conducted, and continuously improve training and mentorship within our great organization.

All of us have experienced the benefits of continuous education and training in our military and professional lives. No military, business, government or veterans service organization can succeed without a strong and continuous training program to engage, mentor and strengthen future leaders.

Some of our strongest posts and departments have long understood and reaped the benefits of training and mentoring to develop skills, productivity, team spirit, pride and motivation. Through training, mentoring and engagement, they developed a series of effective and committed leaders.

So we must ask ourselves three questions: Are we teaching the next generation of American Legion members how to lead successful programs at the post level? Are we taking the time to engage the next generation of American Legion leaders, as past generations have mentored us? Are we providing the necessary resources for the post-9/11 generation...

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About this newsletter
This periodic and Legionnaire-driven newsletter, produced by the Internal Affairs Division, is designed to address best practices, ideas and training that every Legionnaire needs to know, from mentoring to training to setting goals for the future.

Highlighting new training ideas and resources becoming available in 2019 and beyond, it will also feature training initiatives of posts, districts, departments and individuals throughout The American Legion.

Are you a trainer? A writer? We need your submissions! Send your training ideas and articles to train@legion.org.
to advance the organization?

Your National Headquarters, with the advice and input of the departments, has already developed the first of the next generation of training tools based on The American Legion Education Institute and the online Basic Training course. It won’t stop there. All graduates of the Basic Training online course will gain access to a future series of courses under the acronym PRIME (Post, Roles, Improve, Member, Engagement). The five segments will provide members with tools and best practices to effectively lead, manage and operate a successful post.

Department and post mentors and instructors, such as department or national American Legion College alumni, will soon have access to complete lesson plans and presentation materials for post and district operations, finances, American Legion programs, and many other subjects. They will also gain access to online tools and videos to build member-facilitated Legion colleges that can be customized to the needs of the department, district or post. This “training bank” is designed as a free resource to leaders and instructors that will be made available to all who choose to take advantage.

I’ve written before that much of this year will be spent looking back at The American Legion’s legacy over the past 100 years, and learning from our own first century of unparalleled success. This is a unique opportunity to prepare for our next century by engaging our youngest and newest members through the unique new training tools under development by our departments and the national organization.

I can think of no better way to celebrate our legacy than to repeat proven methods of success and plan for our next 100 years.

Brett P. Reistad was elected national commander of The American Legion on Aug. 30, 2018, during the organization’s 100th National Convention in Minneapolis. A resident of Manassas, Va., Reistad is a life member and past commander of Post 270 in McLean, and past department commander of Virginia.

FIND IT ONLINE: myLegion.org is a FREE website designed to connect members of The American Legion to their post and department leadership.
The American Legion states, “The Officer’s Guide is intended as the principal handbook issued by National Headquarters to help American Legion officers fulfill their responsibilities.” This "principal handbook" is a very useful training tool full of important information for post officers and other post leaders.

A quality post handbook for our members can also be an important training tool to help new Legionnaires. It answers many questions they have, provides a good sense of how the post operates, and is a good reference tool with answers to questions that may come up from time to time.

The leaders of Post 66 agreed our new Legionnaires and many seasoned Legionnaires in our post would benefit from a simple, easy-to-follow member handbook. A Legionnaire friend recently suggested that our Post 66 handbook could easily be modified for use by other posts. So, we modified our Post 66 member handbook into a sample handbook, making it easier for others to adopt for use in their post or district.

The table of contents lists the main topics covered in the sample handbook. The Microsoft Word version of the sample handbook can easily be modified to fit the needs of your post.

As you read the handbook, much of the information should be familiar to seasoned and trained Legionnaires. Some of the information may be new or at least be presented in a new way.

The handbook begins with basic information about The American Legion and our post that includes a welcome message, when post meetings are held, the Legion uniform and information on language specific to our Legion and meeting protocols. This section ends with a statement about the value of a Legionnaire’s time as they serve our veterans and their families.

The “Our Post Family” section includes information about the Auxiliary, Sons and Legion Riders. If your post does not have these programs, you can easily eliminate the information from the handbook.

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The “Post Governance & Leadership” section of the handbook is the biggest section and contains information new Legionnaires want to know. It may also contain new information for some seasoned Legionnaires. A vision of success for a post is one such new idea. Most other topics should be familiar to post leaders from their previous training.

The Preamble to The American Legion Constitution and contact information for your post are also included. The sample handbook is provided as an example for your post or district to follow.

I believe in “mutual helpfulness.” If you have any questions or need help adapting the sample handbook, please contact me. My contact information is on the bottom of the last page of the sample handbook.

A Microsoft Word version of the handbook that can easily be adapted to your post or district can be downloaded below:

http://www.slolegion.org/sample/Sample_Post_Handbook.docx

Rick Pushies is a writer and webmaster for American Legion Post 66 in San Luis Obispo, Calif., and is a frequent contributor to The American Legion Training Newsletter.

- Honor those who served before
- Serve those here today
- Prepare for those who are yet to serve

MISSING AN EDITION?
Go to http://www.legion.org/training/newsletters and read or download any past edition you are missing!
National training now under development

ALEI now stands for “American Legion Education Institute,” the forthcoming package of advanced American Legion online coursework for Legion Family members and youth program participants. The expanded ALEI will soon offer online training, YouTube videos, LEAD training videos, lesson plans for department instructors, and assistance for department Legion Colleges.

American Legion Basic Training — only the first step. The former American Legion Extension Institute (ALEI) course was renamed to “Basic Training” to indicate it is the first step of training. The original ALEI was an American Legion correspondence course designed decades ago to give members a history and description of the organization. The new Basic Training course is better defined as an introductory training course within the American Legion Extension Institute (now the new ALEI) explaining our mission, history, programs and basic skills. It is the anchor course for future training under ALEI. Basic Training is available now and is free.

“P.R.I.M.E.” courses will follow Basic Training. Five categories of online courses enhance the initial basic course and provide future leaders with more advanced tools and knowledge to effectively manage and operate a post. Course development has already begun on these future modules.

POST
- Why were posts formed originally?  - How are posts organized?
- How are post operations managed?  - How can a post be successful?

ROLES
- Who are the leaders?  - What are their responsibilities?
- What are post committees?  - How can we run effective meetings?

IMPROVE
- Identify post strengths and weaknesses.  - Develop post missions and core values.
- Evaluate post activities as a reflection of values.  - Develop and follow through with a plan.

MEMBER
- Identifying and attracting new members.  - Promoting The American Legion.
- Retaining our members.  - Demonstrating our values through activities and programs.

ENGAGEMENT
- Sharing the vision with members and community.  - Powerful communication.
- Electronic media best practices.  - Job fairs and open houses.  - Legion Colleges.

PRIME courses will become available to members after successful completion of Basic Training. Students will be able to pick among any of the courses offered, and are credited for each course or for the entire series when completed. PRIME will be augmented with online training tutorials, YouTube videos, and lesson plans and presentations made available for peer- and instructor-led training, post, district and department training, and Legion Colleges.
Stay updated on American Legion training

Training in The American Legion has taken on a new focus and the national website reflects that renewed focus. Look for new content coming in 2019 at www.legion.org/training

National Headquarters welcomes the American Legion National College Class of 2018

October 28-November 2

Visit http://www.legion.org/college for more information about National American Legion College.

Interested in attending in 2019? Applications from departments will be available in the spring of 2019.

National Online Resources

Encourage your fellow Legionnaires to take BASIC TRAINING. Just send them to http://www.legion.org/alei

National Online Resources

Training Events Calendar

is now active! Check out

http://www.legion.org/training/events

for training events in your area.

Are you a department or district trainer and want your event on this calendar?

Add it today!

Don’t see the training you know should be there? Contact your department training team and ask them to add the training event to the national calendar.

Upcoming Issue Topics:

* Bob Sussan (VA) on post operations and management—best practices (a multi-part series)