Americanism is an ideal of loyal patriotism, religious tolerance, righteous freedom, fearless courage, honest integrity, abiding faith in the commanding destiny of the United States, and a fathomless love for the principles that led our forefathers to found this country. During the past year, the Americanism Commission continued to offer a variety of programs and activities to give recognition to the ideal of human values, and the dignity and worth of the individual. These programs and activities embrace many aspects of an individual’s relationship to his or her community, state and nation.

Following is a summary of the commission’s activities.

Youth Activities

Programs for our nation’s youth continue to help thousands reach their potential by building physical, mental and moral alertness while cultivating strong character and fostering civic responsibility. Activities and events of the past year included the following:

- Rebecca Frazer of Morgantown, Ind., won the 2012 National High School Oratorical Contest and an $18,000 college scholarship. Charles Baines of Meridian, Idaho, placed second and received a $16,000 scholarship. John Donaldson IV of Eden Prairie, Minn., placed third and received a $14,000 scholarship.

- Jason Dreyzehner of Abingdon, Va., is the 2012 American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year and the recipient of a $10,000 scholarship. Runners-up and recipients of $2,500 scholarships are Jonathan Chapman of Germantown, Tenn.; Sean Chmielewski of Salem, Conn.; and Robert Kawecki of Charlotte, N.C.


- American Legion Boys State, one of the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for high school students, celebrated its 77th anniversary this summer. In 2011, more than 19,561 young men participated in the 49 Boys State programs.

- Michael Herbert of Arvada, Colo., and Benjamin Attia of Hockessin, Del., were elected president and vice president respectively of American Legion 2011 Boys Nation.
• Just over 500 American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion members have been awarded The American Legion and Scouting Square Knot Award since its inception in 2003, recognizing active involvement in The American Legion’s Scouting programs. Visit www.legion.org/publications or contact the Americanism and Children & Youth Division at (317) 630-1203 for more information about the award.

**American Legion Baseball (ALB)**

This year marks the 86th season for American Legion Baseball. The 2012 World Series was played Aug. 17-21 on Veterans Field at Keeter Stadium in Shelby, N.C., the new “home” for the World Series, and was hosted by Post 82.

• The American Legion Baseball team from Eden Prairie, Minn., sponsored by the Eden Prairie Baseball Association, won the 2011 American Legion Baseball World Series. As national champions, the team was invited to attend the 2011 Major League Baseball World Series, and was honored on the field prior to Game 2 in St. Louis as guests of The American Legion and Major League Baseball.

• Blake Schmit, playing for the Eden Prairie team, is the 2011 George W. Rulon Player of the Year. He attended the 2012 National Baseball Hall of Fame Game in Cooperstown, N.Y. Schmit is the 63rd American Legion Baseball player to be honored by the National Baseball Hall of Fame. Sixty members of the National Baseball Hall of Fame played American Legion Baseball.

**Immigration/Naturalization**

The American Legion is adamantly opposed to illegal immigration and amnesty, by any form or name, for individuals in this country illegally. The security, economy and social fabric of the United States are seriously threatened by individuals who are illegally in this country. The American Legion supports enforcement of existing immigration laws, strong border security, and reducing legal immigration to a number that can be easily assimilated into our society.

Through articles in *The American Legion Magazine* and the *Dispatch*, the Americanism Commission works to inform Legionnaires and others about the serious threats to U.S. national and economic security posed by illegal immigration. Additionally, the booklet *The American Legion “Policy on Immigration – A Strategy to Address Illegal Immigration in the United States”* is available; contact the Americanism and Children & Youth Division at (317) 630-1203 to order, or download from www.legion.org/publications.

Helping legal immigrants prepare for citizenship and assimilation into American society is in the best interest of our nation. Providing assistance and instruction to those immigrants following the legal path to citizenship has been a long-standing and proud tradition of The American Legion almost since its founding. Over the decades many posts, districts and departments throughout the country have hosted naturalization orientation sessions to help teach proficiency in the English language and lessons in U.S. history and civics. The Americanism Commission continues to actively encourage and promote these worthwhile efforts.
Counter-Subversive Activities Committee

Robert G. Bournival
Chairman
New Hampshire

The Counter-Subversive Activities Committee strongly emphasizes the importance of maintaining awareness in combating subversive activities, and continues to recommend that all means available be used to inform the membership of The American Legion and the general public about the positions, initiatives and actions of the organization as they relate to illegal immigration and to subversive activities that threaten to undermine American ideals. An aware, informed citizenry is one of the greatest deterrents to subversive influences within the United States.

National Committee on Education

The Rev. James T. Akers
Chairman
Kansas

Since our founding in 1919, The American Legion has continuously advocated greater program activity in the area of education. The American Legion believes that education is the cornerstone upon which the future of our nation is built. In keeping with this credo, activities during the past year have focused on improving and maintaining a stronger relationship between American Legion posts and schools in their communities.

Widely recognized throughout the country as the premier authority on issues concerning the flag of the United States, The American Legion has produced “For Which It Stands,” a DVD about the history, significance and meaning of our flag, and proper respect and care for it. “For Which It Stands” is designed primarily for students in upper elementary, middle or junior high schools. The DVD is available from Emblem Sales (Stock No. 755.400) for $9.95 plus shipping and handling.

The American Legion continues to promote the concept of bringing U.S. veterans into the nation’s classrooms to speak about their military experiences, receiving an enthusiastic response from both educators and veterans. To support these efforts, a video program titled “America’s Veterans” is available. Designed to increase student understanding of the role of veterans in a free society, the video is available from Emblem Sales (Stock No. 755.402) for $3.95 plus shipping and handling.

Other events during the past year:

- The National Education Association (NEA) is the recipient of the 2012 American Legion National Education Award in recognition of over 90 years’ dedication in advocating American Education Week (AEW) in schools across the nation, and for collaboration with The American Legion and other national co-sponsors of AEW.

- Guidance counselors at almost 32,000 public, private and parochial high schools received The American Legion’s scholarship and financial-aid resource guide, “Need A Lift?” on a CD-ROM. The CD-ROM is available from Emblem Sales for a single-copy cost of $1.95 plus shipping and handling. The guide is also available online at www.needalift.org, allowing students the capability to search and print entries at no cost.
The Samsung American Legion Scholarship Program continued to make awards, distributing more than $4.3 million to students since its inception in 1996.

The Americanism Commission continues to actively promote and solicit contributions to The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund, established by The American Legion to assist the children of U.S. military personnel who die while serving on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001. This year, 18 American Legion Legacy scholarships were awarded, totaling $49,950. The recipients are: Alexander and Samuel Bauer, Pipestone, Minn.; Christina Beeler, Sparta, Wis.; Daniel and Stephen Bertolino Jr., Murrieta, Calif.; Jessica Coleman, Yelm, Wash.; Taylor Curry, APO, AE (Italy); Tyler Hattamer, Gwinn, Mich.; Chantel Jeffries; Honolulu, Hawaii; Sean McVey, Oak Hill, W.Va.; Olivia Murphy-Sweet, Mechanicsburg, Pa.; Jessica Rogers, Hiawassee, Ga.; Cecelia Rovinski, Monmouth, Ill.; Timothy Stein, Colchester, Ill.; Britnee VanVyve, Yucaipa, Calif.; Rochelle Wert, Reed City, Mich.; and Eric and Eva Witt, Springfield, Ohio.

The fund balance of The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund as of Dec. 31, 2011, is $5.7 million. Contributions may be sent to The American Legacy Scholarship Fund, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

Summary

This year-end report reflects only a small part of the work carried out by The American Legion’s Americanism Commission. Posts, districts and departments expend much more time, effort and money as they accept the challenges of sponsoring and conducting Americanism activities that foster wide-ranging community service, youth development and educational advancement.