

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

48th ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION

OF

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

August 23 - 25, 2019

Indiana Convention Center

Sagamore Ballroom, Sections 3 & 4, Level 2

Indianapolis, Indiana

Reported by:

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Captions Unlimited of Nevada

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...At 1:02 p.m., Friday, August 23, 2019, the 48th Annual National Convention of Sons of the American Legion was called to order, and the following proceedings were had:

Call to Order and Posting of the Colors

Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs (NY), National Commander

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Gentlemen, please rise. The Color Guard will now post the colors.

National Chaplain David Rippe will invoke the blessing of God. Please uncover.

Invocation

David Rippe (NE), National Chaplain

Heavenly Father, as we gather at the 48th National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion, we ask for Your guidance. Provide us with clear minds

and open hearts as discussions are held concerning the future of our organization.

We ask for comfort at the loss of Past National Commanders Chris Huntzinger and Charles Belles. We ask for prayers for National Vice Commander Steve Gower, Raymond Rollins of Georgia, Bruce Pierce of Maine, Keith Murdough of New Hampshire, Mrs. John Mejia.

We pray that You give encouragement, strength, and comfort to those whose lives have been touched through flooding and tornadoes. We especially ask for comfort to those families who have lost loved ones in the mass shootings across the United States.

Please give protection to the men and women who serve our country in the military. All this we ask in Your name. Amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: In memory of our departed comrades and the comrades of all veterans, let us stand in silence.

...The Convention observed a moment of silence.

POW/MIA Empty Chair Ceremony

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: To maintain a high awareness that a constant vigil should be maintained so that no POW or MIA will be left unaccounted for, the Sons of the American Legion designate a POW/MIA empty

chair at all meetings.

This is a physical symbol of the thousands of American POWs and MIAs that are still unaccounted for. As a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the remains of those who have died bravely in the defense of liberty and a full accounting of those still missing.

Let us rededicate ourselves for this vital endeavor. The POW/MIA flag is in place at this time.

Pledge of Allegiance

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I now call upon National Sergeant-At-Arms Greg Falco to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

...At this time, the delegation recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Gentlemen, you actually may cover and be seated, please.

We have a special presentation at this time. I'd like Bill Towns to come forward, from Florida -- Ohio, I'm sorry. Ohio. Sorry.

Just a little background on this. I saw this presentation given while I was on tour this year. It's certainly worth sharing with all before we do our own

Preamble to the Constitution. Bill, you have the mic.

BILL TOWNS: This is something that we had found about 30 years ago, and I come across it again. And I think before we do our Preamble today, I'd like to ask you to listen to these words; and when we do our preamble, say it with meaning.

BERNARD KESSLER: Proud possessor of a priceless heritage, we male descendants of veterans of the Great Wars associate ourselves together as Sons of the American Legion for the following purposes.

BILL TOWNS: This opening statement links the Sons of the American Legion members together across the nation.

BERNARD KESSLER: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America.

BILL TOWNS: Our American Constitution contains the fundamentals of our system of government. It is the one guarantee of liberty, freedom and democracy. Written by inspired men, it is destined to serve as long as our nation endures.

BERNARD KESSLER: To maintain law and order.

BILL TOWNS: Members of The American Legion have fought several wars and missions to uphold the laws and order among nations. It is as important that law and order be likewise supported in our domestic affairs.

BERNARD KESSLER: To foster and perpetuate a true spirit of Americanism.

BILL TOWNS: Americanism is an ideal. It stands for individual rights, fair play and justice. It stands for equal opportunities for all.

BERNARD KESSLER: To preserve the memories of our former members in the association of our members and our forefathers in the Great Wars.

BILL TOWNS: Service under arms is a great experience, but it is more than battles in muddy fields at sea and in the air. It means recalling the comradeship, endurance and bravery of friends from all levels of society, building bonds, sustaining them in battle. It means that when some gave their all, we should be more willing to give much help to keep our nation worthy of their sacrifices.

BERNARD KESSLER: To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation.

BILL TOWNS: Always interested in building a better nation, the founding fathers believed then and the Legion family believes now that such building must start with individuals.

This means initiating and supporting community projects and schools. It means that we must take

responsibility for all of those things that will make a better community, state and nation.

BERNARD KESSLER: To combat the autocracy of both the classes and masses.

BILL TOWNS: Composed of a cross-section of American citizenship, The American Legion family represents all political convictions, all races and creeds. That is why no organization is better suited to stand as a protector when the class or mass threatens.

BERNARD KESSLER: To make right the master of might.

BILL TOWNS: The ideal situation is right backed by might, but we have witnessed the use of might by the powerful to suppress the rights of smaller nations. At home and abroad we must stand with the right -- the right to protect the weak and preserve the liberties as guaranteed by our Constitution.

BERNARD KESSLER: To promote peace and goodwill on earth.

BILL TOWNS: The Legion family maintains our peace efforts are best served by maintaining a strong national defense. As a strong man well armed keepeth the peace, so a moral and upright nation with no lust for the territories of other peoples must remain well armed to protect its own land and deter aggression.

BERNARD KESSLER: To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy.

BILL TOWNS: Our nation grows strong by its adherence to these principles. We have tried to live by the Golden Rule and the mark of justice. We nourish the ideals of democracy and help establish democracies.

BERNARD KESSLER: To consecrate and sanctify our friendship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

BILL TOWNS: This is a dominant characteristic of The American Legion family, supporting charities and volunteering.

BERNARD KESSLER: To adopt in letter and spirit all of the great principles for which The American Legion stands and to assist in carrying on for God and country.

BILL TOWNS: This statement declares that the Legion family recognizes the influence of an almighty God in all worthwhile endeavors and links the allegiance of The American Legion family to both God and country.

The words of this -- excuse me. The words of this preamble are the benediction and a fitting reason for the purpose of our existence. They reach the highest exemplification of our vast and unselfish programs of rehabilitation and the welfare of children.

This is the meaning of our Preamble. It's our foundation. It has never cracked in ten decades.

It is from the foundation of The American Legion family will draw their strength and guidance in the next century as we continue to serve for God and country.

Thank you for your time.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Bill Towns and Bernie Kessler from the Detachment of Ohio, thank you very much, gentlemen.

Recitation of the Preamble to the Constitution of Sons of the American Legion

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Now, gentlemen, if you would please stand, and we will call upon National Vice Commander Mike Cotten to lead us in the Preamble to our Constitution.

...At this time, the delegation recited the Preamble to the Constitution of Sons of the American Legion.

Blue Star Banner Ceremony

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Serving as a constant reminder that servicemen and women on a daily basis are putting themselves at risk to ensure our freedoms, the

Sons of the American Legion display a corporate Blue Star Service Banner at all of our meetings to serve as a symbol of support for our military personnel serving this great country.

Let us never forget that every day these individuals are protecting our liberties. The Blue Star Service Banner is in place.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: National Adjutant Anthony Wright will now read the call to the National Convention.

Call to the National Convention

Anthony W. Wright (PA), National Adjutant

Pursuant to Article V, Section 2 of the National Constitution of the Sons of the American Legion, the National Commander of the Sons of the American Legion hereby calls the 48th National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion to be held August 23rd through August 25th, 2019, in the Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Purpose: National Convention sessions, in accordance with the Uniform Code of Procedure for National Conventions, will be convened at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, August 23rd, 2019.

The 48th Annual National Convention shall be

convened for the following purposes:

- 1.) To complete all business of the Sons of the American Legion for the fiscal year 2018-2019;
- 2.) To vote on all resolutions which are properly presented to the National Convention;
- 3.) To consider and make -- and/or make amendments to the National Constitution and/or bylaws of the Sons of the American Legion;
- 4.) To elect a National Vice Commander and five National Vice Commanders, in that sequence, for the ensuing year, 2019-'20. Elections shall take place on Sunday, August 25th, 2019.

Representation: Representation in the National Convention shall be allocated in accordance with the provisions of Article V of the National Constitution of the Sons of the American Legion, which states:

Article V, Section 3: In the National Convention, each Detachment shall be entitled to three delegates and one additional for each 500 members or major fraction thereof, whose members' dues who have been received by the National Treasurer of the American Legion 30 days prior to the meeting of said National Convention and whose registration fees, as fixed by the National Executive Committee, for its total authorized delegate strength have been paid and to one alternate

for each delegate.

Article V, Section 4: Each duly registered delegate shall be entitled to one vote. The vote of any registered delegate absent and/or not present by an alternate shall be cast by the majority of the registered delegates present from his detachments. Alternates for registered guests shall have all the privileges of registered delegates except for that of voting. A registered delegate is one who has received his credentials and has paid the registration fees as required -- that have been required.

In addition to the above, all Past National Commanders of the Sons of the American Legion, the National Commander, the National Vice Commanders and the National Chaplain of the Sons of the American Legion shall be delegates to the National Convention with vote to be exercised with our respective Detachments, with the exception vote of the National Commander whose vote shall be exercised only in his capacity as chairman of the National Convention.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Are you ready to call the roll? National Adjutant Anthony Wright will now call the roll.

Roll Call

*...National Adjutant Wright called the roll of
the Convention as follows:*

NATIONAL OFFICERS

National Commander

Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs, New York

National Vice Commanders

East: Michael S. Cotten, Delaware

South: Steve A. Gower, Sr., Virginia - EXCUSED

Central: Matthew T. Christie, Illinois

Midwest: Peter J. Sierminski, Colorado

West: Edward M. Cleary, Arizona

National Adjutant

Anthony W. Wright, Pennsylvania

National Assistant Adjutants

Harold E. Thompson, Jr., Nebraska (Emeritus)

James E. "Ed" Sheubrooks, Florida

Robert J. Avery, New York

David M. Ridenour, Indiana

Scott A. Williams, Virginia

Scott J. Thornton, Ohio

Jeffrey E. Hicks, New Jersey

National Chaplain

David L. Rippe, Nebraska

National Historian

Timothy S. Van Patten, II, New York

National Judge Advocate

Joseph A. Paviglianti, New York

National Sergeant-At-Arms

Gregory A. Falco, New York

National Assistant Sergeants-At-Arms

Brian K. Waters, Pennsylvania
 Lyle G. Larson, Kansas - EXCUSED
 Raymond P. Giehll, III, Indiana - EXCUSED
 Augustine R. Diaz, Alaska - EXCUSED
 Charles Curtis, California

National Commander's Aide
 Gary W. Denmon, New York

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDERS

Danny J. Smith, Colorado
 Michael K. Seaton, California
 Robert A. McBride, Ohio
 J.R. Stillwell, Illinois
 John J. Smolinsky, Massachusetts - Not Present
 Robert H. Faust, California - Excused
 James R. Hartman, Maryland
 Gregory D. Reis, Illinois - Not Present
 Grant Jamieson, Michigan - Not Present
 Charles E. Gannon, Maryland
 John M. Sherrard, California - Not Present
 David P. Stephens, Indiana
 Christopher R. Cerullo, New York
 Frederick L. Hartline, Sr., Ohio - Excused
 Douglas P. Bible, Minnesota
 Richard L. League, Maryland - Not Present
 David R. Faust, Wisconsin
 Robert A. Worrel, Indiana - Not Present
 Eugene L. Sacco, California
 Roland D. Matteson, Arizona
 Joseph M. Mayne, Minnesota
 John T. Dietz, Kentucky - Excused
 Jack E. Jordan, Texas - Not Present
 William E. Matoska, Maryland
 Byron J. Robichaux, Louisiana
 Richard L. Cook, Oklahoma
 Kevin N. Winkelmann, Texas - Not Present
 Clifford A. Smith, Massachusetts
 Steven C. Laws, North Carolina
 Neal C. Warnken, Kansas
 Michael J. Deacon, Iowa
 William L. Sparwasser, Maryland - Not Present
 Earl R. Ruttkofsky, Michigan
 Raymond P. Giehll, Jr., Indiana

Thomas E. Cisna, Illinois
 Mark E. Arneson, Georgia
 David L. Dew, Texas - Not Present
 James K. Roberts, III, Florida - Excused
 Joseph W. Gladden, Maryland
 Michael W. Moss, Colorado
 Kevin L. Collier, Alaska
 Jeffrey C. Frain, Arizona - Excused
 Brian J. O'Hearne, Massachusetts - Not Present

ROLL CALL OF DETACHMENTS

Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado,
 Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, France, Georgia, Idaho,
 Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana,
 Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota,
 Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New
 Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North
 Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon,
 Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah,
 Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin,
 Wyoming

Commander, that completes roll call. You have a
 quorum.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I now declare this
 National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion
 convened.

Opening Remarks

Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs (NY), National Commander

This is the appropriate time for remarks by the
 Commander. I'm going to defer those remarks to later on
 in the convention. But we've had a fabulous year.
 You'll hear about it through the numbers.

And that is all due to all of you folks out there, all the Detachment members, the team we put together this year as committee and commission chairman. And I just want to give them all another thanks, which they'll have some thanks along the way, I'm sure, from all you folks. But it has been a good year.

At this time, I'd like to call Tom Deal up for the first report of the National Convention, the Legislative Rules Committee.

**First Report of the Legislative and Rules Convention
Committee**

**National Convention Legislative and Rules Committee
Chairman Thomas G. Deal (MD)**

Good afternoon. The Legislative and Rules Committee met at 11:30 today for the purpose of reviewing the standing rules of the convention.

As a delegate of this 48th National Convention, I make a motion that the standing rules of the convention be accepted as published.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I have a motion on the floor to accept the standing rules of the convention as published. Is there a second?

JAY COOK: Jay Cook, delegation chairman from Oklahoma, seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. There's a motion to second. Any discussion on the motion?

It's difficult to see up here guys, so if you do have something, please speak up at the microphone.

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried.

Convention Dedication

Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs (NY), National Commander

The Sons of the American Legion have been saddened this year by the passing of two of our Past National Commanders, Charles R. Belles and Christopher J. Huntzinger. They both served the organization with distinction and honor.

I will now entertain a motion to dedicate the 48th National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion in honor of Past National Commanders Charles R. Belles and Christopher J. Huntzinger.

BRADLEY DUDLEY: Commander, Detachment Commander of Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania makes a motion to dedicate this 48th National Convention to the Sons of the American Legion in honor of Past National Commanders Charles R. Belles and Christopher J. Huntzinger.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you.

DELEGATE FROM VIRGINIA: Virginia seconds that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, Virginia. While we're doing that, our chaplain will be lighting candles for both of those gentlemen.

I have a motion and a second on the floor. Any discussion on the motion? Hearing none, all those in favor please signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you, gentlemen.

Distinguished Guests badges will be placed on the table by their pictures and will remain there throughout the convention to honor their memory.

At this time, I now call past -- at this time I'm going to call Past National Legion Commander David Rehbein for some words.

(Applause)

Distinguished Guest PNC David Rehbein (IA)

American Legion 100th Anniversary Committee Chairman

Commander Gibbs, Adjutant Wright, head table dignitaries, delegates, guests, and one particular PNC, Jeff Frain. I mention him because PNC Frain serves as a member of The American Legion's 100th anniversary

committee. He assumed that role when Anthony Wright became your national adjutant. Anthony had been serving on our committee. Jeff took that spot. We thank you for both of them.

I want to thank you for the invitation to appear before you one more time this year. This will be my last appearance in the office of chairman of the 100th anniversary committee because we are in the middle of that celebration right now. And that committee will go out of business this fall.

In prior years I have talked to you about the plans that we had to celebrate the centennial of The American Legion. Those plans are now in operation.

Those plans have resulted in many, many, many events around the country -- some at the department level, some at the district level, more at the POST and therefore the Squadron level.

The events I have visited this year, I want you all to know that at every one of those there was a significant commitment of Sons of the American Legion members in making that event successful.

Those events included the GI Bill exhibit, being exhibited at Patriotic Hall in Los Angeles. And then a few months later being at a National Guard training base at the Gold Star Museum at Camp Dodge in Iowa.

One of the highlights of the celebration came at Cooperstown, New York, at the Baseball Hall of Fame when the Department of New York organized a centennial event celebrating The American Legion's role in baseball over all these years. We had one of the individuals, Lee Smith, that was inducted into the Hall of Fame there with us. That's another event I saw your members be a part of and play a role.

Small towns -- Hartley, Iowa, a place none of you have ever heard of except maybe a few of the Iowans, dedicated their weekend festival to the centennial of The American Legion. They had the moving wall. They had events all weekend. Their squadron played a role.

And so when I say every event, every event that I was personally at, every event that I saw records of, I think every event where there was a squadron in the vicinity or a detachment available to help, your members helped with that centennial.

You can feel ownership. Even though the Sons of the American Legion are not yet 100 years old, you can feel ownership in the centennial of The American Legion.

I'm going to finish with one last event that we're going to really finalize here at our National Convention. Highway 281 that runs down through the center of the country is The American Legion Memorial

Highway. When it was dedicated in 1960, two-car caravans of Legionnaires -- one started from the Canadian border, one from the Mexican border -- and they met in Great Bend, Kansas. They drove that highway.

A month ago, two teams of Legion Riders led by National Vice Commander Steve Sweet and Jim Wallace started again from the Canadian border and the Mexican border and rode that highway, stopping at posts along the way. We will be presenting a banner to our National Commander on that ride. I know there were S.A.L. members among those riders, because I don't think there is a Rider's chapter anywhere in this country that doesn't contain your members.

I'm going to conclude here with a moment of personal privilege. None of this would have happened without our National Staff.

And with the passage of the LEGION Act, many of you know Jeff Stoffer. Jeff's the editor of the magazine. Jeff was the heart and soul behind the staff effort for the centennial of The American Legion.

With the passage of the LEGION Act, Jeff Stoffer is now eligible to be a member of the Sons of the American Legion and you will not find a prouder member anywhere in your ranks. He doesn't wear a hat yet because -- yes, please.

(Applause)

He doesn't wear a hat yet simply because Emblem Sales has not got it delivered. But when you see Jeff in the hall, congratulate him. And you're going to get a great big smile back. I know you are.

Without him, without his staff, I don't think we would have had anywhere near the celebration of the centennial that we've had.

I want to thank you for all that your members have done to make the centennial a memorable event. If you are still here Tuesday morning, we are going to have some special things going on at the opening of The American Legion Convention.

We did that last year in Minneapolis. We're going to do it again in Indianapolis. So if you're still here Tuesday morning, please come be in that hall when that happens.

It's been my privilege to finish as chairman of this committee. Bob Spanogle started it. He had to step aside. I was privileged to be appointed in his place. Thank you to Anthony Wright, to Jeff Frain for being part of that committee. But thank you to every member of the Sons of the American Legion that stepped forward and helped make this centennial what it is. And it's been a great centennial event. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, Past National Commander Dave Rehbein. I'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention.

(Applause)

We also have American Legion Internal Affairs Chairman Robert Newman with us. I'd like to invite Robert Newman up to our podium to share a few words as well.

We also have our Subcommittee Chairman, George West, with us, too. We'll hear from both gentlemen in just a second. Go ahead.

Distinguished Guest Robert Newman (IN)

American Legion Internal Affairs Commission Chairman

Good afternoon, delegates, guests, everybody. How are you doing this afternoon?

I'm not going to talk too long today because I know you've got a lot of business, and, besides, I'm blind anyways.

Your dedication shows. Last year's Squadrons collectively donated more than \$7,239,127 and volunteered over 2,050,021 hours supporting the various Legion programs and VAs around the country.

It is you, the Sons, that continue to set an

example on how veterans' support of our organization should be modeled. You lead the way with pride, honor and integrity. In the coming year, the Sons will be making strides, taking fiscal ownership of the Sons program.

Resolutions will be presented in this convention that will initiate becoming a self-sustaining, self-supporting organization. These adjustments will enable more online capabilities through mySAL. Adjutants will be able to do their online membership transmittals, and members will be able to go online for renewals. Those capabilities will be rolled out to keep Detachments for testing and evaluation.

The Sons of The American Legion continue to impress and raise the bar with your hard work and dedication to our country and communities. Your veterans' fathers, grandfathers as well as veteran and Legionnaires are proud of you. Your 35-year membership growth is a testament to your dedication and commitment.

With the passing of the LEGION Act, the Sons can now grow even more the honor of the fathers and grandfathers whose sacrifices will never be forgotten.

This will also allow Sons membership who have previously not been able to join The American Legion, may now join -- like me, become dual members of the

Legion family. By taking out the eligibility gaps, we can now honestly say no veteran will be left behind.

The sons of those veterans can now join the ranks with us. In the coming months the feedback and analysis from those Detachments will bring the same capabilities to all S.A.L. Squadrons, which is long overdue.

Have a great convention and continue to be an example for what a veteran support organization should be.

At this time, just because I talked about dual membership, I am a proud member of Detachment of Indiana, Squadron 97 out of Auburn, Indiana.

(Applause)

Thank you very much.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. And we appreciate your remarks. I'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention.

(Applause)

At this time, I'd like to bring our subcommittee chairperson chairman, George West, up for a few remarks.

Distinguished Guest George West (NH)

American Legion S.A.L. Subcommittee Chairman

Commander Gibbs, officers on the platform, Past National Commanders, fellow delegates, all, I wish you all a good afternoon.

You've just heard the Legion Internal Affairs chairman, Bob Newman, share the outstanding accomplishments that you've all made since last we met in Minneapolis. You can and should be very, very proud of the successes that you have had at your Squadrons and your Detachments.

Every year your numbers increase, and then they increase again and again. You meet the challenges and you surpass the goals. Absolutely outstanding. Please give yourselves a pat on the back. You deserve it.

(Applause)

Commander "Doc" Gibbs, what a proud day for the Detachment of New York when you were elected at the 47th S.A.L. National Convention in Minneapolis. Upon reviewing your resumé at the time, there was no doubt that you were the man for the job. What a dedicated candidate to advance to this high office.

You have certainly proved your capabilities throughout this entire term of office. I feel blessed to have had the privilege of serving as chairman of The American Legion Internal Affairs S.A.L. Subcommittee with you at the helm, offering your thoughts and ideas

for the good of the Sons organization.

You certainly have lived and led the way for us all with your motto of "Honoring the Past, Continuing the Legacy."

When lead candidate Clint Bolt made remarks at our department convention, he made the statement that conventions are a good time to pat ourselves on the back for our accomplishments.

(Applause)

Having heard him say that, I wonder, Commander, if you would please join me at the podium for a moment.

Fellow delegates, I'm going to need your help with this a little bit. I'm going to ask the Commander to join me here at my side. We know you are very talented, Commander, however there's one motion that is really awkward to do.

So, now I'm asking my fellow delegates, my fellow Sons, to join me as we all pat you on the back with a loud thank you, Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you.

(Applause)

GEORGE WEST: Thank you, sir. Super.

Thanks for your help. I knew you would join me.

Commander Gibbs, thank you for your caring and sharing with your tremendous leadership as National

Commander for our great Sons of the Legion organization.
Good job, sir, well done. Thank you so much.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We'd like to make you
a guest, too. George, we'd like to make you a
Distinguished Guest of our convention as well. Thank
you, sir.

GEORGE WEST: Thank you, Commander. It's a great
honor. Commander Gibbs made a long drive to come to our
Detachment convention this summer. After being in a
far-away place and a tired man, he came just to come be
with us.

And I neglected to give him one of our 100-year
coins from our Department and Detachment. So I'm going
to right that wrong right now. Thank you so much.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you for your
leadership.

GEORGE WEST: Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: At this time, I'd like
to call Past National Commander Michael Seaton to escort
all the Past National Commanders up to the podium for a
presentation.

Making All PNCs Distinguished Guests

Past National Commander Michael K. Seaton (CA)

Thank you, Commander.

Commander, delegates and guests, I have to start this with, what's up, Doc? Couldn't pass that up.

Your year is coming to a close. In the next three days, we'll take care of business, celebrate successes and you'll share with us highlights of your year as National Commander.

As has been our tradition, the Past National Commanders join me in making you a Distinguished Guest to the 48th National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: At this time, I call National Convention Committee Chairman Greg Spaulding to the podium.

Address of Welcome**National Convention Committee Chairman****Greg Spaulding (IN)**

Good afternoon. Commander Gibbs, National Officers, delegates and guests, the Detachment of Indiana welcomes you to Indianapolis for the 48th National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion. I'm not going to be up here very long because we have a

lot of business to conduct this afternoon.

If you've bought tickets for the dinner tonight at Post 64 and have not picked them up, see me out in the aisle after this session is over.

Post 64 will be running a shuttle. It will be running continuously. It will be making pick-ups out here in front of the Westin. This a casual event. It's going to be like a picnic setting. Just come on out and enjoy.

If you're also interested, we have convention pins. They'll be on sale also out in the a little hall.

On Saturday, we're doing something different this year. There will be a breakout session for our junior members. This was set up by Don Hall and his team. And, Don, thank you very much for taking on this project.

If you like sports, Saturday evening there's baseball and football. Indianapolis will be playing Louisville. There was a discount through The American Legion, but that has passed, but there's still tickets available.

And if you're interested, the Colts are in town and they'll be playing the Bears. Both of these games start at 7:00 o'clock.

Sunday, after the close of our convention, we

have The American Legion parade. I hope that you all can attend either by marching in the parade or being a spectator along the route, giving us your support.

When the parade ends, it will be at National Headquarters, and they have a party planned there at National Headquarters.

There will be food and drinks available, for a nominal service charge, of course. Indianapolis is second only to Washington D.C. in honoring our veterans with war memorials. Several of these memorials are within walking distance of the hotel. So while you're out and about you may want to stop in, visit one of the fine restaurants here in Indy and enjoy one of the meals.

There's also several museums to attend, if you have the time. I know we're really booked for time. So it makes it tough. But the Indianapolis Zoo and the Children's Museum are both nationally recognized.

Gentlemen, that's all I have. We hope that you enjoy your stay here in Indy, and let's have a great convention.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Greg, thank you for your work. We'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention -- of your convention. Thank you.

(Applause)

At this time we'll call on Mark Nave for a report of the Child Welfare Foundation.

**Report of the National Child Welfare Foundation
Committee**

**National Child Welfare Foundation Committee Chairman
Mark E. Nave (PA)**

Good afternoon, Legion family and Distinguished Guests. Wow, what a year this has been.

Last year at this time, Commander Gibbs offered a challenge for us to raise \$1 per member for CWF. \$427,000 later we've accomplished that goal.

(Applause)

That goal is because of you. This goal is because of the Blue Caps, those back home, those of the individual Squadrons -- the leadership at those Squadrons, at those Posts, at the District, at the Detachment and at the national level.

So at this time, I first want to give thanks to Commander Gibbs for setting the bar high. Because of setting that bar high we had a goal to reach and we were able to attain.

I want to secondly thank our National Vice Commanders back here for your involvement on our

conference calls, at the meetings at the NECs, and for sharing any information that we had to get out to the membership through emails. I thank you for your support.

(Applause)

I also want to thank the members of the committee. Those that are here, please stand -- George Fleming, Sandy Lipman, Jeff Evans and Lyle Chapman. Lyle Chapman could not be here, but we thank him.

Gentlemen, I thank you for your expertise, your information, your willingness to share, your hard work on the conference calls with the committee. I thank you. It has been an honor to serve with you this year. Thank you, gentlemen.

(Applause)

Yes, this was a great year. But fundraising doesn't stop. And here we are already in the 2019-2020 year, and we've already raised \$20,000 already. And we're looking to have another great successful year.

One of the ways you can help support us in this successful year is by stopping at the Child Welfare Foundation booth in the Exhibit Hall. We have a couple of things we have out there for sale this year.

One is a CWF commemorative coin for our 65th anniversary, which is going for \$10. In addition, this

year, we have a Sons apron, which I'll show right here. This is going for \$20.

This was the idea of our committeeman Sandy Lipman, who brought it up to our attention, and we were able to make it happen this year. So if you find time please stop by the CWF booth and also pick up the clear piggy banks. Take them home. Fill them up. Turn them in. For any dollar that is brought in, it will definitely help CWF.

And if anybody asks you: What does the Sons of the American Legion do? One of the things you can tell them is Child Welfare Foundation, how, in 31 years, we've raised over \$8.2 million for programs that help the youth of our country.

(Applause)

Give yourselves a hand.

(Applause)

And with this, I will move on now to presentations of the National CWF Awards.

Presentation of the National CWF Awards

National Child Welfare Foundation Committee Chairman

Mark E. Nave (PA)

First up, for the highest monetary donations for

a Detachment by region.

From the East, the Detachment of New York,
\$56,000.20.

(Applause)

Congratulations, New York. Could somebody from
the Detachment come up?

From the West, the Detachment of Arizona,
\$48,167.10.

(Applause)

From the Midwest, Colorado, \$46,195.88.

(Applause)

From the Central, the Detachment of Ohio,
\$31,718.03.

(Applause)

And from the South, Florida, \$15,635.

(Applause)

Next up will be the highest per capita donation
by region.

For the Western Region, the Philippines, \$16.33
per member.

(Applause)

From the Midwest, Colorado, \$14.24 per member.

(Applause)

From the South, Mississippi, \$5.33 -- \$3.53 per
member. Excuse me.

(Applause)

For the East, the Detachment of Vermont, \$2.47 per member.

(Applause)

And from the Central, the Detachment of Ohio, \$1.04 per member.

(Applause)

Next up is Detachments that had \$2 per capita. Okay, we're going to hold off.

(Applause)

Congratulations.

Now, moving on to \$2 per capita for Detachments. They are the Detachments of: Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Mississippi, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, Philippines, Vermont, Virginia, and Wyoming.

(Applause)

Would the delegates come up to the stage?

Now for Detachments that achieved \$1 per capita. Detachments of: Alabama, California, Kansas, Louisiana, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas and West Virginia.

Could someone please come up.

(Applause)

As a delegate to this 48th National Convention, I make a motion that the National Child Welfare Foundation Committee report be accepted.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion on the floor. Do we have a second?

DELEGATE FROM PENNSYLVANIA: Pennsylvania seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a second. Any discussion on the motion?

All those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you.

Mark, there's only two people that I've depended on -- well, a lot of people I've depended on -- but two main people that were focused on my goals, and that's membership and donations to CWF. So I'd like to give Mark a little plaque just from me to say thank you for a record donation year. We hit 8 million and beyond. Thank you, sir.

(Applause)

At this time it gives me great pleasure to ask you to stand and welcome our National American Legion Commander, Brett Reistad.

(Applause)

Distinguished Guest Brett Reistad (VA)
American Legion National Commander

Good afternoon.

First, I'd like to thank you for the warm welcome and for the fanfare. I love that piece of music. I'm going to make this short. I know you all, I'm sure, have quite a lot of business to conduct.

I just wanted to take the opportunity, while I could, to stop by here and to thank the Sons of the American Legion for a great year, for the support that you have given me and the Legion this year.

I had the opportunity, for about the past five days, to ride on the Legacy Run from Florida to Indianapolis with many members of the Sons. How many of you were on the run, raise your hand.

Well, great group of people. I want to tell you how much fun I had doing that, with the rare exception of maybe some rain when we first started out.

But you're a phenomenal organization. I want you to know I'm a dual member as well, and have been for quite a number of years. So you know you've got my support.

(Applause)

But that goes without saying. I just want you to know how much we appreciate what you do and the support that you give The American Legion.

I also want to take the opportunity to thank you for loaning me your National Commander for the year for

many of the activities that we jointly participated in. Some of the travels, some of the events, I think, I am truly blessed to have The American Legion family leadership team that I have with Doc and Kathy Dungan. We've had a phenomenal year this year.

You have a phenomenal National Commander, and I want to take a moment to recognize him. But I also ask for your support for Virginia's own Clint Bolt, who I hope has your support to succeed Doc.

(Applause)

We in the Department of Virginia are quite proud of Clint and what he's been able to accomplish as a member of the Sons of the American Legion in support of the Department of Virginia. And if he's anywhere near as good as he is with the Department at the national level I think that you're going to have another great year.

And, Doc, I'd like to make a couple of presentations to you if I may. I didn't even have to wake Kenny up for this.

(Laughter)

I guess you didn't bring your glasses, did you? I'm forward to getting one of these to you. This is from Pam. She's not here.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: She'll be here

tomorrow.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: You know what? I want to save the best till last. I just have to see where it might be in the box. Are you sure you got everything? Are you sure that's it?

You know, I don't know that that's the right gift, Kenny.

NATIONAL STAFF LIAISON KENNETH GEORGE: I'm sorry, that was given to me that way.

(Laughter)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Want me to open it up?

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: No, no. We've been deceived.

(Laughter)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have, yes. "We" is the operative word.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: That's what I have an aide for; I can blame it on somebody else.

(Laughter and applause)

He must have been sleeping. This is for -- oh, this is for you. That's for Pam. He had it backwards. That's why it was pink.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Oh, my gosh. That is so good. Oh, my gosh.

(Laughter and applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Who's the real duck? That's not it. Got one more item in there for you. Just because we were so fortunate to share some experiences, I wanted you to have a record of that.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Oh, very nice, it's actually a book with -- oh my gosh -- a book with many pictures from our trips together. Oh, my gosh, excellent. That is so nice. Thank you so much.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: I love this. Wow.

(Laughter)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: My family is going to love that, too.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: And it looks just like him.

(Laughter)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Stay right there.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: That was fun to do.

(Laughter)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Well, in turn I'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest, obviously, of our convention.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: However, I know you're a dual member. I've heard that many times.

I don't know if you have a cap. You now have a cap.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Now I have two.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Good. Now you have two.

(Applause)

And we'd like to give you this Certificate of Appreciation.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: Let me get in uniform.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: A Certificate of Appreciation is presented to Brett P. Reistad, National Commander of The American Legion, in recognition of outstanding contributions and in appreciation for dedicated service to the programs of the Sons of the American Legion, given this 23rd day of August 2019 in the city of Indianapolis, Indiana.

Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: You're quite welcome. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER REISTAD: We need to take a photograph or two.

(Applause)

And for the record, I'm sorry, Kenny. Thanks.
Thank you, all. Have a great convention.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Gentlemen, who are we?

... A chorus of "Team 100."

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: One more time.

... A chorus of "Team 100."

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We also have another honored person to be with us this morning -- this afternoon -- our second leading candidate for The American Legion National Commander, Paul Dillard from Texas. I'd like to invite him up to the podium at this time.

Distinguished Guest Paul Dillard (TX)

**2nd Leading Candidate for American Legion National
Commander**

Thank you. Thank you, Commander, for the invitation to address your delegation. I came -- I did not come -- bearing gifts.

But as we say in Texas: Howdy.

It is a pleasure of mine to come today just to -- not see y'all because you can't -- but other than this bunch over here from Texas and a few other places,

I know they can understand me. So some of you may ask me to slow down because I do talk funny.

The thing about it is following some of the folks, like Internal Affairs and National Commanders, these folks, they have said a lot of things that was on my mind. Years ago, when I did serve on Children and Youth with Dennis Boland I was always amazed what you all do with CWF, Child Welfare Foundation.

The effort that you put in it, the money you raise for that foundation is bar none. It's the greatest. And it just shows what you can do when you set your mind to it.

And the Sons of the American Legion, that's a mission that they've establish for themselves, and they fulfill that every year, right along with your membership as you grow year after year.

And as we've heard, the LEGION Act, I think it's going to be able to open up the doors in a lot of areas for the Sons of the American Legion and also The American Legion because I know we've already picked up several in Texas out of the Sons of the American Legion. In fact, my brother-in-law, got to sign him up. He was a Sons of the American Legion.

And I have four members of my family, my two sons and two grandsons, they're members of The American

Legion. We're 100 percent an American Legion family.

(Applause)

Thank you.

But I never thought I'd be on this journey. But with the help of a lot of folks, they seen to it to put me here. So if I don't blunder too much this next year, and I do manage to get the votes -- and I think you all have a candidate in there the year before me, and I look forward to serving him if he don't blunder and get all the votes, and that's Michael Fox. And we will have a great year.

And I look forward to working with all of the Sons of the American Legion. Years ago as I traveled around the Department of Texas, you can tell which Post, when you was at a Post home, had an American Legion Auxiliary unit.

Then, when I was Department Commander traveling around, I said you can see which Posts have has a Sons of the American Legion Squadron there because of the work you do with us right alongside.

And I know in Texas we have a great bunch of guys down there in the Sons of the American Legion. Does a lot of work at their post level. They do a lot of work for our baseball programs and our Boys State Program. And without them we would not be as successful as we

are.

We look forward to working side by side as we carry out. And I'd just like to close by saying thank you very much, have a great convention, and I know you're here for a convention, not to listen to me.

So, let's have a great time. What a great year. Looking forward to you having another great one next year and then a banner year the following. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: It's my pleasure to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention, sir, and wish you much success this next year.

PAUL DILLARD: Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, sir.

It's my pleasure to introduce another Distinguished Guest who's with us this afternoon, our American Legion Child Welfare Foundation President, Dennis Boland from Florida.

(Applause)

Distinguished Guest Dennis Boland (FL)

American Legion Child Welfare Foundation President

How y'all are?

All right. You're my kind of people. Don't let me forget my red cap when I leave. I have a tendency to do that.

(Applause)

You know, every time I come before you, I just don't know the words to say when I'm standing out there. And then I get before you and it's just like the accolades Mr. Dillard just gave you.

The commitment that you make is equal to the commitment that many of us took an oath to serve our country in the military.

You basically committed or have committed to the same ideas that we have committed to. You are awesome. And your fundraising ability is just unbelievable.

I can tell you about Squadron 283 in Arlington, Florida. Last year, we had the pigs. So they went around, and the District Commander, he put it at every Squadron. He said, I want this full and I don't want pennies in it. I want nothing but silver. And they raised over a thousand dollars.

This year, they took the pigs, the red ones, and they went around and they raised \$2,045.36. And then they turned around and donated \$4,000 of their finances. That's the kind of things that you do.

Little bekown to you, the Child Welfare

Foundation, which is our major -- when I say "our major" thing -- it's your major thing, and should be called The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation with the contributions you make -- but as you know, this past year, in January, we had a problem when the government shutdown, didn't pay the Coast Guard.

We gave a million dollars out of Temporary Financial Assistance so that children would have the opportunity to have their homes, their food or whatever they needed.

With that being said, National came to the Child Welfare Foundation and asked us if we could make a contribution on behalf of the children.

We, and I say "we" as a family, because of you, the donations you give, we gave \$750,000 to ensure that our military families with children were taken care of when our government set them aside.

(Applause)

You guys are awesome. I wish we could have another program that was as great as the programs that you do. It's not just the Child Welfare, the Fisher House that you so dearly love, that you donate money to, COTA, all the different programs that The American Legion has survive because of all of the different programs that you give a helping hand to.

You've got to give yourself a hand -- applause for that.

(Applause)

I don't want to belabor. You know my feelings for you. I could never give you the accolades you deserve, but from my heart I am so fortunate to call you my family.

And believe me, you are my family. I've always said that. I love you because you are my family and may God bless you for what you do and continue on. Thank you so much.

(Applause)

Now we'll get into the meat of the subject, the awards for your donations that we so dearly love to give out and wish we could give to everyone, but according to our guidelines, we're limited.

So at this time I'd like to -- the Excellence Award, achieving the highest in per capita giving, 2018-2019, Sons of the American Legion, Detachment of Nevada.

The board of directors gratefully recognize your outstanding support of The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation service to the critical needs of American's children is made possible through your caring and generosity.

Do we have someone from Nevada? He's on his way.

The Meritorious Achievement Award, achieving the highest increase per capita giving for 2018-2019, Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Colorado.

The board of directors greatly recognize your outstanding support of The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation service to the critical needs of American children is made possible through your caring and generosity. Colorado.

American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, the U.S. "Udie" Grant Legacy Award, 2018-2019, presented to the Legion family, Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Florida in recognition of outstanding support of The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. We thank you.

"No person was ever honored for what he received. Honors have been rewarded for what he's done" -- Calvin Coolidge.

We've got to make this lettering a little bigger.

(Laughter)

Whatever you do, don't send John Jennings up here. Oh, behind me.

(Laughter)

All right, my favorite award, which I loved so dearly since I joined the Child Welfare Foundation, the

Garland D. Murphy Jr. Award, presented by The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, Sons of the American Legion, to the Detachment of New York for the program year 2018-2019.

In recognition of their designation as the number one Detachment in total contributions received from their volunteers in support of our annual program designed to meet the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs of our nation's children through productive and meaningful grants, signed Meagan Sweet, Executive Secretary, and Dennis Boland, President, New York.

(Applause)

As president, I asked the board of directors if we could do a special plaque for the Squadron or Detachment that crossed the \$8 million mark. I know a bunch of money was sent in, but this certificate of appreciation presented by The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation to the Sons of the American Legion, Detachment of Ohio, 2018-2019, in recognition of its outstanding support of The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation and designation as a contributor, over the \$8 million mark received in support of The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, signed Dennis Boland, for the betterment of all children.

(Applause)

Last but not least, I'd like to have your National Commander, Greg, up here. Commander, on behalf of the board of directors of the Child Welfare Foundation, it's indeed an honor for me to present to you a five diamond lapel pin from the Child Welfare Foundation, sir.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. If we can interrupt this for a second -- I'm almost done and you're in charge -- and introduce --

DENNIS BOLAND: Really?

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: -- we're going to reintroduce these folks to make a special presentation. Go ahead.

Recognition of Ohio's \$1,000,000 in CWF Donations

DALE ANDERSON: Hello, everybody. I'm a Past Detachment Commander for the Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Ohio. We're here to present a check for \$1 million for a past collection from many hardworking people from Ohio some, who, unfortunately, are no longer with us.

We're already working towards our second million. Thank you.

(Applause)

DENNIS BOLAND: That is awesome. And that's what you do. Like I said, the accolades can go on and on for what you do for all the different programs.

You know, we were just at The American Legion World Series, my wife and I, for the eight days of the World Series.

Another program that, in Florida, our Sons raised mon for the regional teams in the state of Florida, they were awesome for what they did.

But the bottom line is each one of your states that you do the work for that makes it so much easier for us to put on these games and have the regionals and have the state tournaments, it's just another plus to your resumé that you do.

God bless you. I love you like my family because you are my family. Take care.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, sir, for everything you do for us, through us, however you want to put that. We'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our National Convention. Thank you for all you do.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Gentlemen, I want to

thank you for that bling. That's all your doing. So thank you very much for all the work that you've done for CWF this year. Exceeded our goals, our thoughts and our prayers. Appreciate it very much.

(Applause)

At this time, I'd like to call Joe Korba, National Children and Youth Committee, for a report and awards.

Report of the Children and Youth Committee

National Convention Children and Youth Committee

Chairman Joseph A. Korba (NJ)

Good afternoon, everyone.

Children and Youth had a great year this year. And it's thank to you, thanks to everyone out there, and thanks for getting the word out that we spread through our meetings and through our information that got out there.

Donations: Special Olympics, \$202,000, hours -- 38,691 hours; Children Miracle Network, \$35,000, 513 hours -- 3,611. Josh Dogs, even though that is program is being phased out, there's still dogs being delivered, 2561 were given out, \$36,099 was raised.

Operation Military Kids, \$11,642, 2,187 hours.

And other Children and Youth projects, \$727,366, 121,455 hours, representing \$1,012,734 and 165,949 hours of service. So thank you so much.

(Applause)

We've far surpassed last year. Thank you.

**Presentation of the National Children and Youth Awards
National Convention Children and Youth Committee
Chairman Joseph A. Korba (NJ)**

Right now we have some awards to give out. First I'd like to thank my committee -- Phil Shipley from Illinois, John Mejia from California. They both could not be here. But I have Ken Warner out in the audience somewhere, Ken from Pennsylvania; and William Clancy. I want to thank them for their hard work.

(Applause)

If we can bring everyone up here we'll do it all at one time.

The highest reporting from the East, Leonardo, 338, Leonardo, New Jersey, from the East. If I could have a representative up here from them.

From the South, College Park Squadron 51, College Park, Georgia.

From the Central Region, Spirit of 76, Squadron 8, Wellington, Ohio.

From the Midwest, Benson Squadron 112, Benson, Nebraska.

From the West, Colton Squadron 151, Colton, California.

And we have Colton Squadron 151 is the best overall Squadron with the highest donations and hours.

And also Districts, Southern East Shores, Maryland, send a representative up from them, and the Detachment of Washington.

These are your award winners. Thank you.

(Applause)

And again, I want to thank Commander for putting his trust in me with this committee and also everyone out there for your hard work in getting the word out. Thank you.

(Applause)

As a delegate to the 48th National Convention, I make a motion to accept the National Convention Children and Youth Committee report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion on the floor. Do we have a second?

WOODY JONES: Second from Idaho. Woody Jones from Idaho, second it.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. Any questions on the motion? All in favor signify by saying

aye.

Any opposed? Nay.

Carried. Thank you.

Thank you, Joe.

Gentlemen, we're going to begin adjournment process at this time until tomorrow morning at 9:00. So I'd like you to rise for our benediction.

Benediction

David Rippe (NE), National Chaplain

Heavenly Father, may this day encourage us to continue serving our national organization and its programs. We know the success of this organization is because of Your guidance.

In Your name, we pray, amen.

Salute to Colors and Recess

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: You may recover. With the colors of our nation being in place, please hand salute by the numbers. One. Two.

Gentlemen, we are in recess until 9.00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

...At 2:50 p.m., the Convention was recessed to reconvene the following day, August 24, 2019, at 9:00 a.m.

Second Day**Saturday, August 24, 2019**

...On Saturday, August 24, 2019, at 9:03 a.m., the delegates assembled for the 48th Annual National Convention, and the following proceedings were had:

Call to Order and Salute to the Colors**Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs (NY), National Commander**

Gentlemen, please rise.

With the colors of our nation in place, please join me with a right-hand salute by the numbers. One. Two.

National Chaplain David Rippe will invoke the blessing of God. Please uncover.

Invocation**David L. Rippe (NE), National Chaplain**

Before we have the opening prayer, would you please add to the prayer list that I gave you yesterday, David Blair, the NECman from Texas.

Heavenly Father, we come today to celebrate the achievements of the Sons of the American Legion. Your son Jesus Christ in his teachings told us to love one another. We thank You for providing us with generosity

to see the programs of our organization continue for the betterment of all people.

We know that these awards we receive are only possible because You have opened the hearts, minds, and eyes of people to give for the good of others.

In Your name we pray, amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. In memory of our departed comrades and the comrades of all veterans, let us stand in silence.

...The delegation observed a moment of silence.

I now call upon National Vice Commander Matt Christie to lead us in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Pledge of Allegiance

Matthew T. Christie (IL), National Vice Commander

...At this time, the delegation recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: National Adjutant Anthony -- let's recover, gentlemen, and sit down, please.

I now call upon National Adjutant Anthony Wright to call the roll.

Roll Call

...National Adjutant Wright called the roll of the Convention as follows:

NATIONAL OFFICERS

National Commander

Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs, New York

National Vice Commanders

East: Michael S. Cotten, Delaware

South: Steve A. Gower, Sr., Virginia - EXCUSED

Central: Matthew T. Christie, Illinois

Midwest: Peter J. Sierminski, Colorado

West: Edward M. Cleary, Arizona

National Adjutant

Anthony W. Wright, Pennsylvania

National Assistant Adjutants

Harold E. Thompson, Jr., Nebraska (Emeritus)

James E. "Ed" Sheubrooks, Florida

Robert J. Avery, New York

David M. Ridenour, Indiana

Scott A. Williams, Virginia

Scott J. Thornton, Ohio

Jeffrey E. Hicks, New Jersey

National Chaplain

David L. Rippe, Nebraska

National Historian

Timothy S. Van Patten, II, New York

National Judge Advocate

Joseph A. Paviglianti, New York

National Sergeant-At-Arms
Gregory A. Falco, New York

National Assistant Sergeants-At-Arms
Brian K. Waters, Pennsylvania
Lyle G. Larson, Kansas - EXCUSED
Raymond P. Giehll, III, Indiana
Augustine R. Diaz, Alaska - EXCUSED
Charles Curtis, California

National Commander's Aide
Gary W. Denmon, New York

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDERS

Danny J. Smith, Colorado
Michael K. Seaton, California - Excused
Robert A. McBride, Ohio
J.R. Stillwell, Illinois
John J. Smolinsky, Massachusetts - Not Present
Robert H. Faust, California - Excused
James R. Hartman, Maryland
Gregory D. Reis, Illinois - Not Present
Grant Jamieson, Michigan - Not Present
Charles E. Gannon, Maryland - Excused
John M. Sherrard, California - Not Present
David P. Stephens, Indiana
Christopher R. Cerullo, New York
Frederick L. Hartline, Sr., Ohio - Excused
Douglas P. Bible, Minnesota
Richard L. League, Maryland - Not Present
David R. Faust, Wisconsin
Robert A. Worrel, Indiana
Eugene L. Sacco, California
Roland D. Matteson, Arizona
Joseph M. Mayne, Minnesota
John T. Dietz, Kentucky - Excused
Jack E. Jordan, Texas - Not Present
William E. Matoska, Maryland
Byron J. Robichaux, Louisiana
Richard L. Cook, Oklahoma
Kevin N. Winkelmann, Texas - Not Present
Clifford A. Smith, Massachusetts
Steven C. Laws, North Carolina
Neal C. Warnken, Kansas
Michael J. Deacon, Iowa

William L. Sparwasser, Maryland - Not Present
 Earl R. Ruttkofsky, Michigan
 Raymond P. Giehll, Jr., Indiana
 Thomas E. Cisna, Illinois
 Mark E. Arneson, Georgia
 David L. Dew, Texas - Not Present
 James K. Roberts, III, Florida - Excused
 Joseph W. Gladden, Maryland
 Michael W. Moss, Colorado
 Kevin L. Collier, Alaska
 Jeffrey C. Frain, Arizona - Excused
 Brian J. O'Hearne, Massachusetts - Not Present

ROLL CALL OF DETACHMENTS

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California,
 Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia,
 Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky,
 Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan,
 Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska,
 Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York,
 North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon,
 Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee,
 Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West
 Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming

Commander, that completes roll call. You have a
 quorum.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I now declare this
 48th National Convention of the Sons of the American
 Legion reconvened from yesterday.

Opening Remarks

Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs (NY), National Commander

Before we begin this morning, a couple of points
 of privilege, I suppose. I know the folks from the
 Detachment of Hawaii are not present with us today, but

for the minutes, I wanted to be able to present this plaque to Bernard Lee from the Detachment of Hawaii, dual member. Recently heard that Bernard is stepping down from his role as Adjutant and stepping down really from all activities associated with the Sons and The American Legion.

He will be sorely missed. Many of you that have been around a couple of years probably know him. He hasn't been at our conventions the last few years. But he serves all the Legion family when we've taken those trips to Hawaii. And he really, really serves our Legion family.

So I'd like to just read this and we will be mailing it to Bernard: "Presented to Bernard Lee, Detachment of Hawaii, in appreciation of exemplary service to the Legion family."

(Applause)

What we'd like to do next, again, is not in the normal agenda, and that's we would like to invite the youth members that are with us this morning up to the stage, and we'd like to make them distinguished members of our convention.

They'll be convening immediately after we make them Distinguished Guests in Room -- I believe it's 201/202. We have the youth room set up for today and we

have some activities for them, and we want to welcome them and make sure that they realize they are equal parts of our organization as we all are.

So I'd invite any of our youth members that are here with us under 18 to please come on up to the stage. Come on right up front and we'll make you Distinguished Guests.

(Applause)

We are so excited to have you with us. Again, you're every bit a member as me and anyone else in this room. We want to make you feel welcome, and we hope the youth room that we have set up this year will be just one of many and it will be a normal routine for our National Conventions.

We welcome you guys and girls, and we are going to make you Distinguished Guests. And my aide, Gary Denmon, is also going to give you a flash drive of all of our meetings and things that we've had this past year.

So, thank you for being with us.

All right, let's give our future a round of applause.

(Standing ovation)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, gentlemen. They are obviously excused at this time for their own

activities arranged through our Americanism chairman, J.R. Hall, out of Maryland. He has a full day scheduled for them. So we appreciate that very much.

Before we get into the reports from the various committees, just want to go over the procedures again. Nothing new, but just a reminder.

Yesterday was very difficult to see the audience. They have adjusted the lights a little bit. If somebody came up to the mic, we literally could not see them yesterday. So we're in much better shape today.

But again, committee chairman or whoever needs to speak, when you know your committee's coming up, please move to the front row so that you get on the stage quick and give your report.

Award recipients come to the stage in a timely manner. Enter from my right, your left, and exit my left, your right.

At this time, I'd like to call on Harold Thompson, Jr., for the first report of the National Convention, Credentials Committee.

On deck is the Membership committee, followed by National History Book awards.

First Report of the Credentials Committee
National Convention Credentials Committee

Chairman Harold E. Thompson, Jr. (NE)

Good morning.

The chairman, Harold Thompson, called the credential convention committee to order on August 23rd, 2019, 11.00 a.m., for the purposes of necessary committee action on the convention resolution. None was presented.

There is a possibility of 903 delegates, 47 delegates at large, for a total of 950 delegates, votes from 55 Detachments.

We have 37 Detachments preregistered with 741 delegates, 20 alternates and 68 guests. On Thursday, we had 42 Detachments, 884 delegates, 24 alternates and 83 guests.

On Friday, we had 49 Detachments registered with 926 delegates, 24 alternates, and 88 guests registered.

The finish of this will be at the close of registration at noon today. Members of the Credentials Committee meeting was Harold Thompson Jr., chairman; Jordan from California; Cruz from Colorado, Sheubrook from Florida; Hunt from Illinois; Masters from Indiana; Huntling from Maryland; Pentel from Michigan; Michael from Minnesota; Hanson from New Hampshire; and Hicks from New Jersey; Avery from New York; Thornton from Ohio; and Runblum from Wisconsin; and three guests

[phonetics].

Please type your delegate list or print them clearly for the nametags can be done right the first time. If you have guests, please add those names on your guest registration sheet. Please make sure that all your registration is sent in on time. If you have some delegates that will not attend, please leave a blank line and list the rest that are coming to convention.

Also, only the delegate chairman, delegate secretary or the Department Adjutant is allowed to pick up the entire delegation packets from your state.

Detachments, make sure your delegation knows where they are supposed to pick up from your state.

We had 17 Detachments that did not send in their registration ahead of time. If you know you're not going to get it in through the mail on time, the forms now are fillable. Fill it out, email it in to national headquarters. At least we could have your badges and stuff ready when you bring the check in and it will make it lots easier; otherwise, you're going to be waiting.

At the present time, we have seven Detachments that aren't registered. I will conclude the rest of the Credentials report after the close of credentials.

At the present time, I will read through the

Credential report, how many delegates are registered, which you'll be allowed for your vote.

Alabama, seven. Seven registered.

Alaska, six plus one, for a total of seven.

Seven registered.

Arizona, 18 plus three for a total of 21. 21 registered.

Arkansas, four, four registered.

California, 26 plus three, for a total of 29. 29 registered.

Colorado, nine plus three, for a total of 12. 12 registered.

Connecticut, seven. Seven registered.

Delaware, eight plus one for a total of nine. Nine registered.

District of Columbia, three. None registered.

Florida, 43 plus one, for a total of 44. 44 registered.

France, three, three registered.

Georgia, 12 plus one for a total of 13. 13 registered.

Hawaii, three. None registered.

Idaho, four. Four registered.

Illinois, 31 plus four, for a total of 35. 35 registered.

Indiana, 81 plus three, for a total of 84. 84 registered.

Iowa, 12 plus one, for a total of 13. 13 registered.

Kansas, 16 plus one, for a total of 17. 17 registered.

Kentucky, nine plus one, for a total of 10. 10 registered.

Louisiana, seven plus one, for a total of eight. Eight registered.

Maine, eight. Eight registered.

Maryland, 35 plus six, for a total of 41. 41 registered.

Massachusetts, 14 plus two, for a total of 16. 16 registered.

Mexico, three. None registered.

Michigan, 50 plus two, for a total of 52. 52 registered.

Minnesota, 25 plus two, for a total of 27. 27 registered.

Mississippi, five. Five registered.

Missouri, 10. 10 registered.

Montana, five. Five registered.

Nebraska, 16. 16 registered.

Nevada, four. Four registered.

New Hampshire, 15. 15 registered.

New Jersey, 23. 23 registered.

New Mexico, six. Six registered.

New York, 62 plus two, for a total of 64. 64 registered.

North Carolina, eight plus one, for a total of nine. Nine registered.

North Dakota, four. Four registered.

Ohio, 63 plus two, for a total of 65. 65 registered.

Oklahoma, six plus one, for a total of seven. Seven registered.

Oregon, six. Six registered.

Pennsylvania, 126. 126 registered.

Philippines, three. None registered.

Puerto Rico, three. None registered.

Rhode Island, four. Four registered.

South Carolina, six. Six registered.

South Dakota, four. None registered.

Tennessee, six. Six registered.

Texas, 15 plus three for a total of 18. 18 registered.

Utah, four. None registered.

Vermont, 11. 11 registered.

Virginia, 12 plus one, for 13. 13 registered.

Washington, eight. Eight registered.

West Virginia, eight. Eight registered.

Wisconsin, 11 plus one, for a total of 12. 12 registered.

And Wyoming five. Five registered.

So that makes a total of 927 registered.

That concludes my preliminary report.

JIMMY HUNTER: Commander, Jimmy Hunter, NEC from Illinois, on your right.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Yes, go ahead, Jimmy. It is very difficult to see still.

JIMMY HUNTER: I just wanted to make a correction on member -- committee member from Illinois is Hunter, not Hunt.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Okay. Thank you. Duly noted.

This is a preliminary report so there doesn't need to be any action taken on that at this time.

At this time I now call on Joseph Navarrete, our National Convention Membership Committee chairman, for his report and the awards.

On deck are our National History Book awards followed by the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee report.

Report of the Membership Committee**National Convention Membership Committee Chairman Joseph****R. Navarrete (NM)**

Good morning.

The Membership Committee was called to order on Friday, August 22nd at 10 a.m. Four committeemen were in attendance with the exception of Jeffrey Gibson from Alabama, who was excused. All of the National Vice Commanders were also excused due to attending the pre-NEC meeting. With over 62 members in attendance, we had great representation by all regions.

Our theme for the year, as many of you are well aware of, "honoring the past and continuing the legacy," with goals of reaching 400,000 total members, achieving renewal rate above 90 percent, contributing to the Legion Team 100 concept and helping them with their membership goals and reaching out to our younger members. Also, recognizing our own members in a way of rewards through the 24-carat pin along with the IRAs.

Our regional reports highlighted all the successes throughout the year. The ideas brought forward by each region is proof that your regions have been hard at work and committed to success.

We celebrated the 31 Detachments that exceeded

the 100 percent mark, as well as 13 Detachments that had an all-time high.

Brief discussions were held on upcoming abilities to submit membership online, including updates from Ohio that was currently piloting the system.

With more information to come, we are looking forward to the improvements the online system will provide for all of us.

We also recognize those individuals that received recruitment awards that were in attendance, and challenge all the others to join us in all of our recruiting efforts.

With no further business, we adjourned the meeting at 11:15.

And at this time I'd like to move into the award presentation. If we can queue that up. I'd like to see the PowerPoint now.

I'd like to start off by recognizing the Membership committee. Without them, my job would be very difficult: National Vice Commanders Michael Cotten, Steve Gower, Matthew Christie, Peter Sierminski and Edward Cleary.

The regional membership committeemen: Gary Nelson, Jeffrey Gibson, Mike Monserud, Thomas Skelley and Ned Fox -- you guys were in the trenches and got the

job done. Thank you. Your hard work and dedication has been much appreciated. Thank you for all you do.

I'd also like to thank each and every one of you. We are all part of Team 100.

I have mentioned our membership goals and wanted to highlight a key point. The latest membership report on August 22nd had us at 99.9 percent, 4,126 members ahead of where we were this same time last year.

Gentlemen, that means we are only 352 members away from 100 percent. And I can tell you, today, we are rounding up.

(Applause)

As mentioned earlier, we had 31 Detachments exceed 100 percent. Congratulations to Puerto Rico, Hawaii, the Philippines, Mississippi, Idaho, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, District of Columbia, North Carolina, Alaska, Montana, Arizona, Iowa, Florida, Alabama, South Carolina, Delaware, Wyoming, Utah, Vermont, Nevada, Georgia, South Dakota, France, Indiana, Nebraska, New Jersey, Illinois, California, Michigan and Maryland.

That was a long list. 13 of those were all-time highs, gentlemen. That is nothing but amazing.

(Applause)

Now, for the fun time. As you see the next list, it's going to take me a little while to get through.

Just kidding.

The Individual Recruitment awards, what more can I say, other than amazing work. With over 250 Team 100 carat pins awarded and 215 IRA pins, you can see that we know how to recruit. And it shows in our numbers. With over 4,000 members ahead of where we were the previous year, we have that down. Now we need to work on those renewal numbers and retain our membership.

And as we come to the rest of the awards, we'll start with the main awards, please come up to the stage when your Detachment is called.

Presentation of the National Membership Awards

National Convention Membership Committee Chairman

Joseph R. Navarrete (NM)

The first quarter Detachment by region, a minimum of 200 members as of December 31st of the previous year is required.

First, from the Southern region, is Mississippi.

Second, from the Central Region, Wisconsin.

And tied for third, from the East, Delaware, and the Midwest, Montana.

And fifth, from the West, Idaho.

(Applause)

Next is the Hartline Award. Lawrence Hartline,

from Ohio, a dual member, was instrumental in chartering a number of Squadrons in the Detachment of Ohio. This award was named in his name after the passing at the 1976 National Convention.

The Detachment chartering the most new Squadrons between July 1st to June 30th of the next year is Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania chartered 10 new Squadrons.

(Applause)

The Largest Squadron Award as of December 31st goes to Newport Harbor, Squadron 291, Newport Beach, California, with 1570 members.

(Applause)

The Highest Renewal Percentage by Region goes to the following Detachments:

From the Southern Region, Mississippi, with 101.08 percent.

From the East, France with 94.19 percent.

From the Central, Iowa with 93.29 percent.

From the Midwest, Nebraska with 91.68 percent.

And from the West, Alaska, with 87.23 percent.

(Applause)

Next is the 90% Renewal by Detachment.

Congratulations to Delaware, France, Hawaii, Iowa, New York, Maryland, Mississippi, Nebraska, Montana, Ohio, Puerto Rico, Vermont, Wisconsin, New Jersey and

Pennsylvania.

(Applause)

The Arthur D. Houghton Trophy is presented to the Detachment with the greatest percentage increase over the previous year. Arthur D. Houghton was one of the founders of The American Legion. The award was first presented by his wife in 1941.

For Category I, 200 to 1,000 members, goes to Mississippi, with 112.195 percent.

In Category II, 1,001 to 3,000 members, Oklahoma, with 106.955 percent.

In Category III, 3,001 to 6,000 members, Wisconsin, with 106.865 percent.

In Category IV, 6,001 to 12,000 members, Arizona, with 104.263 percent.

And in Category V, 12,000-plus members, Florida, with 103.083 percent.

(Applause)

The Blue Brigade Award goes to those Sons of the American Legion members that recruit 30 new members. A total of 31 individuals were submitted. That included 10 Detachments and five individuals receiving their second-time award.

Due to the submission deadline being moved to our last target date, verification by National Headquarters

is still pending. We look forward to congratulate these individuals very soon and an update will be sent out.

Our last award is the Triple Nickel. This award is for any Detachment that exceeds 105 percent, charters five new Squadrons and has a renewal rate of 85 percent, all before July 1st. This year's Triple Nickel Award goes to Wisconsin.

(Applause)

As a delegate to this 48th National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion, I make a motion that the Membership Convention Committee report be accepted.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion on the floor. Do we have a second?

DELEGATE FROM NEW YORK: New York seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: New York seconds. Do we have any questions on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried.

Well, I have a little plaque to present to Joseph. Again, because he's part of my goals for the year, it just says "Presented to Joseph Navarrete, National Membership Chairman, in appreciation for a record membership year."

I got to know Joseph this year working closely with him. And it's been a pleasure. Thank you, sir.

(Applause)

Our National Historian, Timothy Van Patten, II, from New York for History Book awards. On deck is VA&R committee reports.

National Historian's Report

Timothy S. Van Patten, II (NY), National Historian

Commander Gibbs, members of the dais, Distinguished Guests, fellow Sons, good morning.

This year we received five submissions for the National History Book contest, and they were all outstanding examples of the amazing work that we do across this country.

I would like to thank the members that came in yesterday to help judge these documents. Judging for the Squadron books was extremely close this year, with all books scoring within two points of each other.

The winner of the Squadron History Book is the Roland E. Patnode Jr., Squadron 7, from New Hampshire.

(Applause)

And the winner of the Detachment History Book is the Detachment of Vermont.

(Applause)

I'd like to take this time to thank everyone for the opportunity to serve as your historian this year. It truly has been my honor and privilege.

As a delegate from New York to this National Convention, I would like to make a motion this report be accepted as read.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

LOU MICHAELS: Minnesota, seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Name, sir?

LOU MICHAELS: Lou Michaels, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have motion and a second. Any discussion on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you. Thank you, Tim.

Butch Ray from the National Convention Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Committee for his report, and on deck is Vice Commander Mike Cotten, followed by Vice Commander Matt Christie.

**Report of the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation
Committee**

National Convention VA&R Committee Chairman

Harl D. "Butch" Ray (IL)

Good morning, everyone.

My name is Butch Ray, and, once again, it's been my honor to serve as your VA&R Commission chairman this past year.

I wish to take the time to acknowledge the hard work of my commission members for an outstanding job: Joe Roberts, my Vice Chairman, from Arizona; Gabe Cinquegrana from New York; Brandon Curry from Kentucky; Michael Lawler from Wisconsin; and Steve Tansel from Indiana.

The VA&R Convention committee met on Friday morning, convening promptly at 8:30 a.m. There were 21 assigned committee members present with four absent from the roll call. There was one guest and an additional 29 members --

Thank you, Commander. There we go.

-- an additional 29 members present including Past National Commanders Jim Hartman, Tommy Cisna, and Robert McBride. We also had a visit from leading candidate Clint Bolt, a past VA&R chairman, who gave remarks and stayed for our meeting. All total we had 51 members present representing 24 Detachments.

The meeting was called to order after a salute to our national banner, a prayer and the recital of our

preamble.

We discussed the fact that only 1639 Squadron consolidated report forms were received out of a possible total of 6,158 Squadrons nationally.

It was also discussed that of the 1639 Squadrons that did submit forms, 494 Squadrons, for whatever reason, did not list their 2018-2019 membership, which automatically eliminated them from consideration for a national award.

This means that almost 30 percent of the Squadrons that submitted forms could not be judged as no per capita value could be calculated.

Please remember to put your current year membership from the -- membership of your convention year in that line item, line Item No. 5.

The winners of the national VA&R Detachment District and Squadron awards were not revealed during our meeting in order to keep it secret to the respective winners.

Two support resolutions were discussed with various commission and convention committee members, and Resolutions Nos. 6 and 7, which are in support of the Veterans Affairs MISSION Act and the Veterans Affairs Accountability Act were adopted and forwarded to the full body of this convention for consideration.

The chairman selected a judging panel from those assembled to judge the Charles Rigsby Volunteer of the Year award applications received to date. This panel was released to another location to make their decision and then present the awardee to the chairman. This name is also being kept secret and will be revealed in just a few moments.

Discussions were held regarding the need for additional information on the Rigsby Award to be included in the Commanders and Adjutants training the weekend of the NEC meetings as well as a future workshop on the application process.

A motion was also made to present future Rigsby applications that are not selected -- applicants, rather, that are not selected with certificates of thanks and appreciation for their volunteer efforts assisting our veterans. This was seconded and passed and will be given to the VA&R Commission for action at next year's convention.

Once again, during this past membership year, we Sons have accomplished much in our work for veterans and their care.

Here is how you did: Currently we have 35 reps and depts at various VA facilities nationwide with a total of 106,000 volunteer hours at the VA and State

Veterans homes. At a national average value of \$25 an hour, this calculates to a total of \$2.6 million in value to the service of our nation's heroes.

As reported on this consolidated report forms received, our year end totals for the 2018-2019 membership year are: Family Support Network, over 16,000 hours and \$94,000 in donations; National Veterans Assistance Day, 3800 veterans helped, with 10,800 volunteer hours and \$79,000 in donations; Fisher House, 82,800 hours of volunteer hours and \$92,400 in donations; Support For Our Troops, 56,000 volunteer hours and \$179,000 in donations.

Other VA&R projects, 122,400 hours, \$562,200 in donations; Operation Comfort Warrior, \$69,300 in donations, which is an increase over last year.

All combined, our VA&R totals are 436,838 volunteer hours, which is an increase from last year, and \$1.8 million in donations. That is a 12 percent increase from last year, all based on reporting from only 1600 Squadrons.

The total of our volunteer hours for all VA&R programs and projects as reported calculates out to a value of \$20,920,950. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

(Applause)

**Presentation of the National Veterans Affairs and
Rehabilitation Awards**

National Convention VA& R Committee Chairman

Harl D. "Butch" Ray (IL)

And now on to our awards. The Sixth Annual Convention of the Sons of the American Legion was the first time the Kepler, O'Brian and Webster Awards were presented to the Squadron, District, and Detachment VA&R report winners.

The Kirby Kepler Memorial and the Allen I. O'Brian Memorial Awards are in memory of the Sons of Past National Commander Richard J. Kepler, as they had passed away prior to his being elected National Commander at the seventh National Convention in 1978.

The Earl Webster Memorial Award was established in honor of the father of Past National Vice Commander and Past National Chaplain John Webster.

This year, the Kirby Kepler Memorial Award for the best Squadron VA&R report goes to Squadron 155, Colton, California.

(Applause)

My apologies to California on that slide. I spelled the state's name wrong. As I tell my wife, I'm pretty, not smart.

(Laughter)

The Allen I. O'Brian Memorial Award for the best District VA&R report goes to the Sixth District of the Detachment of Nebraska.

The Earl Webster Memorial Award for the best Detachment VA&R report goes to the Detachment of Washington.

(Applause)

In 1991, Charles Rigsby was elected National Commander at the 22nd National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion. Unfortunately, in the following membership year, the organization was saddened by the passing of immediate Past National Commander Rigsby and that Commander Rigsby was the very first National Commander to be transferred to Squadron Everlasting.

At the next spring National Executive Committee meeting, a Resolution was presented and approved to rename the national Volunteer of the Year Award to the Charles B. Rigsby Memorial National Volunteer of the Year Award in his honor, as for many years volunteer programs at the VA medical centers was his passion.

This year, only four applications for the Rigsby Award were received. As reported, judging took place yesterday, and it's my sincere honor to announce that this year's winner of the Charles B. Rigsby VA&R

Volunteer of the Year Memorial Award is Nick Arceo from the Detachment of Colorado, George C. Evans Squadron 103. Congratulations, Nick.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Nick, it's been a pleasure to get to know you this year as I traveled to your great state. And we'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention.

(Applause)

BUTCH RAY: As mentioned earlier in my report, we referenced two support resolutions that were presented. They are as follows:

S.A.L. Resolution No. 6 - National Convention, 2019: Support of the House of Representatives Resolution House Resolution 5674 and Senate Resolution Senate Resolution 2372, the Veterans Affairs MISSION Act, Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks. Its origin is from the Detachment of Illinois.

RESOLVED, by the Sons of the American Legion in National Convention assembled on August 23-25, 2019, in Indianapolis, Indiana, that the Sons of the American Legion support House Resolution 5674 and Senate Bill 2372.

The second resolution of support resolution for

consideration is S.A.L. Resolution No. 7 - National Convention, 2019: Support of the House of Representatives Resolution House Resolution 1259 and Senate Resolution 1094, the Veterans Affairs Accountability Act.

RESOLVED, by the Sons of the American Legion in National Convention assembled on August 23-25, 2019, in Indianapolis, Indiana, that the Sons of the American Legion support House Resolution 1259 and Senate Resolution 1094.

Comrade Commander, I thank you for the opportunity to serve this past year. This concludes the report of the VA&R Convention Committee. And as a duly registered delegate to this convention I make a motion to approve this report as given, including the resolutions.

JIMMY HUNTER: Second. Jimmy Hunter, Illinois.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion and a second. Any discussion on the motion?

DOUG HEISER: Doug Heiser, Detachment of Indiana. I'd like to say Steve Tansel would have been here with this committee, but he is currently deployed in Kuwait. So please keep him in your prayers.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, sir. Duly noted.

Hearing no other discussion, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Hearing none, carried.

Butch, thank you.

(Applause)

Gentlemen, we have another guest with us at this time. I'd like to invite Past National Commander Jake Comer to come up and give us a few words.

(Applause)

Distinguished Guest John P. "Jake" Comer (MA)

American Legion Past National Commander

Thank you very much, Doc. Tony, Adjutant, all distinguished officers of the Sons of the American Legion, for this nation --

(Gavel)

All right.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JAKE COMER: After 32 years, I forgot.

But to the Sons of the American Legion, all Squadrons represented, my fellow Americans, all, once again I'm privileged to come to the convention and

address you all. I've always felt, as you know, that you are so important to our family operation that I certainly would be remiss if I don't come and thank you for all you do.

When I listened to the report that Butch just put out and realize that all of those monies raised for so many good programs, and yet only 1600 Squadrons out of over 6,000, you're no different than The American Legion, but it's a shame that you don't do a little better, that we don't do a little better.

But I will compliment all of you to know that you're the only organization that I've heard of so far while I'm here that have reached 100 percent membership. That's the outstanding thing here today.

(Applause)

And I know, with over \$8 million for the Child Welfare Foundation, you know how pleased you have made me.

For the young ones that are here and those that have not listened to my rhetoric in the past, 32 years ago, when I served as National Commander, I asked The American Legion and the Auxiliary and the Sons and the Eight & Forty to raise a million dollars for Child Welfare. That's where it all started.

Well, they didn't raise a million dollars; they

raised \$1,168,000. That's what they did, and you're all part of it.

And since then the only organization that kept it up, because we all have our own programs as Commanders, but the Sons did. And you kept up with Child Welfare Foundation, and to now it's well over \$8 million. Give your hands for that great organization.

(Applause)

So, my Sons, let me just say, there's a couple of things, that there's going to be a change this year. We've got to thank you for your help with the -- in Congress, when we asked you to take care of The American LEGION Act, which now we have new membership dates going all the way back to World War II to the present, with no exceptions.

I know of many Sons -- I know the first one in Massachusetts was our Detachment -- present Detachment Commander Marvin. He's now a member of The American Legion because he missed it by a few weeks. And that can affect probably many of you.

So, we're all going to benefit. And we benefit from your help in calling your congressman and your senators to support that legislation.

And we can go -- when I was in the Oval Office with the president and he signed that bill, he made

reference to the fact that they got calls from all facets of our family.

You know, it's heartwarming when I went to the contest yesterday for Color Guards to see many Sons Squadrons involved in the contest. You're there in everything.

Some of you may not realize, but we do, because back home when they have parades, who's leading the parade? Who is in the Color Guard for the Sons of the American Legion? You don't expect me to march. I'm 87. I'm done.

(Laughter)

So we depend on you. And you've done it well.

The American Legion family, the greatest and largest veterans organization in the world, and you should know that as you go back home and work for us and continue to do what you do. And sometimes you don't think you're recognized.

I do, we do, because when we hear we forget and when we see, we remember. It's when we do, we understand. God bless you all.

(Standing ovation)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, Past National Commander Comer. I'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention at this time. And

it's truly a pleasure, been a pleasure getting to know you, visiting your state. Enjoyed your remarks. Thank you, sir.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER JAKE COMER: Thank you, Doc. You guys gotta know, we've seen this man all over the country that I've traveled. He's done a great job for you this year, and the Sons of the Legion National Commanders have always been the best. Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, again.

(Applause)

I now turn the podium over to National Vice Commander Michael Cotten from Delaware for his remarks.

National Vice Commander - East's Final Report

National Vice Commander - East

Michael S. Cotten (DE)

Thank you, Commander. I was told I have a time limit. And they also gave me a watch. I've previously submitted my report electronically, but through our travels to the Northeast Region we made many visitations and we collected a few pictures.

Connecticut, great bunch of guys. Made lots of donations, great job. District of Columbia, the new Detachment, getting on their feet. We made a couple of visitations with them, got them off to a good start.

Delaware, great improvements this past year. From what I've learned, I'm going to pass that along and I'm looking for a lot of great things out of the Detachment of Delaware.

Delaware had the Vietnam Wall, which was a great privilege for our little state. Good family team in Delaware.

Massachusetts, I see Eastern Gathering was a great success, lots of learning and fellowship.

France, France lost a great guy this past year, Ron Moore. He will be missed. France also had 100 percent membership in Squadrons in Belgium, Germany, Greece and China.

Maryland is a machine. With as many Past National Commanders that they have, they are a wealth of knowledge, many programs supported by the Maryland family attitude.

Massachusetts, wonderful convention, great bonding.

Maine, lobster. And just think, when those guys are having lunch, they're waking up in California.

(Laughter)

New Hampshire, great Detachment. Lots of fellowship, donations. They really support veterans and veterans projects. And while we were in New Hampshire,

China Post 1 had a bench at a veterans cemetery in New Hampshire, which was really cool.

New Jersey, great leadership, tradition and they have a beautiful lady out in the Delaware River, the USS New Jersey. Lots of donations from the Detachment. And they always make a special dinner wherever they go for fellowship with other Detachments. Really good.

New York, it was awesome. Great donations and family spirit throughout the state. And when they do visitations, they do visitations as a family.

Pennsylvania, great hospitality at convention. Lots of great programs. And also we lost Past National Commander Chris Huntzinger, who was a real inspiration to many of us.

Vermont, wonderful convention. Great programs, great leadership, support for active duty, veterans. Great programs up there. And they have a golf course that you can actually hang glide off of four tee boxes.

(Laughter)

West Virginia was not an official visitation, but the first American Legion Post chartered in our organization was West Virginia Post 1.

Now for some of the numbers.

Detachments: Had five Detachments officially above 100 percent, and I was told Maine hit 100 percent

yesterday.

Renewals: Over 90.16 percent regionally. I also want to mention Rhode Island is in the house. Great job, guys. Looking for a lot of great things out of you next year.

We had 55 IRAs. We had 69 Team 100 pins. And I want to make some special thank-yous.

First of all, thank you to the Eastern Region for allowing me the privilege of representing you in this organization. It has truly been my honor.

And I want to make a special thank you to the Detachment of Delaware for supporting me, and my NEC from Delaware, my traveling companion and mentor, Toby Cullen. Thank you very much. It has been my greatest pleasure and honor to have the opportunity to represent this organization wherever we go.

And in the future, if I can do anything to help any of you, please call me. You have my number. It has been a wonderful experience, a lifetime experience, and thank you very much.

And as a delegate of this convention, I make a motion that my report be accepted.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

JIM COATES: Jim Coates from New York seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Motion and a second.
Any question on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried.

Thank you, gentlemen. Thank you, Mike.

We'll turn the podium over to Matt Christie.

(Applause)

National Vice Commander - Central's Final Report

National Vice Commander - Central

Matthew T. Christie (IL)

I also had a little slideshow, but for some reason the zip drive didn't work too well. So we're just going to wing it and they told me the lights were very bright up here so I brought my sunglasses and everything.

(Laughter)

So hopefully we'll be able to see better. Now I can't see you guys but I can read my report.

I just want to bring greetings from the Central Region, as this year we traveled -- I was able to travel to six of the eight states within the Central Region.

One of the best accomplishments was our

membership. We had five Detachments that were over 100 percent. Four of those Detachments hit an all-time high.

And then we have Wisconsin that did the Triple Nickel, and congratulations for being the only one this year for the Triple Nickel.

So I've also had a lot of fun, and each Detachment that I visited, there's some things that were asked to stay in those Detachments, some things that were asked to go ahead and have fun.

But we had fun. But one thing I did realize that every Detachment I visited all strived for the same goal: They all worked very hard for raising money, membership and stuff like that.

Great team as you saw Wisconsin come up here with their little entourage with Commander Sherman, that the dedication of that team. And every Detachment has a team very similar to that for the hard work and dedication.

But after everything was said and done, and the day was over, everybody knew how to have fun, and they still continued with that hard work of dedication. Whether they were sitting in a hospitality room or they were sitting somewhere else in a restaurant, they were still working on the progress of how to strive to

complete more and make more.

So I've also in my travels got to learn a few little lessons, such as starting with not counting on bail money. I had bail money. I sent out texts to my wife and to Commander Gibbs here.

The next day I finally got a response from my wife, and I'm still waiting for Commander Gibbs' response, so [chuckling]...

Also, another well-learned lesson, do not leave your cell phone unattended at a table. You'll never know what you'll find on it. So --

Also in the same token, one of my travels, our membership chairman here, Mike Monserud, him and I got to enjoy the fruits of the Central Division's labor of membership as we were celebrating being in first place for -- I think it was about a month at that point, you know, and that was the Bombshell grills.

But unfortunately Mike had to go home, or he was doing some other stuff. But Buster and I got to enjoy the Bombshell grills the next day because all of our flights were delayed out of Des Moines. So that's what happens when you have five feet of snow and 60-degree weather in the same day. So everything was fogged out.

But also part of my travels and some of you have seen it, some of you have not, but I got to know the

difference of which hazelnut is edible and which ones are not.

So, later on today and tomorrow I'll have some of those. If the state of Michigan did not bring some, it's a great little fun time with those. And it's the way it was presented is way how you have to do that.

So, also I got to learn a lot of history. One of my travels, we got to -- we were at a Legion post where the GI Bill was signed. Very good history. And I had pictures of that. Unfortunately I can't share that with you.

Washington Conference, awesome time there. That was my first time being at Washington Conference. Again, learned a lot of history, everything else.

And we were at Commander Gibbs' homecoming. It moved down to Florida, and it was my first time of being actually out in the cold weather since I moved down to Florida. And we braved it very well.

Vice Commander Ed Cleary, Vice Commander Steve Gower and his wife and my wife and I took a long, long walk and walked all the way into Canada, just for the fun of it, you know?

But while we were there we ziplined. Kind of a fun experience. If you've never ziplined, it's awesome. But I did feel sorry for Vice Commander Cleary, as being

from Arizona, he doesn't know what a pair of gloves are, and he only came with a baseball cap, so [chuckling]...

Thirty-four degrees and 15 mile-an-hour winds and you're ziplining, it gets very cold. But we all had a good time. As you can see we survived very well, even though Steve's not here. So it could be iffy.

But other than that, we had a great time. Other lessons I learned is don't pack so heavy. I was leaving one airport, got past the TSA line, and lo and behold, there's my favorite beer. And already limited to what I have for my carry on, and I can't buy any more 12-packs as carry-ons.

But I want to say thank you to Wisconsin as they took care of me this weekend and brought me some good stuff to enjoy while I'm here.

Also, just one thing, part of the motto this year and everybody has talked about it, everybody has preached it, "honoring the past," which is as simple as keeping the memories alive.

We need to talk with some of our Legionnaires and now with the LEGION Act, we'll have more Legionnaires to talk to.

As they're getting older, more important than ever, help us with remembrance that they are the only ones that can tell their stories to preserve the

memories of our members before they become former members and we learn nothing.

Also, "continuing the legacy." Everybody in this room is part of the legacy. We need to keep that legacy alive. And with the passing of the LEGION Act, we'll have more people in this room, hopefully, that will help keep that going.

Big parts of the Legion, the four pillars. We need to sponsor and help sponsor, and we've done a great job supporting our parent organization.

We need to make sure that we continue our dedication and hard work for our Legion charities and maintain a dignified way of life for all veterans who have served our great country. In other words, we can say to foster and perpetuate a true spirit of Americanism.

So, to go back, so, I too was given a watch and the timer was set. So in conclusion, though, I would like to say thanks again for putting your trust into me to serve as your National Vice Commander. And as the saying goes: What happens in your Detachment does not always stay in your Detachment, as we can see by the awards and everything else. All the other stuff stays at the hospitality room.

So, thank you again. And as every speech was

concluded on my travels, go Team 100, even though the National Commander is not here, but we all strived for that.

I just want to say thank you again for the opportunity and the honor to serve as your National Vice Commander.

With that being said, Commander, I'd like to make a motion to accept my report as a delegate of this.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

JIMMY HUNTER: Second by Jimmy Hunter, Illinois.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, Jimmy. Any discussion on the motion?

NATIONAL ADJUTANT ANTHONY WRIGHT: Can't second. He's from Illinois.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We need another second from a different Detachment, please.

GARY LAMUNYON: Gary LaMunyon, Detachment of Michigan, Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you.

We have a motion and a second. Any question on the motion?

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: At this time I call National Vice Commander Edward Cleary for his final report. Pete Sierminski on deck.

National Vice Commander - West's Final Report

National Vice Commander - West

Edward M. Cleary (AZ)

Good afternoon. Is it afternoon? Good morning, everybody. I'm going to start out my report, I did do two visits in the region this year. I went to Idaho and Oregon.

I want to personally thank Woody up here in front for taking very good care of me in Idaho, and back there, Willy from Oregon. You guys took very good care of me. You can start the PowerPoint anytime you're ready. I have a few pictures.

I also want to take the time to thank my father for giving me the opportunity to be a member of this great organization.

You can go to the next one. It's a great honor to work with a great team of you Vice Commanders this year. The rendezvous was a very successful tool in our region to get everyone together as a team.

I want to take the time to thank Arizona for

having my back the entire year. And that's about all I've got to say.

I'm just going to keep it nice and short, just let the pictures run. Thank you, gentlemen, very much.

(Applause)

As a duly elected delegate of this convention, I move to accept my report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion.

WOODY JONES: Woody Jones from Idaho seconds that.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a second. Any discussion on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you, gentlemen.

Pete Sierminski, please come on up for your final report as well.

National Vice Commander - Midwest's Final Report

National Vice Commander - Midwest

Peter J. Sierminski (CO)

Thank you, sir. Good morning, everybody.

My eligibility comes through my father who served in the United States Navy during World War II in the Pacific Theater. Because of his service, I had the

opportunity to serve as National Vice Commander this year. Thank you, Dad. You are always in my heart.

As an organization, we strive to keep that sacrifice known and honored. It is our legacy as Sons of those who serve to continue to keep the people aware of that level.

My journeys began with a visit to Nebraska for their mid-year conference. Thank you, NEC George for picking me up and driving up to Norfolk. It was a long drive on icy roads and you handled it despite the blizzard condition.

Nebraska is well represented on our national level. They have the National Chaplain, Dave Rippe, here. And Seth is the PR chairman this year.

I had the pleasure of attending their state oratorical final while I was there. And the Legion family all came out to support that.

We also had the opportunity to visit the Norfolk Veterans Home, a wonderful experience. Thanks, Nebraska, for all your hospitality.

Next it was on to Texas and the city of Austin for their mid-year conference. Thank you, John, for picking me up at the airport and entertaining me while David arrived at the conference.

Texas has great leadership in their Detachment.

They all work the Legion programs and are a true Legion family. A special shout-out to Tom Skelley for serving as the Midwest Regional Membership chairman this past year. Great job. Thank you, Texas.

My next stop was Dodge City, Kansas, for their mid-winter conference. Don Culver, you are an asset to this organization. Thank you for everything you do.

I flew right into Dodge City on a six-seat turboprop plane. Don picked me up at the gigantic airport there in Dodge City. Sure beats Denver and DIA. No crowds at all. Steve, thanks for all you did to make my stay very enjoyable.

When you think membership, Kansas does it right for sure. Thank you.

My next visit was to New Mexico for their mid-year conference. Don picked me up and took care of me. I addressed all four parts of the Legion family. They have great leadership with national membership chairman Joseph and his family's involvement in that department. Amazing what they do.

What impressed me the most was the turnout that they had at their Legion Riders meeting. The largest I've ever seen. Thank you for all you did for me.

Next up was to the cowboy country, Laramie, Wyoming, my friends just north of Colorado, for their

state conference. Swanny, thanks for all you did to make my visit enjoyable. I was impressed by the turnout they had at their meeting, one of the largest I believe that they've ever had.

So, Swanny, how many more blocks until we get to where the convention parade starts? We walked, I think, further to get there than we walked in the parade. Thank you to my friends just north of me.

A big thank you to the whole Midwest region for a job well done. Without all your help this past year, we could not have accomplished all we did.

As we move through the 100th anniversary of our parent organization, we took stock into ways we could help them stay vibrant, relevant into the next century.

We all became part of Team 100. Thank you for becoming part of that and embracing it and making our organization strong.

Do not let an opportunity pass where you can help support America's best. Without the strength of our military, this world would certainly be a different place. Thank you to all that serve and their families that stood by their side. And thank you, Midwest, for giving me this opportunity this year. Thank you.

As a delegate to this convention, I make a motion to accept my report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

NICK ARCEO: Nick Arceo, Detachment of Colorado, I second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We need another Detachment, please.

JACK LYLE: Jack Lyle seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. We have a motion and a second. Any question on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried.

Gentlemen, Steve Gower is not with us because he's a little bit incapacitated at the moment, but he has filed his report and it will be in the minutes.

I'm now going to turn the gavel over to Vice Commander Pete Sierminski.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER SIERMINSKI: Thank you, Commander. Commander, are you ready to give your report for this year?

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I am.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER PETER SIERMINSKI: All right. Come on up.

National Commander's Final Report**National Commander Greg "Doc" Gibbs (NY)**

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Just a reminder, I guess, before I begin my words. Our travel schedule is developed immediately after the convention. So you heard the Vice Commanders talk about the places they've been.

Well, that gets all developed immediately after convention. So, please, if you have not, put your requests in as soon as possible so that you can get your Vice Commander or a Commander to visit your Detachment.

So, we've been sitting up here the last couple of days, and I take it you've seen my flag. And for many of you, you know what that's all about. But for those that do not, my dad passed away at 57 years old, a number of years back.

He was a World War II combat Marine. Served in Iwo Jima, Tinian, Saipan, a lot of places that a lot of guys didn't come back from. And he was only 16 at the time.

I come from a three blue-star World War II family -- my dad and his two brothers.

His one brother, Bob, served in the Marine Corps as well. And his brother Jack served in the Army Air Corps at that time, in Europe.

So that's what the flag is all about.

Gentlemen, if your attention span is already shot, which it could be, please just watch the video go by of the pictures from some of the visitations we've had this year.

As Commander, I've accepted your invitations. And I went on 40 trips this past year, amounting to about 158 days on the road, in the air, and over the seas.

It was my goal to represent you proudly and professionally. And I hope that has been accomplished.

Ours is a mighty organization, and I appreciate the trust you had in me when you elected me last year, and I hope that I've helped our organization grow in a more positive and productive manner.

As we come to a close on the 100th year commemoration of The American Legion, we can surely look back and see how our patriotism has been reflected throughout this year.

Events and actions that took place honoring our past truly do help to continue our legacy as our motto for this year suggests.

Through our team of successful chairmen, our Blue Cap members, our Vice Commanders, the Sons have moved forward, creating yet another year of membership and

donation milestones.

We have supported and passed new veterans legislation this year. We have pushed the VA to continue making progress and caring for our veterans as well.

As my own National Commandership fades into history, I hope that each succeeding Sons of the American Legion National Commander will add to our impressive movement forward, as we aid The American Legion in establishing their next hundred years' impact.

The actions at our local Squadrons have taken this year in honoring the 100th anniversary, they've all been exemplary, as I've traveled around the country, seen amazing things -- parades, dinners, fundraisers, honor ceremonies -- all have helped keep our legacy alive and aid in helping the younger generation really get to realize the sacrifice that our American women, men, soldiers, sailors, Airman and Marines have made to keep freedom across the globe all these years.

Educating our own children and youth in these sacrifices helps to ensure support and care for our veterans for years to come, which is a major part of our mission as Sons.

May the breadth and depth of our Sons organization expand to build a stronger tomorrow in

America. The lamp of liberty depends on the fuel of patriotism, a fuel that we help to embrace and create through everything we do.

May God continue to bless our veterans and our American Legion family organization. Thank you, gentlemen, for all you've done this year to make that happen.

I stand at the ready to help our next National Commander establish and help and keep his goals in our great organization.

I humbly close in honoring the past and continuing our legacy. Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER SIERMINSKI: I, Pete Sierminski, make a motion to accept your National Commander's report. Do I have a second?

DENNIS HENKEMEYER: Second, Minnesota, Dennis Henkemeyer.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER PETER SIERMINSKI: All right, we have a second. Any discussion on that?

Hearing none, thank you. Thank you, Commander. He's done a wonderful job this year.

(Applause)

I will turn the gavel back to your National Commander, Greg "Doc" Gibbs.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: At this time we're going to call our VE&E chairman, Chris Carlton, up for his report. And on deck will be National Americanism Committee report. I'm sorry, after Internal Affairs will be the Americanism Committee report.

**Report of the Veterans Employment and Education
Commission**

**National Veterans Employment and Education Commission
Chairman Christopher A. Carlton (IN)**

Commander Gibbs, national officers, Distinguished Guests, my fellow members, good morning.

I'd like to start out by recognizing the Commission members that I've had the honor to work with this year.

If you're here in the crowd, please stand up. If not, their name will be read. Marvin Nay, who was representing the East Coast; Blair Miles was representing the South; Travis Cummins was representing the Central; Ray Edwards was representing the Midwest; and David Swafford was representing the West.

Gentlemen, it was a pleasure and an honor working with you this past year. I feel that we gained some momentum and some ground as we evolved our commission.

The Veterans Employment and Education is to

assist The American Legion in ensuring that American veterans have the opportunity to provide with honor and dignity the economic necessities of life for themselves and their families.

This past year, as I've said, we've kind of evolved our commission. In the past we've always focused on job fairs as the employment side of this commission.

But we've also grown to see that it's just not the job fairs that can help, but sometimes it's a business fair that your post may put on, or helping transition our veteran's resumé from his military work to his civilian job.

We have found that there are opportunities for small businesses, that veterans can take their time to retrain and get more involved. And I appreciate all the Detachments that have stepped up and listened to our questions and asked you, you know, to develop a committee for VE&E.

And if you weren't able to develop a whole committee, that you would be able to at least maybe work with your VA&R and have one representative to represent the VE&E.

The second part of our commission, and this is where we've started to evolve, I believe, is the

education part. A lot of us, you know, we have gained -- well, all of us have gained our eligibility through our father or grandfather's service.

But as we know, as we get older, our veterans nowadays, they're a lot younger than what we are. They're coming back from service and they have the opportunity to use the GI Bill.

But maybe they're not aware of how to use it. So now we are starting to encourage our veterans to look out and seek out more education to help better their opportunities for employment.

One thing to be mindful and always be mindful of, of those schools out there that are predatory schools, that are out there to rob our veterans of their GI Bill, where they could spend many years in class and learning only to come to find out that it was all for nothing; that they need more continuing training and more learning to get something.

With both of these working together, there is a third part of our commission and our committees. And that is to stop and end homelessness of our veterans.

There are a lot of homeless veterans out there that sometimes just need a chance. We need to be mindful and be out there ready to help support any organization that works with our homeless.

If a homeless veteran needs to go to a job interview, will he have the clothes to wear to that? If a homeless veteran needs a little more training, are we going to be there to help him along, to show him ways and opportunities that he can further his education?

Always be mindful and watchful and see what we can do at our Post level to help our veterans with these education and employment opportunities.

Gentlemen, it's been a great year. And once again I do thank the Detachments for stepping up. As we go further throughout the years, we hope that one day we, too, will be able to have our numbers of hours being recognized, that we can announce how many hours we are devoting to this.

That's why we've worked with the other commissions and committees on our consolidated report form, and we hope to have two line items at least. So that way we can be sure and we can show The American Legion what we are doing for veterans education and employment -- employment and education. With that, thank you, Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Would you like to make a motion?

CHRIS CARLTON: As a delegate to this convention, I'd like to make a motion to accept the VE&E report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, Chris. We have a motion. Do we have a second?

JIM COATES: Jim Coates, New York, seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, New York. We have a motion and a second. Any question on the motion?

Hearing none, all in favor say aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you, Chris.

Our Internal Affairs Commission is up next. It's Mark Tansel. Thank you, Mark.

Report of the Internal Affairs Committee

National Convention Internal Affairs Committee Chairman

Mark A. Tansel (IN)

Good morning.

Delegates, alternates, guests to this 48th National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion, I report to you on the Internal Affairs Committee meeting that was held Friday, August 23rd, 2019.

Forty-one members representing 24 Detachments were in attendance for our meeting. Under old business, it was discussed regarding the proposed Consolidated Squadron Report Form, a revision that was brought forth in 2018. That has not been finished as of this time,

and more discussion was to be brought to the meeting after Chairman Tansel returned to the meeting due to being at the preconvention NEC meeting.

Under new business, S.A.L. Resolution 4 - National Convention, 2019: S.A.L. Awards and Medals, submitted by the Detachment of Washington, Vice Chairman Don Culver asked for the body's thoughts and concerns regarding the Resolution.

After discussion, the Resolution was returned to the Detachment of Washington stating that more work needed to be brought forth. That motion was made by Matt Krypco [phonetic] of Kansas. It was seconded by George Curtis of California. And the motion passed.

Vice Chairman Culver also conducted an open discussion concerning the potential dues increase with the understanding that this was for informational purposes only.

After some interesting and well-thought comments, the discussion was concluded. At this point, Chairman Tansel had returned to the room and in doing so old business was brought back forth regarding the Consolidated Squadron Report.

It was explained to the body that the new proposed Consolidated Squadron Report was complete and had been submitted to Ken George, our National Liaison.

A new Resolution will be forthcoming to amend Resolution 5 from the spring of 2018. That will strike the final resolved clause from that 2018 Resolution with a new final resolved clause as amended.

At the end of our meeting, the commission and the members of the committee that were at that meeting came up and thanked Don Culver for his years of service to the Internal Affairs Commission. Don will be leaving the commission this year after all of his years as National Vice Commander, part of the MT&D and also Internal Affairs. And we thank Don for his service.

(Applause)

Mr. Commander -- Mr. Commander, at this time I would like to conclude this report. And as a duly elected delegate of this 48th National Convention, I move for the acceptance of the report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, sir. We have a motion. Do we have a second?

KEITH BIRKMEYER: Keith Birkmeyer, Detachment of Arizona Adjutant, or Steve, I second that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion and a second. Any questions on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you, Mark.

MARK TANSEL: Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Gentlemen, we have another honored guest to be with us this morning. That's our National President, Kathy Dungan, from Mississippi. I'd like you to rise, please.

(Applause)

Gentlemen, this is more than an introduction. I spent a year traveling with this person on and off. And it's just been great. It's been fabulous. I'm going to tell you a little bit about her and let her share some words with us this morning.

Kathy Dungan of Wesson, Mississippi was elected as National President of The American Legion Auxiliary during their organization's 98th National Convention held last year in Minneapolis. And she'll serve for one year as we all do.

Kathy has held numerous leadership positions in the organization -- unit, district, department and national levels. At the national level she shared 10 committees and served special appointments, including work on the ALA's five-year Centennial Strategic Plan, their future focus committee, the 100th Anniversary Committee and Succession Planning Committee.

Kathy also served as The American Legion

Auxiliary Mississippi Girl's state director for three years. "Members of the Auxiliary, thank you for putting your trust in me" is what she said back a year from now, and that trust has obviously been well accepted.

After more than 20 years of employment with the Mississippi Supreme Court, she retired as a judicial assistant for the Supreme Court judge. She's actively involved in her community in many ways, including a member of the Little Bahala Baptist Church, where she volunteers as a church treasurer and has for more than a decade.

A youth Sunday schoolteacher and a member of the Widows Ministry Committee and planning committee. Kathy's love for God and country is the guiding reason for her dedication to make a difference in the lives of veterans. And she steadfastly believes in the ALA's mission of service not self.

She's a 40-year member of The American Legion Auxiliary and eligible through membership through her father, Wittie Card, who served in the Army in World War II. Kathy and her husband, William, have one son and two grandchildren. All are members of The American Legion family.

I present to you, our national president, Kathy Dungan.

Distinguished Guest Kathy Dungan (MS)

American Legion Auxiliary National President

Thank you, Commander. Thank you, Commander.
Thank you, all.

(Applause)

I want to thank you all for giving me the opportunity to come and thank you personally for all the support you have given The American Legion Auxiliary this year.

During my travels, I have witnessed firsthand the amazing work that the Sons of the American Legion do for our heroes, children and youth in our communities. You are always there to support the Auxiliary in any way needed. And thank you.

And your contributions to the Child Welfare Foundation is just awesome. Over \$8 million since 1988. Wow, that is so impressive.

Your dedication to helping our children is beyond reproach. And just think of the countless number of lives of children you have touched.

I want to thank you for giving me the most amazing Sons of the American Legion National Commander, Doc Gibbs, this year, working side by side in promoting our mission of service. I could not have asked for a

more finer gentleman to serve with.

Our paths have crossed several times while traveling for this great organization. As a Legion family with National Commander Brett and National Commander Doc, we were honored to place wreaths at several ceremonies during our European trip. What an honor.

Words cannot describe the emotions that went through my mind as we honored those heroes that made the ultimate sacrifice for us.

Many of you followed me on Facebook and were very supportive with your comments. Thank you for that support.

It has been a wonderful year, one that I will never forget. Thank you all for being a part of this amazing journey with me.

Doc, thank you for your service in this great organization. I wish you the very best, you and Pam the very best as you begin a new chapter of service for God and country. And I've got a little token to give you. You won't be surprised. It's no joke or no surprise. You'll be okay with it.

I don't know if you've seen them. It's one of those electronic things that you plug your jump drive in and all the pictures you can store, like 5,000 pictures

on it. And we took a lot of pictures during our travels. So these are wonderful memories that you can set on your desk and look at every day.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Excellent. Excellent. Thank you so much.

NATIONAL AUXILIARY PRESIDENT DUNGAN: You're welcome. Thank you. And I have a small token gift for Pam. If you would just like to give it to her for me, would you, please?

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Certainly. She'll be here later today.

NATIONAL AUXILIARY PRESIDENT DUNGAN: Wonderful, this is her little gift.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I'll keep that secret. Well, Kathy, I'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our own convention. And I do have a gift for you later, but I'll share that next week when I visit your convention.

NATIONAL AUXILIARY PRESIDENT DUNGAN: All right.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: So, please accept this from us, from all of us, our thanks. I don't believe you have one of these. You have one of my other things, but please take that with you.

And I'd like to present you with a citation that says: "This citation of appreciation, presented to

Kathy Dungan, National President of The American Legion Auxiliary, in recognition of outstanding contributions and in appreciation for dedicated service to the programs of the Sons of the American Legion. Given this 23rd day of August 2019 in the city of Indianapolis, Indiana."

Thank you.

NATIONAL AUXILIARY PRESIDENT DUNGAN: Thank you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Sincerely appreciate all you've done.

NATIONAL AUXILIARY PRESIDENT DUNGAN: Thank you and God bless each and every one of you. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, gentlemen. Please remain standing. We have another guest with us. I'd like to introduce Past National Commander Bob Turner and invite him to the podium for his remarks.

(Applause)

Distinguished Guest Robert S. Turner (GA)

American Legion Past National Commander

Good morning, S.A.L.

And I want you to know I'm one of you. I have a S.A.L. cap back in the room, but they told me that I should wear the cap of my highest office. And I have

not been the Commander of the S.A.L. yet.

(Laughter)

Thank you all so very much for allowing me to join you. I want to pay special attention to a group of my friends over there in the corner from the Detachment of Georgia. And I'm a proud member of Squadron 112 in Dalton, Georgia. And we do good work in Georgia for the S.A.L., and I thank you.

The reason for my being here this morning is just to say thank you for what you do, for your support of The American Legion and for the things that we do, but more importantly for your support of the Child Welfare Foundation, an organization that I'm fortunate enough to serve as treasurer of.

So every once in a while I see checks coming across the desk and being deposited that have S.A.L. Squadrons all over this country on them. And, yes, I'm aware of the fact that you have contributed more than \$8 million to the CWF.

We do some good work. We meet twice a year, in the fall and in the spring, and any of you who are in Indianapolis at the time of those meetings, we invite you to come by and join us and see and hear some of the things that your money is going to.

Thank you all so very much for allowing me to

join you. I apologize for interrupting your convention, but I did want to come by and say hello to all of you. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Bob, we'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention as well. Thank you for your remarks, and thank you for all you do to get our money to the right people through the CWF.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER TURNER: Thank you, buddy. I appreciate it.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Have a good afternoon. Thank you.

(Applause)

Gentlemen, please remain standing. I'd like to ask Michele Emery to bring our Youth Champions forward at this time.

(Applause)

Michele, please.

Distinguished Guests

American Legion Youth Champions

Alumni Program Development Coordinator Michele Emery

Good morning.

Thank you for having us. We have six Youth Champions. Five of them are with you today. I'm going

to let them introduce themselves because they would do it so much better than I. So without further ado, here are your Youth Champions.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have Luke with us. He's our Boys Nation president. Invite you to share a few words with us.

(Applause)

Lucas Acevedo, Gardner, MA

2019 Boys Nation President

Thank you. Good morning.

First of all, I would primarily like to thank The American Legion as a whole for allowing myself and the other Youth Champions the ability to come into Indianapolis this week and the ability to climb to the top of our respective competitions.

That being said, I would also like to specifically thank Mr. Scott Wynn of Indiana as director of Boys Nation for executing what is probably the single greatest program I've ever participated in.

And Mr. Mark Avis, as the chairman of my Boys State for everything that he has done for the next generation of Bay Staters.

I would also like to thank Mr. Bill Murphy of the

Sons of the American Legion for following and guiding me to the very top of my position as president. And I'd like to thank my guidance counselor, Mrs. Salilla, for recommending me to the Boys State program.

In addition, I'd like to thank my counselors at both Boys State and Boys Nation, the good people at The American Legion, Gardner, Massachusetts Post, and my English teacher, Mr. Cowett, for teaching me how to write a speech.

(Laughter)

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I'd like to thank my mother for raising me to be the man that you see in front of you today.

(Applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, I mean it when I say that this program has changed my life for the better. Not only has it been a wake-up call to see 99 other like-minded individuals from all across the country, but I've made some of the strongest fraternal human bonds that a person can make.

And I believe that that's truly what the greatest aspect of the Boys Nation program is. Because if I had not won the presidency, and if anybody else that was running against me was standing on this stage today, I could proudly say that he and a few others are some of

the best friends that I have had and ever will have.

And I thank you all for that. So thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Luke, we're really pleased to have you with us. We'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention. I'd like to give you one of my coins. And the folks from the Detachment of Massachusetts have a special presentation they'd like to take care of.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER O'HEARNE: Thank you, Commander, and on behalf of the Detachment of Massachusetts, and as a proud member of the Boys Nation staff and alumni, and in honor of your grandfather's service to the Korean War and the United States Army, I'm proud to present you a membership card to the Boys State Alumni Squadron No. 297 from the Detachment of Massachusetts. Joined by our Boys State director, Mark Avis.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, gentlemen. How about a picture?

Next, I'd like to introduce Makenzie Sheffield. Thank you, Makenzie. Go ahead.

Makenzie Sheffield, Granbury, Texas

2019 Air Rifle Precision Champion

Well, good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

I hope everyone is enjoying the last stretch of summer weather. My name is Makenzie Sheffield. I'm currently a varsity rifle athlete at North Carolina State University. Go, Wolfpack.

(Applause)

Thank you. I've been privileged with an invitation to come here today and speak to you as the result of my winning a national title through this extraordinary program.

My life is one big blessing, and I would not be on this path that I am on now without the hard work and persistence from those of The American Legion who support and fuel athletes like me towards their dreams.

If someone had told me a year ago I would be in this position, I would not have ever believed them. Of course, as an aspiring collegiate athlete I'm always looking to face a challenge head on. And the coordinators at the Legion are more than happy to oblige with creating an amazing opportunity for top athletes around the country.

The competition I competed in was one that I'll always remember. The whirlwind of graduation, college preparations and traveling were taking a toll on me mentally and physically. It was a great challenge and

circumstance that allowed me to put my best foot forward.

Thanks to the atmosphere and preparations The American Legion provided for this national competition, I'm able to say that I feel like a winner in and out of the range. I'm ready to run into this upcoming year looking for more challenges than I was before.

Going into college is a daunting task, and it's completely different than high school, knowing that so many other athletes are going to be given this opportunity because how generous and hard working The American Legion is.

Although I'm more grateful than words can express for the scholarship I received, I am more thankful for the experience that I went through because I know that I will take the lessons that I've learned throughout my years from this association with The American Legion into life.

Thank you all for being here, and I hope you have a wonderful day. And again thank you to those who participated across the country and those who worked behind the scenes for giving people like me and other athletes an opportunity to live out my dream. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I want to give you one of my coins. Makenzie, we're really happy to have you with us this morning, and we'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our National Convention. Thank you for all you do and all you represent.

(Applause)

Our next Youth Champion, I had the -- Jaden-Ann Fraser, I've had the pleasure of going to Colorado and seeing the shooting sports finals.

Two women won the finals.

(Applause)

Just amazing, gentlemen. It's one amazing lady in terms of shooting. Go right ahead.

Jaden-Ann Fraser, Church Hill, Tennessee

2019 Air Rifle Sporter Champion

Thank you. How's everyone doing today?

Good. I'm so excited to be here in beautiful Indianapolis, Indiana, amongst all of you, The American Legion family. Let me start off by acknowledging each and every one of you -- the officials, The American Legion, the Sons of the American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary, Post 3 from Kingsport, Tennessee, and your wonderful staff. I'm honored to be in your company.

Although I was not raised in a military home, I do have military family members both past and present. I never really held high regard for the core values they believed in and fought for.

I never took it upon myself to sit and talk with my grandfather or my aunt and uncle about their military experiences. It wasn't until I joined the NJROTC program at Volunteer High School and was introduced to Chief Petty Officer Norman Greer and Maj. Steven Bickford that I became cognizant of the noble acts of valor our military members represent. And it changed my entire outlook on the military as a whole.

As the NJROTC cadet executive officer and rifle team captain, I've pledged to be a role model in my school, on my range and in my community. To those I met in Colorado Springs personally, I hope I represented well.

Competitive marksmanship has been a source of countless introductions to upstanding people for me, both youth and adult, military and civilian. You, The American Legion organization, chartered first in 1919, has left a lasting impression on this 17-year-old girl from Surgoinsville, Tennessee.

The American Legion national match was by far the most intense, prestigious and successful event of my

shooting career, and I was most honored and humbled by the entire experience.

Before the match, I held six national titles. And thanks to all of you for organizing and sponsoring, I now hold seven.

(Applause)

I love my sport and I want to share with you why. It's a sport that exemplifies self-control, dedication, passion, camaraderie, skill and respect. Isn't that what all sports should represent?

But, sadly, that's not the case. Instead we have violence both on the field and off. We witnessed intentional abrupt acts of disrespect towards our nation, our stars and stripes, and our youth.

(Applause)

It happens at all levels right down to a coach and a parent arguing at a Little League football game over a bad call.

I can't control them. But I can control myself. And I aim to emulate the same virtues and values that each and every one of you sitting before me possess. I will do so with dignity and pride.

I'd like to end by saying that although I don't know exactly what university I will attend or what career path I may choose, The American Legion can rest

assured that the scholarship you provided is greatly appreciated, and I will always do my best to exemplify Americanism.

Thank you all so much for this incredible opportunity. I'm very thankful.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. Please accept one of my coins. Jaden-Ann, I'd also like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention. Thank you for coming with us. Thank you very much.

It's now my pleasure to introduce to you someone else in my path. His path and mine crossed this year, and that's our National Oratorical Champion, Patrick Junker.

(Applause)

Patrick Junker, Van Meter, Iowa

2019 National Oratorical Contest Winner

Hello.

I can honestly say that The American Legion Oratorical Contest was one of the most formative experiences I've ever had in my life.

When I started the oratorical contest more than two years ago, I had horrible stage fright. I'd get the shakes. I would have a hard time breathing. And one

wrong look from a judge would have probably caused a panic attack.

The first time that I went to nationals for the oratorical contest, I had high hopes. And I had felt prepared. Coming out of the quarterfinals that year, I thought I had done a great job.

The judges did not feel the same way, though.

(Laughter)

I lost in the first round of the competition that year. That loss inspired me to reevaluate my speeches and myself. It made me better.

I truly believe that if I would not have lost in the first year, I would not have won in the second. This competition has taught me so much more than how to get over my stage fright.

Not only did it teach me so much about the Constitution, it also taught me perseverance. It taught me how to lose and how to get back up and try again.

The lessons I learned from the oratorical contests are far more valuable than the \$18,000 prize will ever be. These lessons are truly invaluable.

This contest achieved something that many classrooms and schools across America simply cannot achieve. It has taught thousands, myself included, how to become stronger as a person and how to use that

strength to protect the ideals of the Constitution.

I want to thank The American Legion for the opportunity to learn these lessons and values. I want to thank my American Legion Post, 403, of Van Meter, Iowa for their never-ending support. And lastly, I want to thank National Commander Brett Reistad and every member of the Americanism Commission for supporting and maintaining the oratorical program, which has changed so many lives, including mine.

Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Please accept one of my coins. Patrick, we'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention as well. Thank you for coming with us. Thank you, sir.

(Applause)

Now, our next wonderful Youth Champion is Jaden Anderson, our Eagle Scout of the Year. I'd like to introduce him.

(Applause)

Jaden Anderson, Provo, Utah

2019 Eagle Scout of the Year

Thank you.

During the Civil War, the 24-note composition

that we know today as "Taps" was nothing more than a simple bugle call telling Union soldiers to turn out the lights.

"Taps" did not garner any significant meaning until a commanding officer overseeing the funeral of a soldier killed in action made the decision to play "Taps" in place of the three rifle volleys, so as to make certain the nearby enemy would not confuse the firing of rifles as an attack.

Today, that simple 24-note composition we call "Taps" is a nationally recognized and respected -- is nationally recognized and respected by all Americans.

The mournful notes comprising "Taps" are played to commemorate the memory of members of all five branches of the Armed Forces. On Memorial Day, this simple melody is engrained in our national identity and is heard at commemorative ceremonies throughout the nation.

The final bugle call is a sign of respect for all those who have honorably served our country.

I came to know the history of "Taps" shortly after I received this award and was asked to play "Taps" at a local cemetery during a Memorial Day service and also at a flag-retirement ceremony.

I had not played the trumpet in some time, almost

two years, so I definitely needed to practice. I ended up playing well at both events and it was good to see how grateful people were.

"Taps" is a great example of how something simple, almost meaningless, can become something significant and powerful in the lives of others.

Like "Taps," at the beginning of my Scouting and involvement in The American Legion, participating in these organizations didn't have much significance. It was part of my life that I enjoyed, but it was a lot more like the lights-out version of the "Taps" melody.

It wasn't until I began to learn more about these organizations and how they serve others that they began to have a more meaningful change in my life.

My experiences in Scouting and The American Legion built upon each other and continue to have significant and appreciated importance in the living, sharing and passing on the core principles of the Scout Oath and Scout Law to the future generation.

Doing my duty to God and country are now an integral part of me. In some ways, Scouting and The American Legion are like "Taps." What started as a simple, almost meaningless beginning have grown to be a significant aspect of my life.

I want to thank you all for the opportunity to

apply for the scholarship. This scholarship will help me pursue my goals of attending college and will provide opportunities for me to serve my community in the future.

I'd like to thank all those who are here today and all my past Scouting leaders who have helped me to grow and continue to be examples to me today.

May the 24 simple notes that comprise "Taps" remind us that small things, things that may seem insignificant at the time, will result in big changes in the lives of others. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Jaden, we'd like to give you one of our coins. Jaden, we'd like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention as well.

But I'd like to invite our Americanism chairman, Don Hall, from Maryland, to come up for this next presentation for you. And I'm going to read it, and the chairman will give you the awards.

"Certificate of appreciation presented to Jaden Anderson for dedicated service in promoting 100 percent Americanism through your successful completion of the 10 ideals and five-star programs of the Sons of the American Legion. Your outstanding achievements have brought great credit to yourself, your Squadron and the

Sons of the American Legion as a whole. Given this 24th day of August 2019, city of Indianapolis, Indiana."

Thank you, sir.

(Applause)

Youth Champions, please come on up. We'd like to get a picture of all of you together.

Gentlemen, I don't have to tell you, you know by just hearing what you just heard, but I've gotten to know at least a couple of these people on a little bit closer basis, We are in good hands for the future with folks like these. Please, let's give them another hand. Our Youth Champions.

(Standing ovation)

At this time, I call Don Hall, Jr., for the National Convention Americanism committee report and awards. On deck, Legislative Rules committee report and Finance committee.

Report of the Americanism Committee

National Convention Americanism Committee Chairman

Donald L. Hall, Jr. (MD)

It's still good morning.

As Americanism chairman, wasn't it great to see all this up here? I can tell you, that's Americanism working at its finest, seeing those Youth Champions up

there.

I just got done spending the last couple of hours over in the room with the eight, nine young people that you see here this morning, and I can tell you there's a lot of fun going on over there, and it's enjoyable.

And if you want to hear the truth, it comes out of the mouth of those babes over there. So go over there. You can learn a lot.

Yesterday we had our meeting called to order at 8:30. We had 62 people sign in the room including seven Past National Commanders. Commander Cliff Smith, Joe Mayne, Gene Sacco, Michael Seaton, Danny Smith, Mike Moss and Kevin Collier all were with us and had a chance to speak. I thank all of them for being there.

PNC Cliff Smith wanted to thank the Americanism Commission and asked me if he could, for all the work that we've done this past year, in getting out information to everybody. The entire commission appreciated the remarks of PNC Smith and all the other Past National Commanders.

We talked about the wrapping up the resolution that came before the last NEC, on chaplain's training, and we made a promise that we would follow that up and make sure that we do not let that fall away but that we would get that taken care of.

Also talked about our goals moving forward. It's the 10 ideals. You've just seen a young man receive his 10 ideal award. And we're working hard to get that on a PowerPoint, online, so everybody can have it at their fingertips whenever they go on their phones, iPads or computers. That is a big goal for us to do as we move the organization forward.

We also promised that we would try to have that at the NEC by spring and voted to introduce the new one. Discussion was had about judging. As we started judging, folks, we need everybody to take a look at what they're doing when they're filling out their CSRs.

There's a lot of people who filled them out where they had zero membership down because they put down 2018. So as it comes through and gets filled out that gets wiped away, and we don't know what the membership is. Therefore, we can't give you a per capita if we don't know what membership is.

So we need to get that word back. There was a lot of discussion on how we can solve that issue, put that online. But if you put it online they can still write the address and date in there.

So the issue is teaching our members of how to fill out their CSRs. And we hope to keep working on that. All of our commission committees need to work on

that.

As we got into judging, one of our main points there, I thanked the commission for all their work. Some of them were around in the room, but other members are here with us and we had a fantastic year. We did judge our Americanism award winners. We'd like for them to come up at this time.

**Presentation of the National Americanism Awards
National Convention Americanism Committee Chairman
Donald L. Hall, Jr. (MD)**

Squadron of the Year: Squadron 916, Antwerp,
from the Detachment of New York.

(Applause)

Also our District winner, District 6 of Nebraska.

(Applause)

And our Detachment winner, the Detachment of
Washington.

(Applause)

As they make their way up to get awards, we did have a PowerPoint put together by commission member Ernie Laberge. They'll play some of that so everybody is not just waiting.

Right after that we went into our scrapbook judging, also. This year we had five squadrons. And I want to recognize all the Squadrons who participated and sent their book in, not just the winner, because it's nice to have those books to judge.

And we ask that more people please do work on Squadrons, District and Detachment. We only had one each for District and one for Detachment. The five Squadrons were: Parkville Squadron 183 of Maryland; Carter Burdell Hagler Squadron 178 of Georgia; Harry White Wilmer Squadron 82 of Maryland; Cyril P. Morrisette Squadron 294 of Massachusetts; and Anthony Wayne Squadron 174 of New Jersey.

The Squadron winner was Harry White Wilmer Squadron 82 of Maryland.

(Applause)

The District winner was the Third District of the Detachment of Minnesota.

(Applause)

And our Detachment winner, the Detachment of Maryland.

(Applause)

To keep on moving with awards, the National Emergency Fund Per Capita by Region awards: For the south, Arkansas, \$6.43; for the West, Alaska, \$1.07; the

Midwest, Montana, 86 cents; for the Central, Missouri, 84 cents; and from the East, Connecticut, 72 cents.

(Applause)

To try to get everybody to move on so we can get more things done and move faster, we'll bring up the winners of the highest Legacy Scholarship Fund donation by region also: For the East, Massachusetts, \$1,000; the Central, Indiana, \$800; Midwest, Nebraska, \$750; the South, Florida, \$500; and from the West, Arizona, \$100.

Please make your way forward.

(Applause)

Again, how about a big round of applause for all of our winners.

(Applause)

It has been an honor to serve this year as the Americanism chairman. Doc, I appreciate you and all your help.

I want to thank PNC Danny Smith for a lot of guidance, friendship and help along the way, and so many others. Thanks, everybody, for your support on making the Americanism Commission the best it can be.

Doc, this is my report. As a delegate of this convention, I make a motion to accept the report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I'll give you one of my coins. You probably already have one from Miami.

Before we get into a second, I'm going to present a little award, a special award, from me to J.R.

All of you remember last year at the Convention, I put out the challenge to bring some youth here and we're going to do something with the youth. Well, as that evolved, that all fell on J.R.

And he has done a fantastic job. So I just want to give this plaque to him. It says "Presented to Donald "J.R." Hall, National Americanism Chairman, in appreciation for exemplary service to the Legion Family Youth Initiative."

Thank you, Don.

We have a motion. Do we have a second?

BUD NEEL: Bud Neel, Detachment of Nebraska, seconds that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion and a second. Any question on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you.

(Applause)

Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort Stacey Cope, our TFA Program Manager, to the podium.

(Applause)

Distinguished Guest Stacey Cope
ALEF Chairman and TFA Program Manager
American Legion Endowment Fund Awards

It's a pleasure to be here today with such outstanding people such as yourselves, the S.A.L., an important member of The American Legion family.

I have to shout out to Illinois. Hello.

All right. National Commander Doc, Past National Commanders, Distinguished Guests and Delegates, thank you for the very strong support of the Veterans & Children Foundation.

At the beginning of this year, our government shut down and part of the Veterans and Children Foundation program is the TFA.

Our National Commander, Brett Reistad, of The American Legion, authorized our TFA to talk to the enlisted personnel from the Coast Guard. At that time, they were not considered critical personnel because they were not under the Department of Defense but under the Department of Transportation. So they were not getting paid.

So, TFA went out and made them available and made the funds available. They took \$1 million that was

absolutely necessary to be needed.

So this is what this foundation does. And we also support training for the service officers and their education.

During this program year, The American Legion Endowment Fund underwent a name change. The American Legion Endowment Fund remains its legal name but will now be known as The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation. This change was necessary to spark a renewed focus upon helping veterans and children of this great country.

Through the S.A.L.'s generous donations, together we are impacting the lives of thousands of veterans and the children's lives across our great nation.

At this time I'd like to recognize the Departments that have gone far and above in the 2019 donation year.

The first one will be the Harry Colmery Legacy Award. This award is given to the Detachment with the highest donations to Veterans & Children Foundation. And the winner is New York.

(Applause)

I'd like to announce the other detachment that's the next winner, but then it wouldn't be a surprise. So we're stuck.

At this time this reads: "The Harry W. Colmery Legacy Award, presented by The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation to the Sons of the American Legion Detachment of New York."

And it reads as follows: "In recognition of outstanding support to The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation, in designation as the number one Detachment in total contributions received in support of The American Legion's Children and Youth and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Program."

Congratulations.

(Applause)

The next award is the James A. Drain Founder's Award. James A. Drain was the Commander of The American Legion in 1925, when we had 800,000 members in The American Legion at that time.

And he started The American Legion National Endowment Fund with the 800,000 members at that time donated 5 million. I think that's the equivalent of about \$30 million at this time. So just outstanding American Legion Commander that we had.

And this award is presented to the Detachment with the highest per capita donation and that is Oregon. Oregon, will you please come up.

(Applause)

And this reads as follows: "Presented by The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation to the Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Oregon for the program year 2018-2019, in recognition of its outstanding support to The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation and designated as the number one Detachment in per capita donations received in support of The American Legion Children and Youth Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program."

Congratulations.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Vince, thank you for joining us today. We would like to make you a Distinguished Guest of our convention. Please accept one of my coins.

STACEY COPE: Thank you very much for the high honor. Thank you, Doc.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

At this time I now call Tom Deal up to the podium for the Legislative and Rules Committee final report. On deck, Finance Committee, and after Finance Committee, National Convention Constitutional Amendments Committee.

Final Report of the Legislative and Rules Committee
Legislative and Rules Convention Committee Chairman
Thomas G. Deal (MD)

Good morning.

The Legislative and Rules Committee met on Friday, August 23rd at 11:30 a.m. There was 16 members present and nine guests.

We had opening ceremonies. Also a motion was approved to accept the uniform Code of Procedures for the convention. We had -- the Legislative Commission did announce the winner of the George B. Evans Grassroots Veterans' Advocate of the Year as Lucas Herring from Squadron 10 from Vermont. Congratulations.

(Applause)

Did announce the Washington Conference for next year, so get it on your calendars, is March 8th through the 11th. And a lot more information will be coming forward. The tour will be on March 8th.

Other topics we spoke about was some of the successes this year. July 31st, Congress approved the Resolution to declare August 23rd through the 29th would be American Legion week during Indianapolis during the convention. So, that happened.

The president signed the LEGION Act, which we all know; executive order addressing veteran suicide; and

the Blue Water Navy Act. The American Legion coming in to aid the National Guard -- the Coast Guard, sorry, during the government shutdown in January.

The decision of the U.S. Supreme Court to allow Bladensburg World War I Memorial to remain where it's been since 1925. The American Legion Post 853 in California took over ownership of a small piece of land in Ocotillo Wells where a memorial honoring a Vietnam War veteran was located.

Commission members gave their comments and accolades for the year. There were some guest comments about discussion on opening membership up to all male members of veterans families. And that was all the discussion in the meeting.

I do want to recognize the Legislative Commission members. All were in attendance. I'd like them to stand: Doc Pfeiffer from Indiana, Vice Chairman; Bill Kelly from Florida; Bernie Kessler from Ohio; Richard Humphrey from Colorado; and David Lee from New York. Gentlemen, you did a great job this year. I really could not do it without you.

(Applause)

This is a total team effort by this commission. We worked very well together.

And, Mr. Commander, that concludes my report.

And as a duly elected delegate to this convention, I move to accept this report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

BUD NEEL: Bud Neel, Detachment of Nebraska, seconds that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion and a second. Any discussion on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you, Tom.

TOM DEAL: Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: At this time I call Bill Hill for the National Convention Finance Committee report. On deck, the Constitutional Amendments Committee report. After that, National Public on Communications Commission report. Your report.

Report of the Finance Committee

National Convention Finance Chairman

William G. Hill (MD)

Thank you, Commander. The Convention Finance Committee met yesterday at 11:35 a.m. for the purposes of reviewing the finances for the Convention.

Our opening protocol was conducted. We had 16 Detachments' assigned representatives present. One was excused. Three unaccounted for. And we had 17 guests.

We discussed the convention finances, and at this time the only convention we could discuss was the dues for delegates are at the rate we are. We'll find out the income. We'll have that matched up. And also as far as expenditures.

So at this time there was really nothing other than to review. The information will be pending the finance information provided us by the fall NEC.

There was a motion to accept the Finance Report by Dave Hanson from Indiana, seconded by Bob Turner of Connecticut. The motion was accepted, no discussion. Motion passed.

There was a motion to adjourn by Jim Galloway [phonetic] from Colorado, seconded by Bob Turner from Connecticut. No discussion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:45.

As a delegate of this 48th National Convention, I make a motion to accept my report as submitted.

Sorry I took so long.

(Laughter)

Commander, there's been a motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: There's been a motion.

Do we have a second?

BUD NEEL: Bud Neel, Detachment of Nebraska, seconds that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion and a second. Any discussion on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you, Bill.

BILL HILL: Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: At this time I call John Jennings for National Constitutional Amendments Committee report. On deck, Public and Communications Commission. And after that National Convention Credentials.

**Report of the Constitutional Amendments Committee
National Convention Constitutional Amendments Convention
Committee Chairman John T. Jennings (FL)**

Good morning.

I'll make this short and sweet, if you believe that. I do want to recognize, before I start my report, Subcommittee on Resolution members that are present, those that aren't.

I've had a group of great guys this year. This is the completion of this year. We'll start new at our fall.

But Joe Keiser out of Nevada, Bill Blair out of -- David Blair out of Texas. And I didn't know until I heard the chaplain this morning about him being down. Jay Marsden, and of course John Chang out of New York. I want to thank each of you for your dedication and support. They've been there all year long. So thank you and give them a round of applause, please.

(Applause)

All right. Down to the brass tacks and nails that everybody is waiting on. Constitution Amendments Committee met yesterday at 11:30 a.m. Had a good group.

The purpose of the Constitutional Amendment Committee is to review and act on all resolutions submitted for consideration to amend or change the National Constitution of the Sons of the American Legion.

We had a total of 10 resolutions that were submitted for consideration. Nine of the 10 were addressing the same subject, with one that was different.

The separate resolution was reviewed and rejected by the Constitution Amendments Committee, as all

requested action had already been addressed and implemented.

The other nine were addressing to change Article X, Section 2 of our National Constitution pertaining to our national per capita dues.

All resolutions were the same with regards to -- with regards to the whereas clauses. With only one having a slightly different resolve, all nine were consolidated into Resolution NC14-2019 for consideration by this National Convention.

I will now read that resolution in its entirety. The number is S.A.L. Resolution 14 - National Convention, 2019.

Title: Amendment to the National Constitution of the Sons of the American Legion, Article X, Section 2.

Origin: Consolidated Resolution.

WHEREAS, since the inception of the organization in 1932, the principal mission of the Sons of the American Legion has been to support the needs, programs and legacy of the parent organization, The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, over the past many years, as the Sons of the American Legion has grown in both membership and scope of service supported, the structure and administrative requirements have increased; and

WHEREAS, providing continued financial support is necessary to ensure the mission through the service and support which the organization provides is able to be sustained; and

WHEREAS, the national organization has not implemented a per capita dues increase in nearly 35 years; and

WHEREAS, to benefit the continued health and growth of the organization, it is dependent upon the ability to properly fund the programs and administration's costs, therefore, an increase is necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Sons of the American Legion, Article X, Section 2, now reads "The amount of such annual national dues shall be \$2 per member and shall be payable October 20th of each year and for the succeeding year"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Sons of the American Legion, in National Convention, assembled on August 23rd-25th, 2019, in Indianapolis, Indiana, amend the Constitution of the Sons of the American Legion, Article X, Section 2, to read "The amount of such annual dues shall be \$5 per member and shall be payable October 20th of each year for the succeeding year"; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the increase take effect on

June 1, 2020, with the distribution of the 2021 National Membership cards and applied to all membership transmittals received after that date.

The Constitution and Amendment Committee of the 48th Annual National Convention approved and passed NC 14-2019, or 2019.

As a delegate to this Convention, I move for the adoption of NC 14-2019 and hereby place a motion to the Convention for its approval.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Gentlemen, we have a motion.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STILLWELL: Mr. Commander, Past National Commander Stillwell. I offer a second to that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. We have a motion and a second. Any discussion on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

All those opposed, nay.

Carried.

(Applause)

JOHN JENNINGS: And, Mr. Commander, as a delegate to the National Convention I move for acceptance of my Constitutional Amendments Committee report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, J.J. We

have a motion. Do we have a second?

KEITH BIRKMEYER: Keith Birkmeyer, Detachment of Arizona, I second the motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion and a second. Any question on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you, J.J.

JOHN JENNINGS: Thank you, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I'd like to call Seth Rippe up at this time for his final report.

**Report of the Public and Media Communications Commission
National Public and Media Communications Commission
Chairman Seth A. Rippe (NE)**

Mr. Commander, Legionnaires, Distinguished Guests and fellow Sons, I'd like to start by thanking the members of the Public and Media Communications Commission for their service this year -- Damon, Casey, Brandon, Doug, Mark.

And in addition to the members of the Commission, I would also like to thank our National Update Editor, Mike, and our National Website and Facebook Administrator, Gene, for all their work this year.

Thank you, gentlemen.

(Applause)

Finally, I would like to thank all of you have done throughout the year for exemplifying what The American Legion stands for.

Since a picture is worth a thousand words, I'm going to let the pictures on the screen do most of the talking for me.

As the chairman of the Public & Media Communications Commission, I've had the privilege throughout the year to see pictures like these and hear numerous stories of the veterans, families and communities that you are serving through the countless programs of The American Legion.

Through the various platforms available at the national level, we have shared these pictures and stories and celebrated our successes.

We've learned from each other and we've grown our organization. That is what your Public and Media Communications Commission is here for.

The American Legion's 100th birthday has also given us some great media opportunities to share with the country who we are. The passing of the LEGION Act opens our parent organization up to a potential 4 million new members. So think about what that does for

our organization.

We need to capitalize on events such as these to truly market who we are. That is what your Public and Media Communications Commission is here for.

Remember our Commander's theme for the year:
Honoring the Past, Continuing the Legacy.

We stand on the shoulders of many great individuals who have come before us who not only made us who we are individually but who we are as an organization. I'm sure by now you've seen the PowerPoint that the Commission has put together for Commander Gibbs, paying tribute through the individuals through whom our eligibility to the Sons is through.

It was great to hear the stories and the memories behind each of those pictures. It's up to all of us to keep the memory alive, and that is what your Public and Media Communications Commission is here for.

**Presentation of the National Snapshots of Service Awards
National Public and Media Communications Commission
Chairman Seth A. Rippe (NE)**

I will close today by announcing the winners of the Snapshots of Service photo contest. Snapshots of Service is a photo contest promoting the programs of the

Sons of the American Legion. Photos are classified under one of four pillars: Americanism, Children and Youth, National Security, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation.

The only stipulations are that members must be wearing their S.A.L. cover or apparel, and the photo must be accompanied by the entry form.

Without further ado, the winner for Americanism is Squadron 52 of Michigan.

(Applause)

The winners of Veterans and Rehabilitation is Squadron 352 of New Jersey.

(Applause)

And finally, the winner of Children and Youth is Squadron 40 of Maryland.

(Applause)

Thank you all who submitted entries this year.

Mr. Commander, this concludes the Public and Media Communication awards.

As a delegate of the 48th National Convention, I motion that you accept the Public and Media Communications Report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

BUD NEEL: Bud Neel, Detachment of Nebraska,

seconds that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Sorry, it has to be a different Detachment.

JIM COATES: Jim Coates, Detachment of New York, seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, New York.

We have a motion and a second. Any discussion on the motion?

All those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you.

Seth, I hope -- and I hope the gentlemen in the audience will agree -- that we'd love to see you continue the pictures of our mothers and fathers that got us into this organization. I hope that carries on. It's a great thing. Thank you.

(Applause)

Audio in the back, please.

...The delegation viewed a video.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We're going to run through a few of the PSA ads, if you have not seen them, that ran this year.

...The delegation viewed a video.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: All right, gentlemen, thank you. Those are just a few of the things we tried to take care of this year. It was, indeed, a pleasure sharing the campfire with PNC Danny Smith. And we hope some of those things continue.

I'd like to call Harold Thompson up to the podium at this time for the Convention Credentials Committee final report.

Final Report of the Credentials Committee

National Convention Credentials Committee Chairman

Harold E. Thompson, Jr. (NE)

On the final numbers, on Friday, we did have one mistake of the delegates. It should be changed to 927.

At the close of registration Saturday, we had: 47 Detachments; 927 delegates; 24 alternates; 88 guests to the 48th National Convention.

There are only seven Detachments did not register. They were the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Mexico, Philippines, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, and Utah.

And our meeting was closed yesterday with no further business. Ed Sheubrooks moved to close the meeting. Second by Robert Avery. Meeting adjourned at 11:07 August 24th, 2018 [sic]. And since there was no

change, I will not read through the full delegate strength.

(Applause)

As Credentials Chairman, Harold E. Thompson, as a duly elected delegate to the 48th National Convention, Sons of the American Legion, I move for the acceptance of my report.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion. Do we have a second?

JIM COATES: Jim Coates, Detachment of New York, seconds.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. A motion to second. Any question on the motion?

Seeing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried. Thank you, Harold.

HAROLD THOMPSON: Thank you.

(Applause)

Donations

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: All right. At this time we are open for any donations if anyone has any presentations to make at this time.

Don't be bashful.

DELEGATE FROM DELAWARE: Commander, I have two checks with me, one from Squadron 7 in Delaware for the VAVS for \$100. And again another one from Squadron 7 in Delaware, Child Welfare Foundation, for \$150.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Excellent, thank you, Mike. Thank you, Delaware.

GARY LAMUNYON: Thank you, Commander. Gary LaMunyon, Detachment of Michigan. I have a check for \$500 for the National Legacy Scholarship Fund and a check for \$2,000 for the Child Welfare Fund.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Excellent. Thank you, sir.

(Applause)

SANDY LIPMAN: Sandy Lipman, Detachment of Michigan, NEF chairman, combined total \$6,130 for NEF.

(Applause)

JACK YOUNGS: Jack Youngs, Detachment of Idaho, \$614 for CWF.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, sir.
Jim.

UNIDENTIFIED DELEGATE: Doc, just like to present you with one last check for \$805 for CWF.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Very nice. Thank you, sir. Thank you New York.

MARC COLETY: Marc Colety, Detachment of Vermont,

I have \$1,935 for CWF.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, Vermont.

EUGENE GORT: Eugene, Detachment Commander out of Illinois, these are all from Rantoul Squadron 287 out of Illinois, 200 for Child Welfare, \$500 for NEF, \$200 for the Fisher House, \$200 more for the Fisher House, and \$200 for the National Endowment Fund.

And these checks here are all from our Detachment. 3,270 for Operation Comfort Warrior, 1,135 from our Auxiliary for Operation Comfort Warrior, 2,050 for the National Emergency Fund, \$430 for the Child Welfare Foundation, \$300 for the Legacy Scholarship Fund, and \$200 for the National Endowment Fund.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, Illinois.

(Applause)

SHAWN DAVIS: On behalf of the Detachment of Minnesota, from our Detachment convention, my name is Shawn Davis, outgoing Detachment Commander. I have checks here from various individuals including the Third Districts, the First District, Squadron 16, Squadron 9 and various other individuals totaling \$2,795.57 for Child Welfare.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, sir.

(Applause)

Cliff.

CLIFFORD HALL: From Squadron 123 in Georgia, \$100 for Child Welfare; Squadron 29, \$200, Child Welfare; from Squadron 112, \$500 for Child Welfare; and from the Detachment of Georgia, \$1,000, Child Welfare.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Whoa, thank you, Georgia. I think we're setting up the new Commander well. Bob.

DELEGATE FROM IOWA: Detachment of Iowa, Parkersburg Squadron 285 is giving \$20 to Child Welfare, \$20 for the NEF and \$20 for Child Endowment.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Excellent. Thank you, DELEGATE FROM IOWA. Thank you, Iowa.

(Applause)

Come on up Jeff. Jeff Lee.

JEFF LEE: Good afternoon, Commander. I have donations from Virginia for Child Welfare Foundation, Squadron 67, \$100; Squadron 320, \$122.21; Squadron 284, \$200; Squadron 180, \$4,000. For NEF, Squadron 284, \$200. For RCW, Squadron 84, \$200.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, Virginia. Jacob.

DELEGATE FROM WEST VIRGINIA: From the Detachment of West Virginia, we have \$1,875 for Child Welfare.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Excellent. Thank you, Delegate From West Virginia.

(Applause)

DELEGATE FROM FLORIDA: All right. From the Detachment of Florida, we have \$500 for the Legacy Run, \$2,000 for the Legacy Scholarship Fund, \$500 for Operation Comfort Warriors. For the National Emergency Fund, we have \$10,175. And for Child Welfare Foundation we have \$13,250.

(Applause)

Now, we had a Squadron in Florida that donated a little over \$2,000 in coins in the piggybanks. Once those are rolled and banked, that \$2,000 will come, too.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Fantastic, Tom. Thank you, Florida.

Jim.

DELEGATE FROM COLORADO: The Detachment of Colorado has \$1,200 for the National Emergency Fund. We have \$100 to the Child Welfare Foundation. We have for The American Legion Legacy Scholarship \$546. And for the National Endowment Fund, \$1,310.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Colorado.

(Applause)

JOHN WRIGHT: John Wright, NEC from Connecticut. On behalf of all the Squadrons in Connecticut, the Detachment of Connecticut gives \$1,000 to the National

Emergency Fund and \$1,000 for the Child Welfare Fund.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Excellent. Thank you, sir. Thank you, Connecticut.

(Applause)

Sir, go right ahead.

DELEGATE FROM TEXAS: From the Detachment of Texas I have four checks totaling \$260 for the CWF foundation.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Excellent. Thank you, Texas.

(Applause)

Come on up, George.

GEORGE SEVICK: George Sevick, Detachment of Nebraska, I have a check for \$250 from Squadron 32, Pappillion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Excellent. Thanks, Nebraska.

(Applause)

Jimmy Hunter, come on up.

JIMMY HUNTER: Commander, from the Detachment of Illinois, since every penny counts, we have a \$10 fine here for CWF for one of our delegate's phones going off.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Keep making those phone calls to your friends while you're here.

(Laughter)

Go ahead, Tommy.

DELEGATE FROM LOUISIANA: From the Detachment of Louisiana, the NEF, we have \$100 from Squadron 64; from Squadron 122, \$100; Squadron 241, \$100; and 248, \$200 for a total of \$400.

And then on the Child Welfare donations, we have Squadron 53 at \$34; Squadron 16, \$75; Squadron 208, \$75; Squadron 387, \$75; Squadron 64, \$150; Squadron 122, \$150; 208, \$150. And I can proudly say I'm from Squadron 208, and we have \$1,000 in there also for a total of \$7,465.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, sir. Thank you, Louisiana.

Wow, that should put us off to a great start for the coming year.

Announcements

Are there any announcements at this time? Please step up to the mics. Identify yourself. Any announcements at this time?

JEFF EVANS: Good afternoon, Commander Gibbs. Jeff Evans from the Detachment of Virginia. Let me get the right note out. Bear with me.

Clint Bolt and the Detachment of Virginia would like to invite S.A.L. delegates from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. this evening to join us for hospitality at Champps sports bar located on Maryland Avenue. Look forward to seeing everyone there.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, Jeff.

JOHN JENNINGS: Commander, John Jennings, down the center aisle, Detachment of Florida. Just a point of privilege as far as Steve Gower, our National Vice Commander that was unable to attend.

I want to speak briefly on his behalf as a point of privilege. He had done a great job for our Southern region. He has led us with pride, dignity and integrity, and I want to thank Steve personally for what he did. Thank you, Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you for your words.

(Applause)

Duly noted, John, for sure. Any other announcements at this time? Uh-oh.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER COTTEN: Got my watch. Gentlemen of the East, we will have a caucus immediately after closing in this area over here.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER SIERMINSKI: The Midwest will have their caucus right over here to my left and

your right. So, we'll have it right up front by the stage. Thank you.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER CLEARY: Detachments of the West, we're going to be back here in this corner, immediately after the meeting.

NATIONAL VICE COMMANDER CHRISTIE: Central, how about if we meet here? Sounds great, right, especially seeing we're all up front.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Is Blair Miles in the audience?

BLAIR MILES: Sir, yes, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I'd like to invite you to lead the Southern caucus, if you could, please, in Steve's absence.

BLAIR MILES: I'd be happy to do that, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: In that corner, please.

BLAIR MILES: Yes, sir.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: That would be great.

Any other announcements at this time? Any other announcements at this time.

Salute to Colors and Recess

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: With the colors of our nation in place, gentlemen, join me in a right-hand

salute by the numbers. One. Two.

The 48th National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion will now stand in recess until 8:00 a.m. tomorrow.

(Applause)

...At 12:37 p.m., the Convention was recessed to reconvene the following day, August 25, 2019, at 8:00 a.m.

Third Day**Sunday, August 25, 2019**

...On Sunday, August 25, 2019, at 8:01 a.m., the delegates assembled for the 48th Annual National Convention, and the following proceedings were had:

Call to Order and Salute to the Colors**Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs (NY), National Commander**

Gentlemen, please rise.

With the colors of our nation in place, please join me with a right-hand salute by the numbers. One. Two.

National Chaplain David Rippe will invoke the blessing of God. Please uncover.

Invocation**David L. Rippe (NE), National Chaplain**

Before we have our opening prayer today, add another person to your list of prayers that we've had over the weekend. Keith Jewell, an S.A.L. member from Kentucky, was killed, and we send sympathy out to his family and to the Detachment of Kentucky.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we come today to celebrate the

past year under the leadership of Commander Gibbs and look forward to the leadership of the next National Commander.

May the National Vice Commanders who led us this year be blessed. To those who will step in to assume the duties of National Commander and National Vice Commanders, provide them with strength and encouragement. Thank You for these days of unity and brotherhood.

In Your name we pray, amen.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: In memory of our departed comrades and the comrades of all veterans, let us stand in silence.

...The delegation observed a moment of silence.

I call upon National Vice Commander Pete Sierminski to lead us in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Pledge of Allegiance

Peter J. Sierminski (CO), National Vice Commander

...At this time, the delegation recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: National Adjutant Anthony Wright will now call the roll. Please cover.

Roll Call

...National Adjutant Wright called the roll of the Convention as follows:

NATIONAL OFFICERS

National Commander

Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs, New York

National Vice Commanders

East: Michael S. Cotten, Delaware

South: Steve A. Gower, Sr., Virginia - EXCUSED

Central: Matthew T. Christie, Illinois

Midwest: Peter J. Sierminski, Colorado

West: Edward M. Cleary, Arizona

National Adjutant

Anthony W. Wright, Pennsylvania

National Assistant Adjutants

Harold E. Thompson, Jr., Nebraska (Emeritus)

James E. "Ed" Sheubrooks, Florida

Robert J. Avery, New York

David M. Ridenour, Indiana

Scott A. Williams, Virginia

Scott J. Thornton, Ohio

Jeffrey E. Hicks, New Jersey

National Chaplain

David L. Rippe, Nebraska

National Historian

Timothy S. Van Patten, II, New York

National Judge Advocate
Joseph A. Paviglianti, New York

National Sergeant-At-Arms
Gregory A. Falco, New York

National Assistant Sergeants-At-Arms
Brian K. Waters, Pennsylvania
Lyle G. Larson, Kansas - EXCUSED
Raymond P. Giehll, III, Indiana
Augustine R. Diaz, Alaska - EXCUSED
Charles Curtis, California

National Commander's Aide
Gary W. Denmon, New York

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDERS

Danny J. Smith, Colorado
Michael K. Seaton, California
Robert A. McBride, Ohio
J.R. Stillwell, Illinois
John J. Smolinsky, Massachusetts - Not Present
Robert H. Faust, California - Excused
James R. Hartman, Maryland
Gregory D. Reis, Illinois - Not Present
Grant Jamieson, Michigan - Not Present
Charles E. Gannon, Maryland
John M. Sherrard, California - Not Present
David P. Stephens, Indiana
Christopher R. Cerullo, New York
Frederick L. Hartline, Sr., Ohio - Excused
Douglas P. Bible, Minnesota
Richard L. League, Maryland - Not Present
David R. Faust, Wisconsin
Robert A. Worrel, Indiana - Not Present
Eugene L. Sacco, California
Roland D. Matteson, Arizona
Joseph M. Mayne, Minnesota
John T. Dietz, Kentucky - Excused
Jack E. Jordan, Texas - Not Present
William E. Matoska, Maryland
Byron J. Robichaux, Louisiana
Richard L. Cook, Oklahoma

Kevin N. Winkelmann, Texas - Not Present
 Clifford A. Smith, Massachusetts
 Steven C. Laws, North Carolina
 Neal C. Warnken, Kansas
 Michael J. Deacon, Iowa
 William L. Sparwasser, Maryland - Not Present
 Earl R. Ruttkofsky, Michigan
 Raymond P. Giehll, Jr., Indiana
 Thomas E. Cisna, Illinois - Not Present
 Mark E. Arneson, Georgia
 David L. Dew, Texas - Not Present
 James K. Roberts, III, Florida - Excused
 Joseph W. Gladden, Maryland
 Michael W. Moss, Colorado
 Kevin L. Collier, Alaska
 Jeffrey C. Frain, Arizona - Excused
 Brian J. O'Hearne, Massachusetts - Not Present

ROLL CALL OF DETACHMENTS

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California,
 Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, France,
 Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas,
 Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts,
 Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana,
 Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico,
 New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma,
 Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina,
 South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia,
 Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming

Commander, that completes roll call. You have a quorum.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Before we begin the normal duties of the day, I'd like all the veterans in the room to stand up, regardless of where and when you served, dual members or just plain veterans, and we'd like to salute you all, gentlemen.

(Applause)

Thank you for your service and thank you for your

commitment to the Sons of The American Legion as well.
Thank you.

I now declare this 48th National Convention of
the Sons of The American Legion reconvened.

I'd like to call up my Vice Commanders, if they'd
please stand in a row, and my aide, Gary Denmon.

Gary, I'd like you to be right up here. My
chaplain, David Rippe, our chaplain. My wife, who is
with us this morning, your First Lady, Pam. Please come
on up.

(Applause)

I would like to make each of these folks a
Distinguished Guest to our convention.

(Applause)

Let's please give them a hand.

(Applause)

Thank you, gentlemen. Thank you, Pam.

Introduction of the 2019 National S.A.L.

Color Guard Champions

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Sergeant-at-Arms,
please escort the 2019 National Sons of The American
Legion Color Guard champions to the podium. They are
from the Detachment of New York.

(Applause)

Presentation of the 2019 National S.A.L.**Color Guard Awards**

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Wow, this is especially important to me from New York. These folks are the recipients of the 2019 Clyde Stilwell Memorial Trophy, National Color Guard Champions of the Sons of The American Legion.

Greg, would you like to come up and accept this on behalf of your group. Thank you.

(Applause)

I'd like to make these gentlemen Distinguished Guests of our convention. Thank you so much. We appreciate all you do for us.

Again, one more hand, especially from me, for New York. Thank you, gentlemen.

(Applause)

Gentlemen, if you'd please remain standing, I would appreciate it. We had a very successful day yesterday with the youth experience that we hope we'll be able to carry on for more than just one convention.

I'd like to call up some of our youth participants, if they're here this morning, and give them a certificate of appreciation for being here and connecting with us.

So, please, if these folks are in the room, and if you have an adult with you or whatever you want to bring them up, that's fine as well.

Andrew Zach, Luke Woodburn, Keyer Clancy, Stan Clancy, Kayson Cook, Alana Cook, and Sean Deter, Jr. [phonetics], if those folks are here, please come on up and we'll give you a certificate.

(Applause)

I'm going to take a minute and just read the certificate: "This Certificate of Appreciation is presented to," and their name, "in recognition of your participation in the National Convention Youth Room of the Sons of The American Legion held during the 48th National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. The involvement of younger members of this organization is vital to the advancement of the Sons of The American Legion. Given this 25th day of August, 2019, city of Indianapolis, Indiana," signed by myself and our Adjutant, Anthony Wright.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being with us. Have a good day.

(Applause)

At this time, I'd like the Sergeant-at-Arms to secure the doors and allow no one to enter. I will now turn the podium over to our National Chaplain, David

Rippe, for our Memorial Service.

National Memorial Service

David L. Rippe (NE), National Chaplain

*...Proceedings recessed for Memorial Service
until 9:00 a.m.*

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Gentlemen, we have now come to a very special order of business, the election of national officers. At this time, I call upon National Judge Advocate Joseph Paviglianti, who will read the Rules of the Convention governing the nomination and election of officers.

**Reading of the Rules of the Election of National
Officers**

National Judge Advocate Joseph A. Paviglianti (NY)

Thank you, Mr. Commander. Good morning delegates and alternates to the 48th National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion.

I will identify the key elements and items of the rules of the nomination and election for our national officer.

Rule No. 18: Nominations for national officers shall be from the floor on roll call from the

Detachments alphabetically arranged. Each Detachment may present as many candidates as it chooses, unless otherwise specified.

Rule 19: Nominating speeches for national officers shall be limited to five minutes each. Not more than two seconding speeches shall be made for any candidate and said speeches shall be limited to three minutes each. All nomination speeches are limited to only official delegates of the Sons of The American Legion National Convention with appropriate Sons of The American Legion cap and National Convention delegate badge.

Rule 20: If there is only one candidate nominated for an office, elections shall be by acclamation, except when a roll call is requested by the chairman of at least three Detachments.

Rule 21: When two or more candidates are nominated for any office, balloting shall continue until one candidate receives a majority of the votes of the Convention, except in the election of the National Vice Commanders.

In the election of National Vice Commanders, the Adjutant shall poll all Detachments in alphabetical order by areas at which time each Detachment may nominate, second or pass.

All Vice Commanders shall determine -- shall be nominated in the single roll call. The Adjutant shall determine if there are any area that has more than one candidate nominated whose election shall be voted upon separately.

The Commander then shall call for the election of all nominated candidates, being no two candidates from any one area.

In contested election for National Vice Commanders, balloting shall continue until majorities are established for two candidates under the following provisions:

If, on any ballot taken, less than two candidates receive a majority of votes to elect, then the candidate receiving the majority shall be declared elected and balloting will continue until a second candidate also receives a majority.

Candidates from each area shall run only against candidates from that area.

Rule 22: The Convention will nominate and elect a National Commander and five National Vice Commanders, in that sequence, and as required by Article VI of the National Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion.

Delegation chairmen should position themselves at

a microphone in advance of their Detachments being called to expedite the roll call process.

Mr. Commander, this completes the readings of the Rules of the Convention pertaining to the nomination and election of national officers.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: The National Adjutant will now proceed with the roll call for nominations for the office of National Commander.

Election of the National Commander

Anthony W. Wright (PA), National Adjutant

Thank you, Commander. During the nomination process, each Detachment will be called alphabetically. Each Detachment has the option to nominate a person for office, second a nomination or pass.

When it's your turn please use the microphone.
Alabama.

DELEGATE FROM ALABAMA: Alabama yields to North Carolina.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Alabama yields to North Carolina.

North Carolina.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER LAWS: Past National Commander Laws requests permission to approach for the purpose of a nomination.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Permission granted.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER LAWS: Good morning.

An honor for me this morning to stand here and nominate a young man that I've known over the years. Clint is a 22-year proud member of the Sons of The American Legion, John D. Sudduth Squadron 72 in Warrenton, Virginia.

Clint is eligible for membership through his grandfather, Kennard Casey Bolt. He served honorably in the United States Navy during World War II and was stationed at Norfolk, Virginia. Clint is also very proud of his grandmother, Marie Bolt, who served during World War II.

She, like many women at the time, had to raise the family and find time towards the war effort.

But during the war, Clint's grandmother not only had her husband off to war but had three brothers gone, too, plus many other family members.

Remarkably she managed to keep the home going, raising four little kids. The oldest was Clint's dad, William Bolt. But the war effort called that must, must pitch in, and she became a lathe operator for the torpedo factory in Alexandria, Virginia.

Clint and Becky were married in 1987. They have one son named Jason. Jason is married to his wife,

Rachel. They have one daughter, Ella Marie, who is one and a half years old.

Clint has two stepsons, Greg and Josh. Greg has a 12-year-old son named Caleb. And Josh is married, and his wife's name is Rachel.

Clint is a restoration carpenter, his most notable work on the North Wales, a 1750 country estate in Warrenton, Virginia. Once owned by Walter P. Chrysler Jr., the home is listed on the National Registry of Historical Places and is one of the largest homes in the state of Virginia.

Other prominent work is on the 1958 private residence of the Gray Ghost, Colonel John Mosby. The home served as a museum for the town of Warrenton for several years. And although now a private residence, this home is a part of the Civil War history of the town and state of Virginia.

Clint's other interests in old things extends to classic cars. He's a member of the Vintage Chevrolet Car Club of America. His current project is a 1935 sedan. His goal is to have the car completed by the Memorial Day parade next year. There's nothing that he likes more than going to car shows and seeing all these beauties.

Clint has served his Squadron and Detachment at

all levels. Clint is most proud of the Detachment scholarship program he started in 2003 while serving his Detachment Commander. The scholarship program continues to this day and provides \$1,500 to the recipient.

Clint was part of the honor flights from the beginning of that program in the summer of 2005. He served for years as part of The American Legion Department of Virginia Receiving Team at the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C.

During Rolling Thunder in Washington D.C., The American Legion would man an information tent on the National Mall. Clint was a part of that American Legion team recruiting, distributing VA benefit guides and passing out American Legion information. He served our organization as an NEC Resolution Subcommittee Chairman, Membership Committee.

In 2010, Clint served as National Vice Commander for National Commander Mark Arneson. He served as Children and Youth Commission Chairman and the VA&R chairman.

Clint is very proud to have served as national representative for the Sons of The American Legion on the VA Volunteer Services National Advisory Committee. This is the only outside organization that the Sons of The American Legion belongs to with full voting

privileges to assist The American Legion and The American Legion Auxiliary.

As a delegate of this 48th National Convention held in Indianapolis, Indiana, I, Steve Laws, do place in nomination for the high office of National Commander Mr. Clint Bolt from the Detachment of Virginia.

(Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Alaska.

DELEGATE FROM ALASKA: Alaska yields for Colorado.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Colorado.

DANNY SMITH: Colorado requests to approach the podium for the purpose of seconding the nomination.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Permission granted.

DANNY SMITH: Good morning.

National officers and staff, distinguished individuals, delegates, and guests to this 48th Annual National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion, I have come before you this morning to second the nomination of a friend and fellow member of the Sons of The American Legion.

We live in a day and age of technology. And if you want to be informed or learn more about something or someone, all you have to do is Google it.

And if you were to enter National Commander

Candidate Clint Bolt's name, you may find this:
dedicated, focused, helpful, passionate, sincere, and
humble.

No, these are not the results from a Google
search, these are words that his comrades from the
Detachment of Virginia use to describe Candidate Bolt.

Now, I must tell you that I would have to agree
with every one of these. But I would like to add one
more: determination.

Now, you may think that dedicated and
determination are the same thing. But I submit to you
this: Dedication gets you in the race; determination
gets you to the top.

I assure you that with your support, Candidate
Bolt will use his determination, along with his other
attributes, to take us once again to an all-time high in
membership and investments in our programs.

As a delegate to this convention, it is my honor
to second the nomination of my friend and colleague,
Clint Bolt, from the Detachment of Virginia, for the
high office of National Commander, Sons of The American
Legion, 2019-2020.

(Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Arizona.

DELEGATE FROM ARIZONA: Arizona yields the floor

to California.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: We're approving the nomination for National Commander.

DELEGATE FROM ARIZONA: I'm sorry.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Do you second the nomination?

DELEGATE FROM ARIZONA: Arizona seconds the nomination for National Commander.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Thank you.
Arkansas. Arkansas.

DELEGATE FROM ARKANSAS: Arkansas does the same, seconds it.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Arkansas seconds.
California.

DELEGATE FROM CALIFORNIA: California seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: California seconds.
Connecticut.

DELEGATE FROM CONNECTICUT: Connecticut seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Connecticut seconds.
Delaware.

DELEGATE FROM DELAWARE: Delaware seconds that.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Delaware seconds.
District of Columbia.

(No response.)

Florida.

DELEGATE FROM FLORIDA: Florida seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Florida seconds.

France.

DELEGATE FROM FRANCE: France seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: France seconds.

Georgia.

DELEGATE FROM GEORGIA: Georgia seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Georgia seconds.

Idaho. Idaho.

(No response.)

Illinois.

DELEGATE FROM ILLINOIS: Illinois seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Illinois seconds.

Indiana.

DELEGATE FROM INDIANA: Indiana seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Indiana seconds.

Iowa.

DELEGATE FROM IOWA: Iowa seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Iowa seconds.

Kansas.

DELEGATE FROM KANSAS: Kansas seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Kansas seconds.

Kentucky.

DELEGATE FROM KENTUCKY: Kentucky seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Kentucky seconds.

Louisiana.

DELEGATE FROM LOUISIANA: Louisiana proudly
seconds the nomination.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Louisiana seconds.
Maine.

DELEGATE FROM MAINE: Maine seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Maine seconds.

Maryland.

DELEGATE FROM MARYLAND: Maryland proudly
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Maryland seconds.
Massachusetts.

DELEGATE FROM MASSACHUSETTS: Massachusetts
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Massachusetts seconds.
Michigan.

DELEGATE FROM MICHIGAN: Michigan proudly
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Michigan seconds.
Minnesota.

DELEGATE FROM MINNESOTA: Minnesota seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Minnesota seconds.

Mississippi.

DELEGATE FROM MISSISSIPPI: Mississippi seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Mississippi seconds.

Missouri.

DELEGATE FROM MISSOURI: Missouri seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Missouri seconds.

Montana.

DELEGATE FROM MONTANA: Montana seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Montana seconds.

Nebraska.

DELEGATE FROM NEBRASKA: Nebraska seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Nebraska seconds.

Nevada.

DELEGATE FROM NEVADA: Nevada seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Nevada seconds.

New Hampshire.

DELEGATE FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE: New Hampshire

seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: New Hampshire seconds.

New Jersey.

DELEGATE FROM NEW JERSEY: New Jersey seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: New Jersey seconds.

New Mexico.

DELEGATE FROM NEW MEXICO: New Mexico seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: New Mexico seconds.

New York.

DELEGATE FROM NEW YORK: New York proudly

seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: New York seconds.
North Dakota.

DELEGATE FROM NORTH DAKOTA: North Dakota
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: North Dakota seconds.
Ohio.

DELEGATE FROM OHIO: Ohio seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Ohio seconds.
Oklahoma.

DELEGATE FROM OKLAHOMA: Oklahoma seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Oklahoma seconds.
Oregon.

DELEGATE FROM OREGON: Oregon seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Oregon seconds.
Pennsylvania.

DELEGATE FROM PENNSYLVANIA: Pennsylvania
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Pennsylvania seconds.
South Carolina.

DELEGATE FROM SOUTH CAROLINA: South Carolina
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: South Carolina
seconds.

South Dakota.

(No response.)

Tennessee.

DELEGATE FROM TENNESSEE: Tennessee seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Tennessee seconds.

Texas.

DELEGATE FROM TEXAS: Texas seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Texas seconds.

Vermont.

DELEGATE FROM VERMONT: Vermont seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Vermont seconds.

Virginia.

DELEGATE FROM VIRGINIA: Detachment of Virginia
proudly seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Virginia seconds.

Washington.

DELEGATE FROM WASHINGTON: Washington seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Washington seconds.

West Virginia.

DELEGATE FROM WEST VIRGINIA: West Virginia
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: West Virginia seconds.

Wisconsin.

DELEGATE FROM WISCONSIN: Wisconsin seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Wisconsin seconds.

Wyoming.

DELEGATE FROM WYOMING: Wyoming seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Wyoming seconds.
Alabama.

DELEGATE FROM ALABAMA: Alabama seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Alabama seconds.
Alaska.

DELEGATE FROM ALASKA: Alaska seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Alaska seconds.

Mr. Commander, Clint Bolt has been nominated for National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SEATON: Comrade
Commander --

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Yes, sir, identify yourself, please.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SEATON: Michael Seaton,
Past National Commander, delegate from California.

On behalf of this convention, I would like to move that Clint Bolt of Virginia be elected National Commander for 2019-2020 and that he be elected by acclamation and request that the Chair recognize Bob McBride from Ohio for the purposes of the second.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MCBRIDE: Robert McBride,
Ohio, I second that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: We have a motion and a second on the floor. Any discussion on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

Carried.

Clint Bolt is our new National Commander.

(Applause)

I'm yielding the mic to Past National Commander Michael Seaton.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SEATON: Thank you, Commander.

Delegates and guests, the Past National Commanders are here today to continue a tradition that began 48 years ago at our first National Convention in Chicago.

We are here to demonstrate our unity and support of our new National Commander Clint and wish him the best for the coming year.

It is my pleasure to present to this Convention the 2019-2020 National Commander, Clint Bolt.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: It's my pleasure to make Clint Bolt a Distinguished Guest of our convention.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER ELECT BOLT: Wow, I'm truly humbled and I'm honored that my grandfather served in

World War II in the United States Navy, because it was his service that allowed me to be a part of this organization.

Since I've been here this week, I got here Wednesday, I think each and every one of you has shook my hand, patted me on the back, offered me words of wisdom and well wishes.

I want to tell each of you, if this job ever gets me down, if I ever get discouraged, if I ever need strength, I know where to look for it, my brothers.

Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: I now call National Adjutant Anthony Wright to the microphone and we'll proceed with roll call for nominations for the office of National Vice Commander.

Election of the National Vice Commanders

Anthony W. Wright (PA), National Adjutant

During the nomination process, each Detachment will be called alphabetically by area. Each Detachment has the option to nominate a person for office, second a nomination, or pass.

At this time, we're going to ask you to please use the microphones, and we're going to start with the

Eastern Region for National Vice Commander.

Connecticut.

DELEGATE FROM CONNECTICUT: Connecticut yields to Maryland for the purposes of a nomination.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Maryland.

DELEGATE FROM MARYLAND: Maryland requests permission for Past National Commander Joseph Gladden to approach the podium for the purpose of a nomination.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Permission granted.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GLADDEN: Good morning.

This weekend we gather to commemorate the end of another year. And while we gather to remember, we also gather today to look to the future.

The interesting aspect of life is that while the past has been laid a foundation for the future, it's only through continuing the building of what was done in the past that our future will be all that it can be.

It can be said that to be the National Vice Commander of the East is an incredible experience. The East has a long tradition of greatness and leadership.

Leaders like Chris Cerullo, Brian O'Hearne, Bill Matoska, Cliff Smith, Jim Noble, John Waite, Bill Hill, Ken Warner, and most recently Mike Cotten have led the East, and six of those have gone on to be National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion.

The greatness of the East is also seen in all of our Detachments in our membership. That totals over 136,000 and growing. But today, while remembering the past is really about the future of the East.

Our next National Vice Commander for the East will be Gary Nelson from New Jersey.

Gary gets his eligibility from his father, Russell Nelson. Russell served in the Army during World War II and served in the military campaigns on Normandy Beach and the Battle of the Bulge. Gary's father was a 74-year member of The American Legion and a life member of the VFW.

Gary's mom, Doris, was a member of The American Legion Auxiliary. And his sister, Barbara, is also a member. And her husband, Jack, is a member of the Sons of The American Legion. And it's little known fact that Gary's twin sister, Garianna, is also a member.

(Laughter)

Gary -- sorry, Gary, I couldn't help myself on that one -- Gary has served at all levels of the Sons of The American Legion including Squadron Commander, County Commander and Detachment Commander in 2004-2005.

On a personal side, Gary has earned his BS in management and economics from Ramapo College of New Jersey and an MBA from Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Gary has several different certifications and is self-employed as a property manager for the last 44 years.

With that, I, Joe Gladden, delegate of this convention, Past National Commander and friend, take great honor in placing the nomination of Gary Nelson from New Jersey for National Vice Commander for the year 2019-2020.

God bless you, God bless America and God bless The American Legion family. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Maryland nominates Gary Nelson.

Delaware.

DELEGATE FROM DELAWARE: Delaware proudly seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Delaware seconds. District of Columbia.

(No response.)

France.

DELEGATE FROM FRANCE: France seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: France seconds. Maine.

DELEGATE FROM MAINE: Maine seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Maine seconds.

Massachusetts.

DELEGATE FROM MASSACHUSETTS: Massachusetts
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Massachusetts seconds.
New Hampshire.

DELEGATE FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE: New Hampshire
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: New Hampshire seconds.
New Jersey.

LENNY FREE: Thank you, New Hampshire.

Good morning. My name is Lenny Free. I'm the
Detachment NEC from the great state of New Jersey. It
is an honor to be standing here before you all this
morning to talk about a man of great knowledge,
leadership and integrity.

He's a great friend who I've known many years.
He's also my mentor, and he's a great friend to all who
know him.

It is with awesome pride on this day of
August 25th, 2019, that we second the nomination of Gary
P. Nelson from the Detachment of New Jersey for the high
office of National Vice Commander of the Sons of The
American Legion. Thank you.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Thank you.
New York.

DELEGATE FROM NEW YORK: New York proudly
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: New York seconds.
Pennsylvania.

DELEGATE FROM PENNSYLVANIA: Pennsylvania
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Pennsylvania seconds.
Rhode Island.

(No response.)

Vermont.

DELEGATE FROM VERMONT: Vermont proudly seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Vermont seconds.
West Virginia.

DELEGATE FROM WEST VIRGINIA: West Virginia
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: West Virginia seconds.
Gary Nelson has been nominated from the East.
Connecticut?

That's why we have them back here.

(Laughter)

DELEGATE FROM CONNECTICUT: Connecticut seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Connecticut seconds.

Thank you.

Now, officially, Gary Nelson has been nominated.
Southern region.

Alabama.

DELEGATE FROM ALABAMA: Alabama requests permission for PNC Gladden to represent Alabama for the purposes of a nomination.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Permission granted.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GLADDEN: I had to pay Blair a lot of money to do this. I come before you today to nominate a very special person to the high office of National Vice Commander for the South region for the Sons of The American Legion, and that member is Blair Miles from Alabama.

Today is about selecting a leader who would not only continue the great traditions of the South, but will make new traditions and take the South to new heights.

Having known Blair for years, I've enjoyed watching his development as a member of the Sons of The American Legion for five years in Alabama and 15 years in Ohio.

Blair, after 30 years of service to the U.S. Navy and Federal Aviation Administration as an air traffic controller, retired and moved from Ohio to Alabama. Upon his transfer to Alabama, Blair immediately got involved with the Detachment of Alabama, joining S.A.L. Squadron 88 from Mobile.

For the last two years, Blair has served as Detachment of Alabama's Commander and has taken on two special projects -- the Junior Leadership Camp and the Veterans Retreat to help veterans suffering from PTSD and TBI.

While a member of the Spirit of '76 Squadron 8 in Ohio, Blair was part of one of the most successful fundraisers in our nation, and that was Squadron 8's annual Super 55 Gun Raffle that yearly earns up to \$85,000 for Legion programs in the Post home.

Blair gets his eligibility from his father, Robert Blair Miles, a 24-year Army EOD specialist in both Korea and Vietnam.

Blair's son, Kevin, was an operations Iraqi Freedom EOD specialist. And Blair's daughter, Lindsay, is currently serving in the Navy aboard the aircraft Arizona USS *Theodore Roosevelt* as a 3rd class petty officer gunner's mate.

Blair himself is a dual member and is a member of The American Legion from his service in the Navy for over six years.

I know in my heart that Blair will do everything in his power to make the programs of The American Legion successful and make sure that no worthy comrade is left behind. I know in my heart that Blair will make the

South proud.

With that, I, Joe Gladden, delegate to this National Convention, Past National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion, take great honor in the nomination of Blair Miles from Alabama for National Vice Commander for the year 2019-2020.

God bless you, God bless America and God bless The American Legion family. Thank you.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Alabama nominates Blair Miles.

Arkansas.

DELEGATE FROM ARKANSAS: Second for Blair.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Excuse me?

DELEGATE FROM ARKANSAS: Second for Blair.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Arkansas seconds.
Florida.

DELEGATE FROM FLORIDA: Florida seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Florida seconds.
Georgia.

DELEGATE FROM GEORGIA: Georgia seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Georgia seconds.
Kentucky.

DELEGATE FROM KENTUCKY: Kentucky proudly
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Kentucky seconds.

Louisiana.

DELEGATE FROM LOUISIANA: Louisiana proudly
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Louisiana seconds.
Mississippi.

DELEGATE FROM MISSISSIPPI: Mississippi seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Mississippi seconds.
North Carolina.

DELEGATE FROM NORTH CAROLINA: North Carolina
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: North Carolina
seconds.

South Carolina.

DELEGATE FROM SOUTH CAROLINA: South Carolina
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: South Carolina
seconds.

Tennessee.

DELEGATE FROM TENNESSEE: Tennessee seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Tennessee seconds.

Blair Miles has been nominated for the Southern
region.

(Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Did I say Virginia?
I'm sorry.

DELEGATE FROM VIRGINIA: Virginia seconds that motion.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Virginia seconds.
Thank you, Virginia.

(Laughter and applause)

Are we good?

Blair Miles has been nominated for Southern region.

Central Region.

Illinois.

DELEGATE FROM ILLINOIS: Illinois yields to Indiana.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Illinois yields to Indiana.

Indiana.

DELEGATE FROM INDIANA: Indiana requests permission for PNC Raymond Giehll, Jr., to approach the podium for the purpose of a nomination.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Permission granted.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIEHLL: They aren't kidding. It's bright up here. Good morning.

Good morning, guests and delegates to this convention. These may indeed be times that try men's souls. We see threats all around by those who disagree with the principles for which we stand, and those that

we recite at the beginning of each of our meetings.

Now, you may think I'm talking about enemies of foreign and domestic who oppose our way of life, but that's not what I have in mind today. Instead I'm speaking of the challenges of the future of the Sons of The American Legion and The American Legion itself -- threats like declining membership and low Squadron and Post participation.

But problems by their nature open up possibilities for solutions, and we as Sons absolutely must be part of this solution.

This requires inspired positive-thinking leadership at the national level of the S.A.L. from Sons who have invested their time, talent and treasuries in making our organization one in which we can take pride.

In Indiana, we have such a man. Richard "Doc" Pfeiffer has served the S.A.L. at every level. He has been a member of the Sons of The American Legion for 30 years and currently serves Orland Squadron 423 as Adjutant.

At the district level, he has served Commander, Adjutant, Judge Advocate and Finance Officer. For the Detachment of Indiana he's held most every office including Commander, NEC, Delegate and perhaps most important Membership Chairman.

At the national level, he is currently on the Legislative Commission, has participated in Resolutions and Child Welfare committees as well as The American Legion Extension Institute and National Management Institute.

Resumés are all good and well, but Doc's value to the S.A.L. lies in his demeanor and the way he goes about doing business. Doc is the kind of leader who speaks softly and doesn't need to carry a big stick because when he speaks, people listen. He's a voice of experience, reason and optimism -- all traits an organization like ours needs.

He doesn't presume to know all the answers but he never shies away from the difficult issues. Working with Doc is never onerous or rancorous but always instructive, rewarding and profitable.

I've had the honor of serving with Doc for about the last 20 years now, and I can tell you he's a great person. He's a comrade in the truest sense of the word.

Doc qualifies as a son through his father, M.L. Pfeiffer, now in Post Everlasting, who, like our current Doc, was a Marine Corps veteran of World War II.

He's an American Legion family, with wife Ann-Nora is a member of the Auxiliary; son Christopher, a career servicemember in the Air Force is a dual

member. When counting Doc's extending family there are 14 American Legion members.

Finally, I remind my fellow Sons that the S.A.L. is in good hands when one of our national officers is called Doc. You like that? Where did he go?

(Laughter)

It's my privilege to place into nomination for the high office of National Vice Commander Central the name of my friend, Richard "Doc" Pfeiffer. Thank you.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Indiana nominates Richard Pfeiffer for National Vice Commander Central Region. Iowa.

DELEGATE FROM IOWA: Iowa yields to Michigan for the purposes of a second.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Michigan.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER RUTTKOFSKY: Michigan, I'll read from here, Adjutant.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Sounds like a plan.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER RUTTKOFSKY: Save some time. Earl Ruttkofsky from Michigan. Those of you who know me know that I used to build automobiles for a living.

My goal was always to build a great car that someone could be proud to drive of.

Doc Pfeiffer also is known to build things as a

commercial builder. He likes to build things that not only look nice but function well. The S.A.L. builds to take the organization into a leader -- a Legion second century, a leader who has pride in the work and stresses quality in all they do.

When we elect a National Commander -- Vice Commander, we require a leader to build up and not tear down, a leader who sees the potential in the Sons of The American Legion. To be that kind of a leader, he must have experience in all aspects of leadership, not the least of which have the respective of those he works with.

Doc Pfeiffer is that type of a leader, a true gentleman who leads by example. His resumé attests to this in all ways, get 'er done.

I, Earl Ruttkofsky, now -- it's my pleasure to second the nomination of my friend, Richard "Doc" Pfeiffer, to the high office of National Vice Commander, Central Region. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Michigan seconds.
Minnesota.

DELEGATE FROM MINNESOTA: Minnesota seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Minnesota seconds.
Missouri.

DELEGATE FROM MISSOURI: Missouri seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Missouri seconds.

Ohio.

DELEGATE FROM OHIO: Ohio proudly seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Ohio seconds.

Wisconsin.

DELEGATE FROM WISCONSIN: Wisconsin seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Wisconsin seconds.

Illinois.

DELEGATE FROM ILLINOIS: Illinois seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Illinois seconds.

Iowa.

DELEGATE FROM IOWA: Iowa seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Iowa seconds.

Richard Pfeiffer has been nominated for Central
Region Vice Commander.

Midwest.

(Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Colorado.

DELEGATE FROM COLORADO: Colorado yields to
Kansas.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Colorado yields to
Kansas; is that correct?

DELEGATE FROM COLORADO: That's correct.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Kansas.

DELEGATE FROM KANSAS: Kansas respectfully requests permission for Past National Commander Neal Warnken to approach the podium for the purpose of a nomination.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Permission granted.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER WARNKEN: Good morning.

The young man I want to introduce to you today has been a personal friend, and I've been around him and watched him grow for many, many years.

Chris Cook has been a member of the Sons of The American Legion for 30 years. What's interesting about that is Chris is only 29 years old.

(Laughter)

Now, if that's not dedication, I don't know what is. That alone proves to me that he's a very dedicated Sons of The American Legion member.

His family is very much a Legion family. Chris earned his eligibility through his grandfather, Wilbert Cook, who served in World War II as a Army Corps 60th Bombing Group. Some of you may know his father, Past National Commander Rick Cook, his brother, Jay, and his mom, Jacqueline, who is an Auxiliary member.

In his junior year of high school, Chris attended American Legion Boys State. Chris has served in several positions in the Detachment level of Oklahoma, which

includes four years as National Executive Committeeman. He's a graduate of NMI and has served as National Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms.

Today, it is indeed a pleasure to place in nomination for Midwest National Vice Commander, Chris Cook.

(Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Kansas nominates Chris Cook.

Montana.

DELEGATE FROM MONTANA: Montana yields to Oklahoma.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Oklahoma.

FROM THE FLOOR: My name is Kayson Cook from the Department of Oklahoma, Detachment of Oklahoma. I would like to second the nomination for my uncle, Chris Cook, for National Vice Commander.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Oklahoma seconds.

(Applause)

South Dakota.

(No response.)

Texas.

DELEGATE FROM TEXAS: Texas seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Texas seconds.

Wyoming.

DELEGATE FROM WYOMING: Wyoming seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Wyoming seconds.
Colorado.

DELEGATE FROM COLORADO: It is with great pride
Colorado seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Colorado seconds.
Montana.

DELEGATE FROM MONTANA: Montana proudly seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Montana seconds.
Nebraska.

DELEGATE FROM NEBRASKA: Nebraska proudly
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Nebraska seconds.
New Mexico.

DELEGATE FROM NEW MEXICO: New Mexico seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: New Mexico seconds.
North Dakota.

DELEGATE FROM NORTH DAKOTA: North Dakota
seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: North Dakota seconds.
South Dakota here?

(No response.)

Chris Cook has been nominated National Vice
Commander, Midwest.

(Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Western Region.
Alaska.

DELEGATE FROM ALASKA: Alaska yields for
California.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: California.

JAMES FISCHER: James Fischer, a delegate of this
convention. I request permission for PNC Gene Sacco to
approach the podium for purposes of a nomination.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Permission granted.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER SACCO: Good morning.

Commander, National Officers, fellow delegates
and guests to this 48th annual National Convention of
the Sons of The American Legion: I am honored today to
nominate a fine gentleman and great friend for the high
office of National Vice Commander representing the
Western area.

A 58-year member of Haggin Grant Squadron 521 in
Northern California, he's represented our Detachment
very well.

He gains his eligibility through his father, a
World War II veteran. Participating in the Legion
family programs with an emphasis on American Legion
baseball.

In fact, last month he completed his 57th year
participating and volunteering his time in the

California State Tournament of American Legion Baseball in Yountville, California.

A few years ago, this gentleman was also inducted into Pasadena Squadron 13 Sons of The American Legion Hall of Fame.

To tell you about all of his S.A.L. qualifications in the Squadron, District and Detachment level would simply take too long. I would rather conclude my remarks by sharing with you a few items that clearly display his dedication to the Sons of The American Legion and the entire American Legion family.

This gentleman has been married to his lovely wife, Debbie, for over 50 years. In fact, they celebrated their 50-year anniversary in May of this year.

He is a father of four and has 15 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. I've known and volunteered with this fine gentleman for over 40 years and have always found him to be dependable, efficient and unfailingly dedicated. In fact, I've never worked with a person of the Sons of The American Legion who gives as much attention to detail as he does.

His willingness to take on difficult projects and see them to successful completion has repeatedly impressed me over the years.

His skills do not end with his work in the Sons of The American Legion or The American Legion Baseball program.

He also projects a warm, cheerful attitude to our members. I have seen him resolve conflicts and handle other difficult decisions with remarkable patience and admirable tact.

This gentleman goes out of his way to help people in the community and fellow members of his local Elks Lodge. He loves people, works hard and always tries to lift the spirits of those around him.

I believe these characteristics represent all that is good in our organization. And on behalf of the Detachment of California, I therefore am pleased to place the name of a great member and a great friend, Mr. Ned Fox, for the high office of National Vice Commander, representing the Western area. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: California nominates Ned Fox.

Idaho.

DELEGATE FROM IDAHO: Idaho proudly seconds the nomination.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Idaho seconds the nomination.

Nevada.

DELEGATE FROM NEVADA: Nevada seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Nevada seconds.

Oregon.

DELEGATE FROM OREGON: Oregon seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Oregon seconds.

Utah.

(No response.)

Washington.

DELEGATE FROM WASHINGTON: Washington seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Washington seconds.

Alaska.

DELEGATE FROM ALASKA: Alaska seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Alaska seconds.

Arizona.

DELEGATE FROM ARIZONA: Arizona seconds.

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: Arizona seconds.

Commander, that concludes roll call for National Vice Commanders.

The nominees for National Vice Commander by region: Gary Nelson, East; Blair Miles, South; Richard Pfeiffer, Central; Christopher Cook, Midwest; and Ned Fox, West.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: All right, gentlemen. Having only one nominee per region, we will entertain a

motion to act on those nominations, the nominations of Gary Nelson, Blair Miles, Richard Pfeiffer, Chris Cook, and Ned Fox as our National Vice Commanders.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER STILLWELL: Mr. Commander, Past National Commander Stillwell, I move that the Adjutant be instructed to cast the unanimous ballot for the installation of officers for National Vice Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. Do we have a second?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER COLLIER: National Commander, Past National Commander Kevin Collier seconds that motion.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you. We have a motion and a second. Any discussion on the motion?

Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Any opposed, nay.

We now have new Vice Commanders, gentlemen.

(Applause)

Gentlemen, please come on up -- Gary Nelson, Blair Miles, Richard Pfeiffer, Chris Cook, and Ned Fox.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: It's my honor to make these gentlemen Distinguished Guests to our Convention,

and we look forward to their leadership and service next year.

(Applause)

Your National Vice Commanders.

(Applause)

Just one more point of business. We may have some new members of our youth that may have come in a little late to the meeting today. So if they are here, I'd like them to come up and receive their Certificates of Appreciation. That's Kayson Cook and Alana Cook.

(Applause)

And if the two Clancy boys are with us here this morning, please come up to the podium as well. And Luke Woodburn, if he's with us, please.

Again, our future.

(Applause)

Thank you, guys.

(Applause)

NATIONAL ADJUTANT WRIGHT: At this time I'd like to go on record that I, Anthony Wright, cast one unanimous ballot for the following National Vice Commanders: Gary Nelson, National Vice Commander, East; Blair Miles, South; Richard Pfeiffer, Central; Christopher Cook, Midwest; and Ned Fox, West.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: It's now official.

(Laughter)

And could I have the National Historian please approach the podium, put the camera down for a change.

(Laughter)

It's been a pleasure to have Tim serve as our historian. He's had the ability to follow me around a little bit this year. And I appreciate it very much. And I'd like to make Tim a Distinguished Guest of our convention at this time.

(Applause)

Okay, gentlemen, with the colors of our nation --

GREG SPAULDING: Commander Gibbs, sorry to interrupt. Greg Spaulding. May we come to the podium for a presentation?

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Certainly. Have a seat, gentlemen.

GREG SPAULDING: At the dinner Friday night, one of the bartenders, she had on a nice little red, white blue cowboy hat. And I don't know who brought it up or how it came about, but would she like to sell that hat. And she said, I will for a thousand dollars.

Well, that was a challenge, you guys. And they went around, trying to pass the hat. We got that hat. But we did give it back to her. But Commander Heiser here has a check to present to Commander Gibbs for his

project.

DETACHMENT COMMANDER HEISER: In the amount of \$1,048, for the NEF, Commander.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, gentlemen.

GREG SPAULDING: Also we have the banner that greeted everybody into the convention this weekend, and that's going to Commander Gibbs also.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, gentlemen.

(Applause)

We also have had a donation given to me this morning from Rick from Iowa for \$100 for CWF. And I believe there's another cash donation out there. At this time, would you please come on up? A few dollars was collected at a little meeting last night.

I did want to give you a minute to mention this at the mic.

MIKE MONSERUD: Mike Monserud, Detachment of Iowa, Commander. We went to that Post 64 last night and we also tried to raise some money for the Detachment of Illinois for NEF. So from Iowa American Legion family, with help from the Arizona American Legion family and the New Mexico American Legion family, we have \$700 we raised for NEF last night.

(Applause)

BRANDON CURRY: Commander Gibbs, Brandon Curry, Detachment of Kentucky, permission to approach the stage for a donation for CEF.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Certainly.

While Kentucky is coming up to the podium, I want to thank them. They gave me a bottle carrying some liquid from Kentucky.

(Laughter)

It was very special and it will be enjoyed.

(Laughter)

BRANDON CURRY: Good morning.

Hey, we're the bourbon capital of the world for no reason, guys. I love it.

I have \$650 from the Detachment of Kentucky for CWF, Commander.

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you, sir. Appreciate it, brother.

(Applause)

All right at this time I would like to let the Vice Commanders know their duties are done for the year, and I would like them to retire to their appropriate Detachments.

Thank you, gentlemen, for your service.

(Applause)

All right, ladies and gentlemen --

(Gavel)

(Laughter)

Salute to Colors and Recess

Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs (NY), National Commander

With the colors of our nation in place, please join me by the numbers of a right-hand salute. One. Two.

The 48th National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion will now stand in recess until 12:30 p.m. today to allow our members to attend the Joint Memorial Service. Thank you.

...On Sunday, August 25, 2019, at 10:05 a.m., the 48th Annual National Convention was recessed, to reconvene at 12:30 p.m.

...On Sunday, August 25, 2019, at 12:34 p.m., the 48th Annual National Convention was reconvened, and the following proceedings were had:

Call to Order and Salute to Colors

Greg K. "Doc" Gibbs (NY), National Commander

Ladies and gentlemen, with the colors of our nation in place, please join me in a right-hand salute by the numbers. One. Two.

Before we begin the rest of our agenda for the rest of this afternoon, I'd like to ask the representatives from Pennsylvania and Virginia to the stage, to the podium for the purposes of a presentation.

Gentlemen, if you could please take care of our photos of our honored Past National Commanders that have passed away this past year whom we dedicated this convention to. Thank you. It's appreciated.

Installation of the Newly Elected

National Vice Commanders

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please bring before us the installing officers.

I'll be turning the microphone over to Past National Commander Dan Dellinger.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: Please be seated.

Sergeant-at-Arms, please bring before me the newly elected national officers of the Sons of The American Legion, with the exception of the National Commander.

You have been chosen to fill the various offices of the National organization of the Sons of The American Legion. You will, I know, vindicate the trust that has been reposed in you and fulfill in every way the obligation that trust entails.

You will at once familiarize yourselves with the duties of your particular offices, and you'll proceed upon those duties with the same spirit of devotion and endeavor that characterizes your father's service of the Great Wars, out of which their basis for membership in The American Legion and your own in the Sons of The American Legion.

You must know that the welfare and success of the programs of the Sons of The American Legion depends largely upon you. And you must know that upon your shoulders equally rests the burden of preserving the integrity of the Sons of The American Legion.

You must protect and advance its good name before the people of this nation. You must exalt it in their

eyes. You must make them know as we know its purposes and its policies.

Ever remember the tolerant spirit that animates its members. There is no rank among us, for each serves as the equal of his comrade; and all strive toward the same goal, which is the realization in the life of the Republic, the ideals of justice, freedom, democracy and loyalty.

Ever remember that the cardinal purposes of the Sons of The American Legion are the care of the dependents of those who have answered the final call and of those who are now suffering from disease and want; rightful education of our children of our country and devoted service to the community, state and nation.

Are you now willing to assume the responsibilities of your office?

NEWLY ELECTED NVCs: I am.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: Raise your right hand and repeat after me, giving your name when I give mine.

I, Daniel Dellinger, do solemnly pledge myself to perform faithfully and impartially the duties of the office in the Sons of the American Legion I am about to assume, and I further pledge I am not a member of and do not subscribe to the principles of any group opposed to

our form of government.

You may lower your hand. The audience may be seated.

Into your helpful hands are placed the important responsibilities of assisting the Commander in all of his duties. You will stress to the membership and nation the programs and goodwill of The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion.

Sergeant-at-Arms, please conduct the newly elected National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion to the podium.

(Applause)

Commander Bolt, to you is entrusted a very sacred duty - that of the teaching and protecting the cardinal principles of the Sons of The American Legion throughout the nation. To you is entrusted supervision of the duties of all other officers of the national organization.

To you will come the indigent and the distressed, and it's your duty to see that no worthy comrade is turned away without justice. It is your duty to see that freedom is ever the watch word of those with whom you may come in contact.

Loyalty to the national organization, its membership, The American Legion, are requirements which

you now assume. You're more than the presiding officer for meetings. You are guided by the Constitution and by the decisions of the national organization. Yet the responsibility for the success of this year's programs are largely on your shoulders.

You must initiate and carry programs through to completion. You must thoroughly familiarize yourself with policies and traditions of the Sons of The American Legion. To you I extend the congratulations of The American Legion and wish you well.

(Applause)

Are you ready to assume the office, the responsibilities of your office?

NATIONAL COMMANDER ELECT BOLT: I am.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: You will raise your right hand, repeat after me, giving your name where I give mine.

I, Daniel Dellinger, do solemnly pledge myself to perform faithfully and impartially the duties of the office in the Sons of the American Legion I am about to assume, and I further pledge, I am not a member of and do not subscribe to the principles of any group opposed to our form of government.

You may lower your hand, and the audience may be seated.

Recognition of the Retiring National Commander

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER DELLINGER: I ask the retiring the National Commander to please join me at the podium.

Commander Gibbs, your duties as Commander of this organization have been completed. Yours has been a year marked with the earnest endeavor and success to a very satisfying degree.

Yours has been a great privilege and a rich experience. The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion have observed your faithful and untiring efforts and extend to you their sincere appreciation of the services which you have rendered. Congratulations.

(Applause)

(Standing ovation)

Everybody is already up, I know. But it says it in the script. I have to follow the script.

(Laughter)

I present to you the officers of your choice. I congratulate you on the selections you have made. Now that you have chosen them to guide the destinies of this organization, it is your duty to aid them in every way.

Help them keep the Sons of The American Legion a free organization of free men faithful to its principles

and ideals.

National Commander, I now give you your gavel.
It's up to you to seat your audience.

(Gavel)

(Laughter)

NATIONAL COMMANDER CLINT BOLT: I need a little more practice. No, wait a second, guys. I would like to -- we have three of the wives of the Vice Commanders. I'd like them to come forward and place the caps on their husbands.

(Applause)

Thank you. Vice Commanders, you can please take a seat for a moment.

Will the Sergeant-at-Arms please escort our leading candidate for National President, Nicole Clapp, and our leading candidate for American Legion National Commander, Bill Oxford, to the stage.

FROM THE FLOOR: They're behind you.

NATIONAL COMMANDER CLINT BOLT: Oh, hell.

(Laughter and applause)

**Remarks and Introductions by the New National Commander
National Commander Clint D. Bolt (VA)**

Let's see if I can do this right. I need the

Sergeant-at-Arms to escort Jason and Greg to the stage, please, my boys. Come over here, gentlemen.

(Applause)

At this time, I'm going to ask my lovely wife, Becky, to come forward, and my two boys, Jason and Greg, to help put me in my official uniform.

(Applause)

At this time, I'm going to make my family Distinguished Guests of this Convention.

(Applause)

At this time I would like to call Pam Gibbs to the podium, too, please.

Where is my aide? You can always blame it on the aide, isn't that what Brett said?

(Laughter)

Becky has a gift she wants to give the former First Lady.

(Applause)

What would we do without our Adjutants?

FROM THE FLOOR: Suffer.

(Laughter)

NATIONAL COMMANDER CLINT BOLT: Commander Gibbs, officers, delegates, members, family and guests, thank you. Thank you for the high honor to serve you as your National Commander.

I am humbled by the trust you have placed in me, and I will strive to always represent the Sons of The American Legion to the best of my ability.

I want to thank my family -- Becky, Greg, Jason, Josh -- for being supportive of me on this journey. I thank each of you for allowing me the time away from you.

Becky, a special thank you, dear, for believing in me, for the well-timed words of encouragement, and the even not-so-good words of encouragement. I'm sure I needed them at times, too.

And thank you for making this trip here today; I know it's been hard on you this week. She just had an operation a little over a week ago, so I'm fortunate she's here. But Becky, this is your special day too, dear.

(Applause)

To my Virginia team, the whole team -- Sons, Auxiliary, Legionnaires -- without your years of continued support, I would not be standing here today. This is truly a team effort.

The inner circle -- National Vice Commander Steve Gower, Scott Williams, Linwood, Willie Morgan, H.B. Hall, Dellie Suitor, Kevin Chaplin, Rita and Bill Feasenmyer, Fred Vaccarella, Victor Graulau, Jeff Lee

and George Lussier -- thank you for supporting me with the countless hours of work that you did for me.

To my aide, Jeff, who is taking a pounding already, eh?

(Laughter)

Thank you for your decades of support, your guidance, but most importantly, your friendship. I love you, brother.

There are many Legion family members who were with me in the beginning, but are now serving Post Everlasting. I wish they could be here today for me to thank personally, but I'm certain they are all smiling down.

I want to thank the 48th National Convention for honoring Past National Commander Chuck Belles from Virginia. He wanted so much to be here at this Convention to see elected. His wife, Carol, called, and, gentlemen, I want to tell each of you, she was moved by the gesture of you all honoring him this weekend.

Special thanks to past American Legion Commander Dan Dellinger, American Legion Commander Brett Reistad and American Legion Auxiliary Past President Peggy Thomas. Thank you for your years of service and for providing me examples of excellence in high office that

each of you have held.

My sponsor, Steve Laws, thank you for your years of guidance and helping me navigate the pathway to becoming this National Commander this year.

I want to thank all of the Sons of The American Legion Past National Commanders for sharing your years of wisdom and experience with me. You, too, have also been truly brothers.

But I want to thank Past National Commander Danny Smith and Doc Gibbs. Thank you for your insights, for sharing your experiences, your mentorship and for being the finest examples of what our national leadership is. Thank you, gentlemen.

(Applause)

I'm truly blessed this year to serve with two people that, they're just exceptional, dedicated people for the organization.

For the Auxiliary, soon-to-be President Nicole Clapp from the Department of Iowa, her theme this year is "Celebrating a Century of Service." The Auxiliary turns 100 this year, and she will be the 100th president.

At this time I'd like to ask Nicole to come forward and share a few words, few thoughts with you.

AUXILIARY PRESIDENT-ELECT CLAPP: Good afternoon.

Congratulations, Commander Clint. How does that sound?

Sons of The American Legion, you have elected a very sincere, dedicated and hard-working individual to lead your organization in this upcoming year.

I feel very fortunate to hopefully be serving alongside Commander Clint if I'm elected National President of The American Legion Auxiliary on Wednesday.

I need to thank The American Legion, their founding fathers, for having the insight to create The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion.

As Clint mentioned, it is our centennial year, and so for us we are looking to celebrate our heritage on November 10th. And with that, having an opportunity to celebrate that milestone with leading candidate of The American Legion, Bill Oxford, and now Commander Clint.

In 2019-2020, The American Legion Auxiliary, with our membership of over 600,000 strong, will proudly embrace Commander Clint's theme of "serving those who served," while we are celebrating a century of service.

I believe it is a very fitting way of showing our appreciation to blend the past and the future of The American Legion family. Thank you very much. And I

wish you the very best, Commander.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER BOLT: For The American Legion this year, soon-to-be Commander Bill Oxford, from the Department of North Carolina. Commander Bill's theme this year is "Building a Foundation for the Future." Commander Bill is a firm believer that it takes a whole Legion family for this foundation to be strong for the next 100 years.

Bill, can I ask you to come forward right now, sir?

(Applause)

AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL COMMANDER-ELECT OXFORD: Wow, have we got a great family or what? Clint, I'll get to you in just a minute. But, Doc, I'd like to say to you: Great work. You had a tremendous year. And if, I think my memory serves me correct, this is the 46th consecutive year of an all-time high in membership? That's a good number, folks. And that's going to be what we're talking about more than anything else this year, is our membership.

Clint, your goals for the year, 400,000 members and half a million dollars for the Child Welfare Foundation, great work. I support that 100 percent.

But Clint mentioned my theme for the year,

"building a foundation for the future." As we look around, we are the future of this organization. The things that we did yesterday, the things we do today, the things we will do tomorrow are creating the foundation for this organization for the next centennial.

Clint, I know that you will be successful in your goals. I hope everybody helps us become successful as we strive to reach those new membership numbers with the Legion Act that opens up a whole new field or a whole new source of memberships for the Legion, for the Auxiliary and the Sons.

So as we move into the next centennial, Clint, we're behind you 100 percent. Congratulations on your election. It will be an honor to serve on your team, and I'm tickled to death to have you on my team. Thank you.

(Applause)

NATIONAL COMMANDER BOLT: Commander Gibbs, you and your officers, the commission committee chairmen and their members, congratulations on an outstanding year.

You have served with honor and distinction and moved our organization to new highs in all areas. You truly have honored the past and continued the legacy.

To honor my grandfather, Kennard Bolt, who served

in the United States Navy, World War II, and all veterans everywhere, my theme this year is "serving those who served, full steam ahead."

I feel that the core mission of the Sons of The American Legion is to assist our nation's heroes and their dependents, to promote Americanism and to make our communities a better place to live.

Sons are making a difference all across this country. Each year Posts and Departments are discovering how valuable the Sons of The American Legion are serving on committees and chairing many of the Department programs.

A few examples is Sons member Matt Griffis, from the Detachment of Arizona. Matt is a retired policeman.

The Department of Arizona has tapped his work and skills and made him the Department Director for The American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy.

More Sons than ever are serving on Boys State as counselors. In my own Detachment, Fargo Wells has been a Boys State counselor for 35 years.

Learning of his vast experience, the Department of Washington D.C. reached out to Fargo and asked him to help them start their Boys State program, where he has now served for four years helping them.

Our very own National Commander, Doc Gibbs, is a

judge at the National Oratorical Competition and is also on the selection board for the Samsung Scholarship.

You heard second-leading candidate Paul Dillard tell us that visiting a Post, you can just tell when a Post has a strong Sons program.

I couldn't agree with him more. If you want to see a healthy Post, then it needs to have a strong, active Legion family.

But less than half of the Posts in this organization have a Sons program. This year we need to show those Posts just how valuable a Sons program could be for them.

Membership is job one for us. I feel that a 400,000 membership goal can and will be reached this year. To help us with that growth is the passage of the Legion Act. This opens up the door to over 4 million veterans and their sons to grow our organization.

But we must help the Legion recruit these new veterans. And more importantly, we must welcome them and their sons into our ranks.

American Legion Commander Bill Oxford will award any Legion family member who recruits three Legionnaires this year. It will be his Membership Excellence Pin.

Supporting our Legion charities, it's more important than ever. The American Legion stepped up and

assisted the children of our Coast Guardsmen, when the government shut down this year.

This TFA fund had an unexpected draw of \$1.3 million. We need to do all we can to help replenish those monies so that we can make sure and keep The American Legion toolbox ready to go when needed.

Gentlemen, you heard the awesome accomplishments this weekend, and it is clear that each one of you make a difference -- a difference in the lives of our veterans, our children and our communities.

As The American Legion starts the new century of service, the Sons of The American Legion will be a steadfast family member committed to our veterans, building a foundation for the future by serving those who served.

May God bless The American Legion family, may God bless the United States of America. Thank you all very much from the bottom of my heart. Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

Presentation of the National Commander's New Cap

I'd like to ask Pam Gibbs to come forward and place the cap on her husband.

Commander.

(Laughter and applause)

Now, could I call Dan Dellinger, Bill Oxford and Nicole Clapp to the podium to make them Distinguished Guests of this Convention.

(Applause)

I'll give Dan his in a minute.

At this time I will turn the podium back over to National Commander Doc Gibbs.

(Applause)

Presentation of the National Commanders' Flags

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Chris Cerullo, our Past National Commander from New York.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER CERULLO: Thank you, Commander.

Sergeant-at-Arms, can I have every member of the Detachment of New York please stand up, of the Sons of The American Legion. Because when I speak, I speak for every member of our Detachment.

Doc, we miss you, and it's time to come home.

(Laughter)

For 35 years, I've told my stories. You start tomorrow telling your story. And when that flag goes back to Hamburg, New York, your story is in the threads of that gold flag. That's what makes it shine so bright.

We thank you for the job you did and made us proud. Thank you.

(Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Mike Moss, another Past National Commander when I served as Vice Commander under Mike.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER MOSS: Sergeant-at-Arms, please exchange the colors.

Clint, it's my honor to present you with your colors, a symbol of our organization. I know you'll treat them with respect and dignity.

Congratulations again for a fine job, well done so far this year. You've got a lot of stuff to go ahead. So thank you.

(Applause)

Old Business, New Business, and For the Good of the Sons of the American Legion

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: At this time, gentlemen, is there any old business to come before this National Convention? Any old business to come before this National Convention? Third time, is there any old business to come before this National Convention?

Is there any new business to come before this National Convention? Any new business to come before

this Convention? Any new business to come before this Convention?

Hearing none, we're going to move on to the Good of the Sons of The American Legion. Are there any reports for the Good of the Sons of The American Legion?

FROM THE FLOOR: Excuse me. I would like to ask that the new Vice Commanders meet over here on this side so I can get some pictures taken along with the new Commander, please.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Any other Good of the Sons business?

JIM COATES: Mr. Commander, Jim Coates, Delegate Chairman, Detachment of New York, it's my privilege to make an announcement that one of our delegates, one of our members of the Sons of The American Legion, has just been elected as the president of the National American Legion Press Association.

With that in mind, then, Ken has asked for the microphone for a brief remark.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Certainly.

KEVIN HARRINGTON: Thank you. Commander Gibbs, Commander Bolt, congratulations on your year and your new election. And as my first official act as President of the National American Legion Press Association, representing the Sons of The American Legion,

congratulations, gentlemen.

(Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: And
congratulations to you as well.

JIM COATES: My apologies, Commander, that was
Kevin Harrington.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Yes, Kevin
Harrington, newly elected.

(Applause)

It's nice to have a Son in that high office.
Thank you, sir.

(Standing ovation)

NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Any other business for
the Good of the Sons of The American Legion?

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER BIBLE: Mr. Commander,
Douglas Bible, Past National Commander, point of
personal privilege. It is my honor to announce the
leading candidate for National Commander of the Sons of
The American Legion, Mr. Michael Fox, from California.

(Applause)

And it is also my pleasure to announce the second
leading candidate for National Commander,
Mr. Christopher Carlton, from Indiana.

(Applause)

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Home crowd.

(Applause)

Very good. Any other business for the Good of the Sons at this time?

THOMAS SKELLEY: Commander, Tom Skelley, Texas. The Detachment of Texas would like to officially thank The American Legion family of Georgia and especially their Post 75.

In our time of need with a medical emergency experienced by our NECman David Blair, they were there to offer their support and assist us.

Their efforts truly exemplify part of our Preamble, to consecrate and sanctify our friendship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

I'd just like to go on record as an official thank you to Georgia.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Can you give us an update or is it too personal?

THOMAS SKELLEY: David has been released and is doing well at this time.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: Thank you.

(Applause)

Any other business for the Good of the Sons at this time?

I have one item that I forgot about. A number of -- before we went to France this year, I reached out

and asked if there were any direct connections to the GIs that are buried in the cemeteries in France.

And I heard from about eight people who -- they can remain nameless but who had direct connections to folks who were buried or served at D-Day.

I brought back some sand from Omaha Beach and I have it in small, little vials. If you're one of those eight people, you can see me. It doesn't have to be today. It can be any time.

But I'll keep those vials of sand from Omaha Beach. And if you have a close connection to someone who served and/or died there, please see me and we'll share that with you.

Any other thing for the good of the Sons?

I understand we have a get-together tomorrow night. Does somebody want to comment on that, give us details? No?

(Laughter)

Closing Remarks and Announcements

Okay. Any other announcements before we adjourn?

FROM THE FLOOR: That was close, yes, you're right. I would just like to announce the Four Corners party tomorrow, starting at 12 noon over at Post 64, running until 4:00 p.m. Everyone's invited. Please come, have some fun. Bring your cover for a

photographic moment for all the Sons.

Thank you, sir, that is all.

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: All right, very good. Any other announcements?

The Post-Convention National Executive Committee meeting will begin in 15 minutes in this room. If there's no further business to come before us at this time, at this National Convention, I'm going to ask our National Chaplain, David Rippe, to lead us in the closing prayer.

Please rise and uncover.

Benediction

David L. Rippe (NE), National Chaplain

Heavenly Father, may these past days encourage us to continue serving You and our national organization and its programs. We know that the success of our organization is because of Your guidance.

We ask for thy protection as we return to our homes. God bless the Sons of The American Legion and the United States of America. Amen.

Retirement of the Colors and Adjournment

PAST NATIONAL COMMANDER GIBBS: The Color Guard will now retrieve the colors. Hand salute.

It has been a pleasure serving you. I now declare this 48th National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion adjourned.

(Applause)

1:24 p.m.

...At 1:24 p.m., Sunday, August 25, 2019, the 48th Annual National Convention of the Sons of The American Legion was adjourned.

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION

I, DENISE HINXMAN, Certified Court Reporter, do hereby certify;

That on August 23-25, 2019, I was present and took verbatim stenotype notes of the Meeting entitled herein, and thereafter transcribed the same into typewriting as herein appears;

That said meeting was taken in stenotype notes by I, Certified Court Reporter, and thereafter reduced to typewriting under our direction as herein appears;

That the foregoing transcript is a full, true and correct transcription of our stenotype notes of said meeting.

Dated at Reno, Nevada, this 15th day of September, 2019.

Denise Hinxman