEBALL CHAIRMEN

The 59th annual Conference of Department Baseball Chairmen was held September 27-29, 2019, at The American Legion National Headquarters and the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana as a program segment of the annual national Combined Americanism Conference. Gary Stone (MO), Chairman, American Legion Baseball Committee, served as the conference chairman. Forty-six departments were represented by either their baseball program chairperson or designee; there were sixty-nine attendees present.

An opening session was held Friday evening in the Panorama Ballroom, Sheraton City Centre Hotel. The invocation was given by baseball committee member, Rick Cash (AR). Americanism Commission Chairman, Richard Anderson (CT) and Americanism Division Director, Jill Druskis (NE) extended welcome and greetings to the conference attendees.

Presentations of the Ford C. Frick award were made by Americanism Chairman, Richard Anderson and Chairman Stone to The American Legion Department of North Dakota for having the national runner-up team, Fargo Post 2; and the Howard P. Savage award to The American Legion Department of Idaho for having the 2019 national champions, Idaho Falls Post 56.

Assistant Director, Jeremy Field provided a recap of the website and social media activity during the season and at the 2019 American Legion World Series. Field also highlighted the various departments that held successful special events that promoted the organization and the program. A few examples Field provided were that the Departments of New York and Virginia streamed their championship tournaments online, Department of Washington hosted wounded veterans and families at a ball game through an Operation Comfort Warrior grant and the Departments of Pennsylvania and Wisconsin held all-star games at MLB parks.

Chairman Stone opened Saturday morning’s session held in the National Executive Committee room at National Headquarters. A representative from K&K Insurance gave a presentation of the updates to the online insurance process for 2020 and covered handling of claims, requesting additional certificates and policy coverages.

Risk Management Manager Robert Crandall gave a presentation of the recent passing of Senate Bill 534, which amends two federal statutes: (1) the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 and (2) the Amateur Sports Act of 1978. This new bill in part requires abuse awareness education and training for adult volunteers who are in contact with amateur athletes, reporting procedures, and how it affects our baseball program.

Our current background check provider, Protect Youth Sports offers an abuse awareness training module that complies with the Senate Bill requirements and USA Baseball has also developed a baseball specific abuse awareness training module, both of these services are free. Risk Management and Baseball national staff are currently collaborating to make appropriate updates to the risk management policies manual for the baseball program which will include abuse awareness reporting procedures, education and training requirements, and background screening.
Program Manager Cloud provided a complete review of the team online registration submission, review and approval process, highlighting items of importance for our chairman to assist team managers with their applications and rosters.

Program Manager Cloud reviewed a draft of the 2021-2022 American Legion Baseball National Regional Tournament Request for Bid with the attendees. The discussion included deadline date to submit bids, encourage the host committees to engage with their city’s Convention & Visitors Bureau for assistance, and bids may be for one or two years.

The chairmen broke into caucuses by regions to discuss and recommendations on proposed 2020 baseball rule changes. The caucusing allowed the chairmen to offer their department’s position and/or recommendation and to provide a consensus of the region for the group.

Chairman Stone began formal discussions of the proposed rule changes for 2020 following the caucus discussions held by the department chairmen. The eight regional caucuses recommend modifying pitching rule 1.R.3. to read “A pitcher may throw any combination of pitches on the same day to reach the limit of 105 pitch provided he does not exceed two appearances.” Caucuses were divided on the proposed increase of the current 5,000 high school combination enrollment number. Two regions voted for an increase to 7,000 enrollment; two voted to increase to 6,000; and three voted against an increase. Additionally, the caucuses unanimously recommend allowing graduate players to transfers and modify Rule 6.E.2 to include in cases of a season ending injury with supporting medical doctor documents, a player may be replaced on National Form #1.

The Sunday morning session was held in Panorama “A”, Sheraton City Centre Hotel. Tom Drury (NM) conducted a ceremony in memory of those baseball chairmen and volunteers that have been transferred to Post Everlasting since our last conference.

Program Manager Cloud held a discussion regarding the junior program survey results that were presented at Spring Meetings. Cloud encouraged and challenged chairmen to be more active in promoting their junior program to introduce more 13 to 15 year old participants. Cloud also emphasized the importance of participation numbers to quantify sponsoring national junior regional tournaments.

Chairman Stone thanked the attendees for their attention and participation during the conference. The 60th annual conference of American Legion Baseball Chairmen will be held in conjunction with the 21st annual National Combined Americanism Conference on September 25–27, 2020, in Indianapolis.

Respectively Submitted,

Gary Stone, Chairman
Conference of Department Baseball Chairmen
REPORT TO THE AMERICANISM COMMISSION
FALL MEETING – October 15, 2019
Indianapolis, Indiana

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL COMMITTEE
Mark Avis (MA), Vice Chairman

The Baseball Committee met on Sunday, September 29, 2019 at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel in conjunction with the 59th Annual Conference of Department Baseball Chairmen. Those in attendance were: Gary Stone (MO), Chairman; Mark Avis (MA), Vice Chairman; Committee members John Hayes (IN); Tom Drury (NM); Mark Cauble (NC); Rick Cash (AR) and James Grenier (VA). Also in attendance were Steve Cloud (IN), Program Manager, Americanism Division; and Baseball Administrative Assistant, Tina Dunn.

Your committee held discussions regarding the current team housing policy at regionals for department champions. Current policy is if the department champion team is located within a 50-mile radius of the regional tournament site, that team will not be housed at the regional site. The committee recommends the change to the housing policy for those out-of-state department champion teams located within a 50-mile radius of the regional site the opportunity to be housed to host hotel if they elect to do so.

Your committee reviewed and recommend approval of the guidelines for the 2021-2022 American Legion Baseball National Regional Tournament Bid request. Bids must have the endorsement of the department commander and department baseball chairman and are due to national headquarters by February 1, 2020. Your committee also recommended that regional site inspections be conducted prior to their review and recommendations of tournament bids received.

Your committee also reviewed and approve adoption of the 2020 American Legion Baseball National Tournament Rules and Policies for 2020 post season tournament play. Minor changes for next season include clarification of tie-breaker for a three team tie coin flip, also team manager and/or head coach will be required to stay with team at host hotel in the team room block, and update original forms team managers are required to hand deliver at national tournament sites in include Forms #2, #76, and #77.

Your committee recommends the following changes to the 2020 American Legion Baseball Rule Book. Rule 1.R.3. Pitching Rule - to read “If a pitcher throws 45 or fewer pitches in game one of multiple games on the same day, he may return to pitch in game two, up to 105 pitches total for the day. If a pitcher were to throw more than 45 pitches in game one, he would be ineligible to pitch in game two” Rule 2.B.4. Graduated Students – to read “Players who graduate in 2019 shall play for the last American Legion team they played for or the team nearest their parents’ domicile.” Rule 3 & 4 Player Recruiting – Combined total enrollment of high schools cannot exceed 6,000 for 10th, 11th and 12th grades.
Rule 6.E. Players Per Team – add paragraph “4. In cases of season ending injury, a player may be replaced on National Form #1 prior to the end of regular season play with department baseball chairman approval and with proper supporting medical doctor’s note and documents.”

The next conference call for the committee is scheduled for November 6, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gary Stone, Chairman
American Legion Baseball Committee

Respectfully Submitted,
Gary Stone, Chairman
American Legion Baseball Committee
Report to the Americanism Commission of the
2019 Annual National Children & Youth Department Chairmen’s Conference
Herbert J. Petit, Jr. (LA), Chairman

Herbert J. Petit, Jr. (LA), conducted the 13th annual national Children & Youth Conference at the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana on September 21-22, 2019. Sixty-four members of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion and guests registered for the conference.

- Distinguished guests included:
  - Bill Oxford (NC), National Commander, The American Legion
  - Lisa Williamson (AK), National Children & Youth, American Legion Auxiliary
  - William Clancy (NY), National Children & Youth Chairman, Sons of The American Legion
  - Loren Sperry (WA), Chairman, Junior Shooting Sports Program Conference

- The attendees heard presentations and received instruction from:
  - Michelle Emery, Samsung Alumni Program Coordinator – Samsung Alumni program
  - Robert Crandall (IN), Compliance and Risk Management- Senate Bill 534
  - Stacy Cope, Youth Welfare Program Manager – Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) Training
  - Doug Chace (IN), Member Engagement Coordinator – Consolidated Post Reporting (CPR) Training
  - Lisa Williamson (AK), American Legion Auxiliary Children & Youth Chairman – American Legion Auxiliary program updates
  - William Clancy (NY), Sons of the American Legion Children & Youth Chairman – Sons of The American Legion program updates
  - United through Reading – The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Grant Recipient
  - St. Vincent’s Hospital Foundation – The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Grant Recipient

Children & Youth chairmen had a robust discussion about Resolution No. 5 (CO) from 2019 National Convention titled “School Safety”, with the department C&Y chairman from the Department of Colorado providing insight as to the resolution being about providing a presence, not providing security. After the discussion an informal poll of the department C&Y chairmen indicated about an even split between those who would wish to see the resolution approved and those who were undecided or wished to see it rejected.

Children and Youth Chairmen were given the opportunity to review the newly updated Children and Youth Program Report Awards will need to be updated to reflect that the awards are now downloadable on MyLegion by departments.

Chairman Petit concluded by urging the conference participants to continue their hard work in the year ahead on behalf of our nation’s children.

Chairman Petit also urged the conference participants to conduct their own training sessions back in their home department or detachment and to get the ball rolling on some of the programs that were presented this weekend. Most of the conference presentations can be viewed at: www.legion.org/youth/presentations.

The 14th Annual National Children & Youth Conference will be held in Indianapolis September 18-20, 2020.
The Committee on Children and Youth met at the Sheraton Hotel City Centre, Michigan Room, 21st Floor in Indianapolis, Indiana, on Monday, October 15, 2019. The meeting was convened at 10:15 a.m. and the roll was taken. A quorum was declared. Following opening remarks, the minutes of the spring meeting were approved.

Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Committee
Jim Willis, (OR) Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Committee member provided an update to the Committee on Children and Youth regarding the Youth Cadet Law Enforcement (YCLE) program. Mr. Willis was happy to announce that the Department of Washington will be starting their own Youth Cadet Law Enforcement program. The department is looking to hold their first class the summer of 2020 in conjunction with the Washington State Patrol. The Department of Washington and the Washington State Patrol will start working next week on the curriculum for the week long training period. The department has also started receiving support from outside companies which will contribute the cost of the program.

Mr. Willis then went on to say that Legionnaires need to find that “spark plug” person within their departments that will go out and find the support within the local law enforcement agencies so that each department can have a YCLE program. The hope is one day very soon we will be able to see a Youth Cadet Law Enforcement champion on stage at the National Convention along with all of the other youth champions.

This program provides first-hand experiences and insight into the operations of law enforcement agencies. Developing a respect for law enforcement in high school students, both male and female, representing all communities and backgrounds in the state, is the primary goal of the program. Once these young people have been selected to attend the program, the law enforcement community is challenged to present a program that will instill an understanding and respect for law enforcement professionals and their techniques.

American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation
The President of the American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation, Honorable Vincent Gaughan (IL) provided an update on the fund. For the 2018 year the Veterans and Children Foundation (VCF) was able to give $136,200 to The American Legion for the Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program and Department Service Officers (DSO) schools. TFA grants ensure that the basic needs, including shelter, utilities, food and clothing expenses, of minor children of eligible veterans are maintained when all other resources are exhausted. Department Service Officer training is offered twice per year to ensure our service officers are well-equipped to assist our comrades filing claims with the Veterans Administration.

Gaughan spoke about the recent name change. The Endowment Fund is now doing business as The American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation. The name change was done in part to both inform and spark a renewed energy and focus to the veterans and children of this great nation.

Two Sons of The American Legion (SAL) Squadrons were recognized at national convention with the annual presentation of the following VCF/SAL awards: The James A. Drain award, for the highest per capita contribution to the fund, was presented to the Detachment of Oregon. The Harry W. Colmery award, given to
the detachment with the highest overall donation total, was presented to the Detachment of New York. These awards are given out annually based on the donations received during the program year.

**American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, Inc.**

Created by The American Legion in 1954, the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, Inc. (CWF), is a separate 501(c)3 corporation. Its philanthropic priority is to support worthwhile youth-serving projects and to assist in the dissemination of information to the general public and specific target groups. From 1955 to date, the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, Inc., has awarded more than $17 million to organizations to assist children of this country.

Vice President of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, Peggy Moon, provided the Children and Youth Committee with an update. Now in its 65th year, CWF has awarded $811,282 to twenty-two non-profit organizations for the 2020 calendar year. These grants were determined during the annual meeting of the board of directors, held at the Sheraton Hotel City Centre in Indianapolis, Indiana, on Sunday, October 13, 2019.

**Annual Children and Youth Conference**

The thirteenth annual national Children and Youth Conference was held September 21-22, 2019, at the Sheraton Hotel City Centre in Indianapolis. This conference educated 64 Legion family representatives and guests from 40 departments on current children’s issues and the programs of the Committee on Children and Youth.

Conference participants learned practical implementation strategies for the programs presented and are now equipped with the resources for conducting children and youth programs and conferences within their own respective departments. As our children and youth programs work best due to a concerted effort from all members of the Legion family, please encourage the children and youth representatives from your American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion to consider joining us next year for what promises to be another informative weekend.

**Resolution No. 5 School Safety (CO)**

The Committee on Children and Youth voted to recommend to the Americanism Commission to reject this resolution. The committee felt that since this initiative had not yet been fully implemented or has demonstrated any sustained success at the department level, there would not be a resource available to other departments who wish to initiate.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Americanism Commission, the Committee on Children and Youth thanks you for your continued support. Working together, we will continue to make a difference in the lives of young people across this nation. As one of the four pillars of this great organization, the Committee on Children and Youth has been so tasked from our beginning, and we remain unwavering in our commitment to ensure a safe and healthy future for our nation’s greatest natural resource – our children and youth.

Respectfully submitted,

Herbert J. Petit, Jr., Chairman
Committee on Children and Youth
Friday, September 27, 2019

The 84th annual American Legion Boys State Directors Conference opened with a joint session with The American Legion Auxiliary Girls State Directors on Friday afternoon, September 27, in the Meridian Center Ballroom of the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Conference Chairman and Past National Commander Dale Barnett (GA). Robbie Roberts (GA) offered the Invocation and led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Respect was paid to those listed as POW’s and MIA’s.

Greetings and Remarks were extended by American Legion Executive Director, James Baca.

Samsung Scholarship on Mobility Solutions and Chief Advocate, Samsung Veterans Community was presented by John Hendrick, Samsung Chief of Staff. His discussion consisted of the origin of the Samsung American Legion Scholarship on July 26, 1995. The cumulative impact to date is 2,000 students with giving out more than 6 million to the students. His focus also included growing applications; and issued a challenge to those in attendance offering an unknown reward to The American Legion (TAL) Boys State or American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Girls State program with the highest growth in applicants for 2020.

Samsung Scholarship updates were presented by Scott Wynn, Director of Scholarships and Education, Boys Nation. Mr. Wynn recognized the top five departments from each program: TAL-BS (MI, SC, CA, AK&WI, VA) ALA-GS (WI, SC, MI, CA, AZ). Applications overall dropped by 2% from last year, however, completion rate increased by 3.5%. Discussion focused on recruiting, submission, and communication challenges. The joint session featured a panel presentation on various methods to combine TAL Boys State and ALA Girls State programs. Topics included sharing technology, joint recruiting, processes, contract costs, bulk ordering, staffing, participant feedback, and inclusion. This followed with a robust question and answer segment.

Panel Representing American Legion Auxiliary Girls State programs were:
- Kay Mickens (MO)
- Lisa Lawrence (KS)
- Andrea Kimball (MA)

Members representing The American Legion Boys State programs were:
- Ryan Hendrickson (MO)
- Shane Wilson (KS)

After a review of Saturday’s agenda and remarks, the opening session of the conference recessed at 7:15 pm.
Saturday, September 28, 2019

The business session of the Boys State Directors Conference reconvened at 8:30 am on Saturday, September 28. Conference Chairman Dale Barnett (GA) called the meeting to order in the Meridian Center and West Ballroom of the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel.

One hundred and fifty-five Boys State directors, chairmen and program staff were in attendance, representing 46 American Legion Boys State programs. Several departments were represented with five or more Boys State staff members.

The National Americanism Chairman Richard Anderson (CT) brought greetings and made introductions for himself and Rose Pescinski, Administrative Assistant to the Director, Americanism Division. Chairman Anderson gave an overview of the weekend’s activities and encouraged all in attendance to use the weekend to network and gather information to take back home to their respective American Legion Boys State programs. Chairman Richard Anderson remarks stressed the importance of the Boys State and Girls State programs and his belief in 100% Americanism for The American Legion.

Boys Nation and Boys State update was presented by Scott Wynn, Director American Legion Boys Nation in the Meridian Center room. Mr. Wynn presented the top five most improved programs by percentile (NH, WA, KY, AK, RI) as well as, the largest program of 2019 is South Carolina. The reported participant total across TAL Boys State was 17,212 a 11.05% decrease since 2018. Since the office’s records began in 2003 there has been an overall 30.26% loss in participation. Discussion focused on embracing technology, exploring new methods, researching audience, collecting data, community outreach, and product knowledge. Mr. Wynn also invited the participants to join Slack, an online team work space to share ideas, documents, and communications throughout the year. At this time there are 107 members.

Following this update was a presentation from Paul Williams (WI) over Creating a Relevant Brand for TAL Boys and ALA Girls State programs. This topic included research conducted by the Department of Wisconsin. Their team worked diligently gathering data to evaluate our performance and digital presence against other programs across the country.

Recruiting Tips presented by Kelly Meyer, Regional Admissions Representative, University of Evansville in the Meridian Center room. Mrs. Meyer spoke on what the Boys State recruitment process looks like to students and high school counselors. How college admissions representatives effectively recruit within the high schools and their communities, and how TAL Boys State and Boys Nation representatives do the same.

Community Outreach presented by Scott Wynn discussed how community involvement can increase brand awareness of the TAL Boys State programs. He also recommended several state and national associations to either join or present to, in order to add scholastic credibility to the programs assisting in school recruitment.

After lunch the conference was broken out into five separate sessions on various topics. This was done in two one hour blocks allowing participants to engage in multiple topics of interest. Topics were as follows:

Municipal simulations and the Free Press presented by Jared Harrison, Department of Oklahoma in West Circle room 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm and 2:10 pm – 3:10 pm. This session covered how Oklahoma Boys’ State is working with local municipal officials to create a realistic municipal simulation, where each city executive team is faced with a list of predefined tasks and also faces the challenges associated with handling random tasks that they receive throughout the week. After discussing the Oklahoma municipal simulation and answering questions, the speakers discussed the implementation of the Free Press into Oklahoma Boys’ State, including a newspaper and
nightly news broadcasts. They also discussed the unexpected spin off from the news broadcast of daily highlight videos and recruiting videos.

Advantages of Online Registrations was presented by Brandon Krause, Department of Indiana in the Meridian Center room 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm and 2:10 pm – 3:10 pm. Session looked behind-the-scenes at Indiana’s online application process. They discussed their reasoning behind the transition to an online application and what steps they took to put it into action. Additionally, they shared the results, identified challenges (and solutions), and what their plans were moving forward.

Boys State Internship Programs was presented by Dr. Peter Tropz, Department of Kentucky in the Circle Center room from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm and 2:10 pm – 3:10 pm. Kentucky Boys State developed an internship program for graduates of the KBS program to further develop their leadership skills. The discussion revolved around how the KBS Internship program not only helps KBS and Student Interns, but also helps to foster an environment of continued networking and interactions between mentors and interns, thus helping interns develop their skills, resumes and experiences.

Media and Marketing was presented by Josh Marshall, Visual Media Specialist, American Legion National Headquarters, Scott Wynn (IN) and Paul Williams (WI) in room A- 21st Floor 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm and 2:10 pm – 3:10 pm. This panel discussed various media topics including how to use media correctly. What shots are important. Length of videos, content, quality. Creating consistent content. Where to find your audience. Importance of creating engaging content. This session veered from presentation, to question and answer, after the first few minutes of the session. It became evident to the presenters that those interested in this material were coming in with no experience.

LGBTQIAA+ Students was presented by Dr. Gina Forrest, Multicultural Education, Indiana University in the B room 21st Floor 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm and 2:10 pm – 3:10 pm. Dr Forrest discussed the latest vocabulary terms in the community, as well as discuss the difference between sex and gender. She also fielded questions surrounding LGBTQIAA+ community.

After two hours of breakout program sessions, the participants were then divided into program sizes amongst those five rooms. A facilitator was named in each group and tasked with discussing their challenges, possible solutions, and what a successful program of their size looks like. This breakout came directly from 2018 CAC feedback.

Program Size 0-100, Circle West room.
Program Size: 101-300, Circle Center room.
Program Size 301-500, A-21st Floor.
Program Size: 501-800,Meridian Center room.
Program Size: 800+, Meridian Center room.

After meeting for one hour, each group’s facilitator or designee was put on a panel in the general session room. As panelists, their goal was to share what each group had done with their time, their takeaways, as well as, field questions from the participants.

Wrap Up and Door Prizes presented by Conference Chairman Dale Barnett (GA) and Scott Wynn (IN), Director, American Legion Boys Nation, National Headquarters in Meridian Center room. Door prize drawings were conducted. There were plenty of great prizes given away thanks to the overwhelming generosity of the departments.

The conference recessed at 6:00 pm.
The Sunday morning session was held in the Meridian Center, Lower Level in the Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre Hotel following religious services. The meeting of Boys State Directors was reconvened at 9:00 am by Conference Chairman Richard Anderson (CT).

The Sunday morning session opened with the annual Boys State Memorial Service conducted by Scott Wynn, Director American Legion National Headquarters Boys Nation for American Legion Boys State staff, delegate alumni, and program supporters who have passed away over the past year. Remembered were as follows:

### 2019 Boys State Directors Conference Memorial Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>OFFICE/COMMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>Bobby Reyes</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Joe Cenoz</td>
<td>Chief Counselor Emeritus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Stephen Leishman</td>
<td>Boys State Counselor 2008-2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>James “Pat” Schuback</td>
<td>Past Department Commander, DC Boys State Committeeman, Chairman DC Oratorical Contest</td>
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<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>Donald L. Tucker</td>
<td>1952 FL Boys State Governor, Speaker of the Florida House of Representative 1974-1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>Sean Stephenson</td>
<td>Boys State/Boys Nation Attendee, Motivational Speaker, Interned at the Whitehouse</td>
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<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>AC Byrd</td>
<td>Post 23, Boys State Chairman</td>
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<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Forrest Travirca</td>
<td>Past Judge Advocate</td>
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<tr>
<td>MN</td>
<td>Linda Ann Smith</td>
<td>MN Boys State Staff/Legionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>William Berry</td>
<td>MBS 1950, Boy Nation and Dean of MBS Legislative School</td>
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<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>Dorothy “Dottie” Bonnariat</td>
<td>Served Boys State Office for 25+ years</td>
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<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>William “Bill” Rakestraw</td>
<td>Trustee, National Executive Committee 2005-2009</td>
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<td>NY</td>
<td>John Konkol</td>
<td>Past counselor/NY Americanism Chairman</td>
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<tr>
<td>OH</td>
<td>James “Jim” Garrity</td>
<td>30 year member of the Buckeye Boys State Staff. Past President of the American Legion Buckeye Boys State Board of Trustees 2008-2009.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OH</td>
<td>Robert “Bob” LaBounty</td>
<td>30-year member of the Buckeye Boys State Staff. Trustee Emeritus</td>
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<tr>
<td>OH</td>
<td>John Ruddick</td>
<td>23 year member of the Buckeye Boys State staff. Trustee Emeritus</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Role</td>
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<tr>
<td>OH</td>
<td>Richard “Dick” Lentz</td>
<td>30 year member of the Buckeye Boys State staff. Trustee Emeritus</td>
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<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td>Richard Coburn</td>
<td>Band Director 1966-2016 (50 years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td>William Haynes</td>
<td>20 Year Program Director 1985-2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>Robert O’Keefe</td>
<td>Deputy Director, Chairman of VA Samsung Scholarship Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>WV</td>
<td>Benjamin Rodriguez</td>
<td>20 years staff Boys Nation</td>
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<td>WV</td>
<td>John E. Wines</td>
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<td>WV</td>
<td>Frederica “Elaine” Whitscarver Brown</td>
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<td>WV</td>
<td>Curt H. Tonkin</td>
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<td>WV</td>
<td>George J. Kucsis</td>
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<tr>
<td>WV</td>
<td>Mary Jo Faller Aires</td>
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<tr>
<td>WI</td>
<td>Bob Kaczmarek</td>
<td>Board of Directors-member served at Badger Boys State for 44 years</td>
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Following the memorial service Our Biases and our Perception was presented by Dr. Gina Forrest, Multicultural Education, Indiana University. This topic discussed various types of biases and how they affect our decision making.

Conference Wrap up. Good of the American Legion presented by Scott, Wynn Director, American Legion Boys Nation, American Legion Headquarters.

In his closing remarks, Conference Chairman Dale Barnett (GA) encouraged everyone to use what they’ve learned and share it with the rest of their staff. He concluded by thanking everyone for what they do for The American Legion and The American Legion Boys State program.

With no other business to come before the group, following a salute to the flag of our country, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.
Good Morning. Three weeks ago we held our Department Chaplains Conference here at this hotel. We had 30 Chaplains from The American Legion attend. By all accounts it went very well.

Unfortunately, due to a communication error Mary Anne Casadei, ALA National Chaplain, and due to a scheduling conflict Rodney J. Tolbert, SAL National Chaplain, could not attend, but we discussed the themes central to my tenure as National Chaplain of The American Legion. Those themes may be found at: https://www.legion.org/chaplains

Past National Chaplain and current Massachusetts Department Chaplain Father Phil G. Salois read into record his end of year report to the conference attendees, highlighting the accomplishments of his tenure and providing the current National Chaplain with a path to follow. A copy of which is included with this report.

Past National Chaplain and current Indiana Department Chaplain Norris Keirn provided an excellent lecture on the fundamentals of being a good chaplain on the Friday before the start of the conference. This optional briefing is the start of an ongoing New Chaplain’s Training class that will help provide initial development to new post chaplains as well as those new to being district or department chaplains who have duties coordinating the efforts of chaplains within their purview. A copy of this briefing is included with this report.

Christa Sutton, MSW LCSW, Department of Veterans Affairs provided an outstanding briefing on Suicide Prevention. She helped the chaplains in attendance see the how their role in helping those in need extends beyond simply providing an invocation to lifting up all the members within their department. A copy of this briefing is included with this report along with a toolkit provided by the VA.

From there we broke into two small groups to discuss how to implement the suicide prevention training that we just learned into actionable steps that we can each share within our departments, our districts, our posts, and to all veterans. Additionally, we discussed other areas that we as chaplains can be better utilized within our formations. These areas will be developed further into additional professional development training at future Department Chaplains Conference sessions.

Presentations from the department chaplain conference weekend will be made available for all Legion Family chaplains to download within the month from The American Legion website at www.Legion.org.