



The American Legion Birthday

The American Legion

March 15 is the designated birthday of The American Legion. On that date in 1919, the first American Legion caucus, held by members of the American Expeditionary Force, convened in Paris. Much as the birthday of the United States is celebrated on July 4 - for the date in 1776 when patriots declared the independence of the British colonies and the spirit of America was born - March 15 is the date when The American Legion came to life.

Go to <https://www.legion.org/publications/248270/american-legion-birthday-suggested-speech> for a suggested speech to use in conjunction with the 105th birthday of The American Legion.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Top Ten Detachments Membership Percentage

1. Hawaii	100%
2. South Dakota	99.94%
3. Puerto Rico	95.51%
4. France	95.24%
5. North Dakota	94.05%
6. Wisconsin	93.63%
7. South Carolina	91.78%
8. Florida	91.25%
9. Rhode Island	87.64%
10. Iowa	97.46%

as of February 21, 2024

BE THE ONE

John Loudermilk, Commander
Sizzlin' Sixth District, Detachment of Ohio
Membership and YOU!

As we find ourselves at the mid-point of the administrative year, I extend my warmest wishes to each and every one of you for a prosperous and fulfilling New Year.

With the arrival of February 1st, I urge everyone to prioritize the renewal of their memberships. It is imperative to ensure that all members are in good standing, as unpaid memberships will now be considered expired. Your active participation and support are vital to our collective mission, and I encourage each one of you to take this opportunity to renew your commitment to our cause.

In the spirit of camaraderie and support, I emphasize the importance of conducting Buddy Checks within the Post and Squadron. If you notice a fellow member's absence from our meetings or events, I urge you to reach out to them and offer your support. Small gestures of care and concern can have a significant impact and ensure that no member feels isolated or forgotten. Additionally, let us not overlook the importance of checking in on our shut-ins, providing them with the support and companionship they may need.

As ambassadors within our communities, we must remain visible and vigilant, standing as beacons of hope and support. Let us collectively strive to "Be The One" who makes a positive difference and fosters a sense of unity and belonging.

Let us unite and finish the year with renewed determination.

THE MILLENNIUM

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All information must be submitted no later than 12:00 noon the twentieth of each month and must be made electronically by [emailing the editor](#).

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REPRESENTING

More THAN ME



National Vice-Commander John Cook (NH) helps the Ralph W. Shirley Post 46 in Conway, NH raise money for their American Legion Baseball team. Players and volunteers braved a winter storm to attend a meat raffle. Fun time was had by all.

submitted photos



Happy St. Patrick's Day

DONATE TODAY

AMERICAN LEGION

[CLICK HERE](#)



Detachment of Ohio Commander David L. Dilts with Zanesville Police Department Sergeant Kyle Brookover, the Department of Ohio 2024 Law Officer of the Year.

Facebook photo



National Vice-Commander Robert Bristo participated in the 138th edition of the Saint Paul Winter Carnival and is seen here with the Blue Star Mothers. The carnival is held in St. Paul, MN and was held from January 25 through February 4, 2024.

Lou Michaels

FOLLOW US:



PROUD POSSESSORS OF A PRICELESS HERITAGE

Important Web Links

The National Public & Media Communications Committee has created this Important Web Links document for our members, as well as for all members of the American Legion Family, to use to get to some of our most important websites. Please save this document and refer to it often. Thank you!

SAL National Web Site

<https://www.legion.org/sons>

Publications and Forms (SDR, Handbook, Awards and much more)

<https://www.legion.org/sons/publications>

Subscribe to Newsletters (requires signing into MyLegion.org)

<https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/My-Account/Opt-In-Out>

Millennium Newsletters

<https://sites.google.com/view/teamvrab/el/the-millennium?authuser=0>

Round-Up Newsletters

<https://sites.google.com/view/teamvrab/el/round-up-newsletter>

Newsletter Digital Archives

<https://www.legion.org/library/258352/50-years-sons-american-legion-newsletters-now-available>

Be The One

<https://www.legion.org/berheone>

Voter Voice

<https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home>

Membership Reports

<https://www.legion.org/sons/membership-reports>

SAL Resolutions

<https://www.legion.org/sons/resolutions>

Future Meetings

<https://www.legion.org/sons/events>

Emblem Sales Digital Catalog

<https://emblem.legion.org/catalog-legion.asp>

Business meetings schedule

Sons of The American Legion is announcing its 2023 – 2024 Zoom Business Meeting schedule. To attend on the appropriate date, please click the link on the meeting you would like to attend. If you will be calling in, the number for all meetings is (877) 853-5257.

These meetings are open to all members to listen in and find out more about the organization, learn about how national programs are going, and get ideas that may work at home.

Central Region

Second Wednesday Quarterly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 919 4714 3789 | Passcode: 241 429
11/10/23 | 12/12/23 | 03/13/24 | 04/09/24 | 06/11/24 | 08/13/24

Midwest Region

Fourth Wednesday Quarterly | 7:00 p.m. Mtn
Meeting ID: 924 0402 2733 | Passcode: 371 685
09/27/23 | 12/27/23 | 03/27/24 | 06/26/23

Northeast Region

Third Wednesday Quarterly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 980 7046 7820 | Passcode: 469 153
09/20/23 | 12/20/23 | 03/20/24 | 06/19/23

Southeast Region

First Wednesday Quarterly | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 945 1723 1230 | Passcode: 58543
06/06/23 | 12/06/23 | 03/06/23 | 06/05/23

Western Region

Third Wednesday Quarterly | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 964 2285 1563 | Passcode: 433 552
09/20/23 | 12/20/23 | 03/20/24 | 06/19/24

Americanism Commission

Third Monday Bi-Monthly | 7:30 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 935 4066 0918 | Passcode: 571 659
10/16/23 | 12/18/23 | 02/19/24 | 04/15/24
06/17/24 | 08/19/24

Finance Commission

Third Thursday as scheduled | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 966 1733 0121 | Passcode: 463 702
09/21/23 | 02/15/24 | 04/18/24 | 07/18/24

Internal Affairs Zoom Business Meeting

Fourth Thursday Bi-Monthly | 6:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 932 2650 4089 | Passcode: 725 519
10/26/23 | 12/28/23 | 02/22/24 | 04/15/24
06/27/24 | 08/22/24

Legislative Commission

Second Thursday Bi-Monthly | 7:30 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 937 1376 7924 | Passcode: 172 912
10/12/23 | 12/14/23 | 02/08/24 | 04/11/24
06/13/24 | 08/08/24

Public Media & Communications Commission

Fourth Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 914 4414 8114 | Passcode: 977 759
10/24/23 | 12/26/23 | 02/27/23 | 04/23/24
06/25/23 | 08/27/23

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

Second Monday Bi-Monthly | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 971 3717 7471 | Passcode: 712 824
11/29/23 | 12/11/23 | 02/12/24 | 04/08/24
06/10/24 | 08/12/24

Veterans Education & Employment Commission

Third Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 989 2627 5747 | Passcode: 26060
11/19/23 | 12/21/23 | 02/15/24 | 04/18/24
06/20/24 | 08/15/24

Century Committee (CENTCOM)

Second Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 919 4714 3789 | Passcode: 241 429
10/10/23 | 12/12/23 | 03/13/24 | 04/09/24
06/11/24 | 08/13/24

Child Welfare Foundation Committee

Third Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 984 7031 4786 | Passcode: 780 858
09/21/23 | 11/16/23 | 01/18/24 | 03/21/24
05/16/24 | 07/18/24

Children & Youth Committee

Second Monday Bi-Monthly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 951 1622 6587 | Passcode: 799 095
09/11/23 | 11/13/23 | 01/08/24 | 03/11/24
05/13/24 | 07/08/24

Member Training & Development Committee

First Monday Bi-Monthly | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 957 9605 2218 | Passcode: 528 704
09/04/23 | 11/06/23 | 01/01/24 | 03/04/24
05/06/24 | 07/01/24

Membership Committee

Third Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 989 3388 3350 | Passcode: 546 900
09/19/23 | 11/21/23 | 01/16/24 | 03/19/24 | 05/21/24 | 07/16/24

National Convention Committee

Second Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 7:30 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 953 4866 3402 | Passcode: 670 002
09/12/23 | 11/14/23 | 01/09/24 | 03/12/23
05/14/23 | 07/19/24

Christopher M. Casey, Chairman

Americanism Report

Greetings from your National Americanism Commission,

The Americanism Commission is working on the following goals for this program year:

1. Increase Boys State participation numbers by 10%.
2. Increase flag education programs by 10%.
3. Support the Flying Flags for Heroes program by increasing detachment participation by 10%.

There are additional action items that the commission will have on their plate for the 2023-2024 program year:

1. The Americanism Commission will work to improve the National Children & Youth Academy with the assistance of the Children & Youth Committee.
2.
 - a. Develop age-appropriate curriculum with hands on activities
 - b. Develop a registration form with emergency contact information
 - c. Develop a participant patch and rocker (year specific)
 - d. Incorporate The American Legion Auxiliary Junior Patch Program
 - e. Reach out to former participants (parent/guardians) for feedback
3. Youth/Parent Program Initiative: Future Blood Donor program through the American Red Cross. The program is designed for those 16 and under and requires parent/guardian involvement.

The Americanism Commission has provided a "guidance sheet" covering ideas to promote Americanism at your Post during American Legion family Day, April 27, 2024. Please reach out to the commission if you have not received this information. We

continue to provide Americanism Action Alerts bi-monthly, and that information is being disseminated by the National Vice-Commanders. Please make plans to host a flag education program in your community prior to the end of the school year. Keep an eye out for a "guidance sheet" on how to host your own program shortly.

Please reach out to your commission members if you have any questions or concerns.

Ned Fox, Chairman

Resolutions Report

Greetings members of the greatest program of the American Legion. (SAL)

Your Sub-Committee on Resolutions meetings are driven when resolutions have been received through the National Adjutants Office. Another way the committee may meet is when a Committee/Commission send a preview of their resolution asking for input or suggestions. Giving the Sub-Committee an opportunity to review helps move the process along in timelines established by Advisory. If your resolution is referencing an older document, please provide a copy of the document with your submittal. This will help in the review process of the resolution and any supporting documentation.

It is suggested that resolutions be only one page as you lose your audience when they become too wordy. (Just a suggestion.) Should the need arrive to make a change on the submitted document, the originator will be notified to concur with any change.

It is not the Sub-Committee on Resolutions position to agree or disagree with a properly submitted resolution. We are to review the content, suggest modification to the language if needed, and present it to the NEC for discussion. As members, we will recommend, reject, or send back for further review. If a resolution is recommended for approval, then all

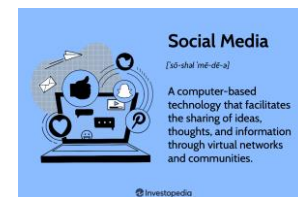
members of the NEC may speak to have their concerns heard regarding the resolution. The NEC is the body that approves or rejects resolutions that are submitted at the fall and spring NEC meetings. This is the time for your voices to be heard should you have concerns with a resolution.

Brandon S. Roberts,
Detachment of Georgia

Tips and guidelines to social media postings



It's important to conduct ourselves in a positive manner whether we are wearing the Sons of The American Legion cover or the emblem on our apparel. We should also conduct ourselves in a certain manner while promoting our organization through online and social media platforms.



Social media is a wonderful tool that we can use

to promote and market ourselves and the programs we support. Unfortunately, one inappropriate post may undo all the hard work that you and other members have done to further our goals.

The following are etiquette tips and guidelines to help you determine the difference between appropriate and inappropriate posts.

DO's...

- Create a website, Facebook page, and other social media platforms for your squadron.
- Post frequently and be as consistent as possible.
- Promote the Sons of The American Legion and entire Legion Family, along with programs and charities support(ed) by the organization.
- Post pictures when possible.

- Post events to let people know how they may show their support.
- Create posts to let people know how to join the American Legion Family.
- Highlight accomplishments of the Sons at the national, detachment, and squadron level.
- Share other documents or squadron social media posts when appropriate.
- Promote all patriotic holidays and activities, Legion Family milestones, and significant dates related to the military or American history.
- Inform national and detachment headquarters of your website presence so they can follow you.

DON'T...

- Over post which in turn may cause your audience to unfollow you.
- Post, share, or tweet any content that does not meet the mission of the Sons of The American Legion, or The American Legion or American Legion Auxiliary.
- Post or share content that portrays the Sons of The American Legion or the American Legion Family in a negative light.
- Post or share any political advertisements, statements, jokes, or overly political photos. The American Legion is non-partisan.
- Link to any site or page that does not share the same goals or mission as the Sons or The American Legion.
- Smear, besmirch, or otherwise impugn the character or reputation of any individuals, public figures, or other organizations.

Editor's Note: This article was originally published in the last edition of National Update, Spring/Summer 2018.

**MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL
TARGET DATE**
March 13, 2024



Blue Brigade award presented in Michigan

Squadron 71 Past Commander honored for membership recruitment.



Detachment of Michigan Commander John Beeman presenting a Blue Brigade Jacket to John Pickard Past Commander of August Mattson Squadron #71.

submitted photo

Gladstone, MI – John Pickard, Past Michigan 5th Zone Commander and Past Commander of Squadron 71 in Gladstone was recently honored with the Blue Brigade Award and Jacket.

The award was presented by current Detachment of Michigan Commander John Beeman.

According to Commander Beeman, "This award is in recognition and appreciation of outstanding achievement in recruiting thirty or more members for Sons of The American Legion. Through such extraordinary achievement, this esteemed recruiter has singularly contributed to the growth and sustenance of Sons of The American Legion, keeping ever strong its invaluable contribution to America's veterans, their families, and communities throughout this great country."

The Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Michigan represents over 26,000 members. The Sons of The American Legion was founded in 1932 as a program of The American Legion.

Sons and grandsons of veterans, both living or deceased, are eligible to join the Sons. Squadron 71 meets the second Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at 802 Delta Ave., Gladstone, Michigan.

Donald L. "JR" Hall, National Commander Lincoln Pilgrimage

The American Legion Family was all represented at the [90th Annual National Lincoln Pilgrimage](#) to celebrate the life of our 16th President Abraham Lincoln. The annual event is held at the tomb of President Abraham Lincoln in Springfield, IL, and is held on his birthday.

On Sunday evening, Sons of The American Legion National Commander Don "JR" Hall Jr. was the speaker at the reception sponsored by Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Illinois. A great event attended by over a dozen departments from across the country.

Monday morning's breakfast had American Legion Auxiliary Past National President Sharen Conaster speak to all that gathered on Lincoln's birthday, followed by a trip to the tomb of President Lincoln, where members of the American Legion Family each laid a wreath to represent each of our organizations.

The final event was the luncheon that had American Legion National Commander Dan Seehafer speak to a packed house. Springfield Post 32 was the host of the weekend and all of its events and did a wonderful job.

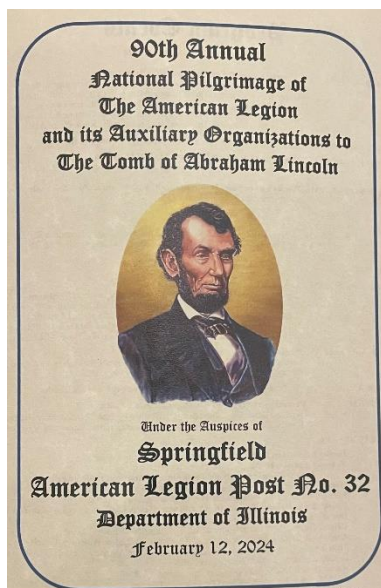


Sons of The American Legion National Commander Donald L. "JR" Hall, Jr. and American Legion National Commander Daniel J. Seehafer during the 2024 Lincoln Pilgrimage.

submitted photo



Wikipedia





The Newshound

A special section for Young Sons of The American Legion

Did you know?



Young SAL can participate in the Patch Program with your ALA Juniors!

www.ALAforVeterans.org



Boys State Eligibility



The American Legion

The American Legion has certain qualifications for prospective Boys State citizens. Following are the recommended guidelines employed by most Boys State programs:

Students in high school are considered. Previous participants of a Boys State competition are not allowed to attend a second session. Only those

who illustrate leadership, character, scholarship, loyalty and service in their schools and community should be considered. Merit and ability are the basis for evaluation during the actual citizens selection process.

Boys State competitions are in compliance with federal handicap laws. Most programs require a medical/parental consent certificate signed by a parent and registered doctor.

The selection process often differs in Legion departments.

The ideal method is for schools to recommend lists of eligible candidates to local Legion posts. The post would then conduct interviews and select their representative(s) for the program.

St. Patrick's Day Coloring Page



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Members from Boys State may also attend Boys Nation. For additional information on Boys State, please click [here](#).



Twins of Anaconda Squadron



Pictured above, left to right, are James (Jim) and Theodore (Ted) Gannon, born identical twins, adopted sons of Mr. and Mrs. Walter J. Gannon, Anaconda, Montana, who have the distinction of being the youngest twins to become charter members of a Sons of the American Legion Squadron in Montana, and possibly in the nation. Sibley Holmes Malee and Thomas Michael Malee, twin boys of Dr. and Mrs. J. J. Malee. The Gannon twins were two years old March 20. The Malee boys celebrated their seventh birthday on January 17.

Reprinted from *The Legion Heir*, June 1938

Jeff Vrabel Sr., Editor

Who are you representing?

National Commander Don "JR" Hall has a message this year, **"Representing More Than Me."** We've all heard it said, but are we living up to it?

You see, none of us could be members of this great organization without someone else making it possible for us. The men and women of the United States military put their lives on the line each and every day, as did those who are veterans and have served their time honorably. Many have seen things they will never talk about.

Others will tell everyone they can about their experiences. Either way, they sacrificed for us. Some of them never came home, and we cannot forget what they have done for us, and for our country. Just like Jim and Ted in the picture to the left, someone served for them, someone served for us.

Over the next few months, we want to feature the veteran you are representing, the one who earned your eligibility in Sons of The American Legion. If you want to participate, we will need the following:

- Name of veteran
- Photo of veteran
- Your name
- Relationship to veteran
- A few paragraphs on the veteran, what that veteran means to you, and how you are representing the veteran.

You don't have to be a professional writer to participate. Just send it in and we will take care of the rest. To show everyone how easy it is, I will go first.

My eligibility in Sons of The American Legion was earned by **Joseph K. Vrabel**, a United States Army veteran of the Korean War.

One of the stories my dad told a lot was about his friend, [Harold R. Cross Jr.](#) They were both in the 5th Regimental Combat Team. On July 27, 1953, Harold was killed near Christmas Hill when a bomb hit his bunker. My dad was only sixty feet away when it happened. Sgt. Harold R. Cross Jr. was the last man killed in the Korean War.

My dad went on to honor Sgt. Cross every day, and he told me that his work for our veterans through The American Legion was his way of paying tribute to his friend. During my dad's year as Department of Ohio Commander, he honored Harold on his pin, listing his name, the date he



National Vice-Commander Robert Bristo and Shawn Davis recently attended a pancake breakfast at American Legion Post 99 in Minneapolis, MN.

Lou Michaels

Bill Towns, Detachment of Ohio

Don't You Quit!

While having a quick bite at the food court of a local mall I watched a young boy, possibly 5 or 6 years old. He seemed intrigued by the escalators which were carrying shoppers up and down to the different floors of shops. Soon with no one watching he stepped up on the down staircase and tried to climb it. He made it up about 5 steps before a group riding down forced him to retreat. Undeterred he ran at it again this time making it about half-way before again being blocked and having to ride back down. He had been defeated twice but did not quit.

His little legs were tired, but he went at the escalator a third time climbing, climbing, climbing, and finally wearing out he stopped to rest. Which you guessed it landed him back at the bottom. Dejected, he walked over and sat down I presume with his family, which had not seen his adventure. After a moment he caught me looking at him. Me still smiling be-

cause I could feel he needed one. I winked and nodded at him. Then without a thought he jumped to his feet and ran back to the escalator. This time his journey was unobstructed, his legs rested, and he did not quit! As he jumped off at the top of the escalator, he turned and raised his arms in triumph! I applauded him and his grin turned to a full-blown smile.

Whether you want to climb a staircase, a mountain, or just make quota; set a goal, have a plan, make sure others know and support your goals, and **Don't You Quit!**

Rusty Myers

American Legion Post 105 Family attends Four Chaplains Mass

Kearny, NJ – One of the more emotional moments of the Four Chaplains Mass at St. Stephen Roman Catholic Church in Kearny each year is when the hymn "No Greater Love" is sung during communion. The refrain says that *"There is no greater love, says the Lord, than to lay down your life for a friend."*



The Four Chaplains

No words can better explain the story of the Four Chaplains who were killed on February 3, 1943. Each year, their sacrifice is memorialized at a mass held in their honor at St. Stephens, and the American Legion Post 105 Family, along with other Legion families from throughout Essex County, are honored to attend.

The Four Chaplains - Methodist minister Rev. George L. Fox, Reform Rabbi Alexander D. Goode, Catholic priest Father John P. Washington, and Reformed Church in America minister Rev. Clark V. Poling – all served as US Army Chaplains in the first year of World War II. In January of 1943, they set sail from New York along with 900 other soldiers headed for Greenland aboard the USAT Dorchester, a troop transport which was part of a larger convoy. On the morning of February 3rd, the ship was torpedoed by a German U-boat, with the ship sinking quickly.

The chaplains were seen handing out life jackets and helping soldiers into

SAL donates \$1,500 to Wolves Trapshooting team



[The PilotIndependent](#) | February 8, 2024

Walker Sons of the American Legion Commander Aaron Skattum recently presented the Wolves Trapshooting team with a \$1,500 sponsorship check for this season.

the water, eventually giving up their own life jackets to save other men. Survivors of the Dorchester, of which there were only 230 out of 904, recall seeing the four men standing arm-in-arm on the ship as it went down, praying and singing hymns. The chaplains all went down with the Dorchester.

As members of the "Greatest Generation," they made the ultimate sacrifice by helping save as many of their fellow serviceman as they could - a testament to their commitment as officers and men of faith to serve their fellow man.

To honor that sacrifice, veterans, patriotic organizations, and veteran service organizations from around the area gather at the invitation of Saint Stephen's to attend a mass in the Chaplain's honor each year on the first Sunday in February. In a remarkable addition to that, descendants of the Dorchester's survivors from around the country attend, as well as descendants of the chaplain's themselves - now 81 years after the vessels sinking.

Saint Stephens has the unique distinction of being a church where one of the Chaplains was actually stationed as a parish priest. Originally from the Roseville section of Newark, Father John P. Washington was assigned to Kearny in 1938, before his enlistment in 1941. Because of his connection to the church, there is a large statue outside of the four men standing and praying on the deck of the Dorchester, along with the Sanctuary of the Four Chaplains residing in the church itself.

For the fourth year in a row, the American Legion 105 Family has been invited to attend, along with other Essex County American Legions from Nutley (Post 70) and Montclair (Post 251). In addition, members of the county leadership along with County Commander Terence Scantlebury were in attendance, joining other posts and squadrons from Bergen and Hudson counties. The mass, filled with trumpets,



American Legion Post 105 Family outside St. Stephen Roman Catholic Church
photo courtesy American Legion Post 105, Belleville, NJ

organ, and bag pipe music, is somber in nature celebrating these four lives, representing the very best of humanity. Every moment of the hour-and-a-half mass celebrated their lives and the way in which they died.

In summarizing the mass, Father Joseph Mancini, Pastor of Saint Stephens, noted that the Four Chaplains "...were asked to give it [their lives] up, and did so willingly ... with bravery ... lovingly ... because they knew there was more than this physical existence."

It is with that sentiment of hope and faith that the American Legion continues to honor the sacrifice of the Four Chaplains, and of all of our veterans past and present, fulfilling their motto "For God and Country."



www.fourchaplains.org

Randy Timms

Operation Homeless Veterans

In 2019, a small group of men were discussing how they could raise money to support veteran causes in the area. What Kevin Nold and Terry Casper decided, after coming from the world of Boy Scouting, was to conduct a sleep-out. Not an ordinary, simple, easy sleep-out, but one around Valentines Day. Now, many of you reading this may not understand the impact of this decision. But Valentines Day in Wisconsin takes place in some pretty cold temperatures! So, sleep-out takes on a whole new meaning when you're preparing for potential minus 10 degree weather! But it would certainly emphasize the plight of the homeless.

They gave this a working title and began to talk with companies to get a feel for the level of donations they might expect. One company in particular promised to match donations up to \$2500.00. Thanks to Modern Woodman, the fire was lit, and planning began in earnest.

The remainder of 2019 was dedicated to planning, advertising, and collecting. Valentines Day 2020 approached, and the men were ready. They were joined by Mark Pape, Squadron 294 Commander who has been inspirational. His never-ending energy and enthusiasm continue to drive this effort forward with unbelievable success. "Nice Rack," a local band, volunteered to play and many in the community jumped on board. The end result from this crazy idea was 1 very large truck filled to the brim with clothing and canned goods and donations totaling \$20,000.00.

In 2021 the Squadron continued to refine everything. More donations, more cardboard boxes, raffle items and better advertising. End result - \$40,000.00 and another truck filled to the brim.

In 2022 it was refined even further. \$55,000.00 and 2 trucks filled to the brim!

In 2023 the idea was exploding! More people were getting involved. Raffle baskets seemed to fall from the sky. Donations poured in. More folks decided they too would find a cardboard box and give this a go. The end result was amazing. Just over \$80,000.00 was collected and once again, 2 very large trucks filled to the brim with clothing and canned goods. Local television stations were involved. Other media outlets were wanting the story of this once crazy sounding idea that has become a movement.

Temperatures have made this a true challenge. One year it really did drop to minus 10 degrees. While this year (2024) temps started out at 45 degrees but fell to the lower 30's by morning.

In the past few years, donations have been split between the Milwaukee Homeless Veteran Initiative and

Veterans Outreach of Wisconsin (a/k/a Tiny Homes).

Now, Operation Homeless Veterans has celebrated their 5th year and although donations continue to come in, the trucks are filled again and this time over \$100,000.00 will be raised! \$295,000.00 in five years! And we have no idea what the value of multiple large trucks full of clothing and food would add to this amazing total. Squadron 294 has set a bar so high it may take years for others to surpass it. As other squadrons in Wisconsin are duplicating this amazing event, 294 has even become a donor to them! Helping others to achieve success in their region will help more veterans and potentially change the lives of many.

So, hats off to Kevin, Terry, Mark and so many others that have dedicated their time and effort to making this such a gigantic success. Without the Legion, Auxiliary, Riders, Sons, and their supporters, this would never be possible. Thank you to all for making Operation Homeless Veterans a success.

Well Done!

Joe Roberts,
National Membership Committee

Education as a membership tool?

When we think about membership tools, what are we usually thinking? Probably ways we can contact our existing members to ask them to renew or ways to attract new ones. We need renewals, and of course we can always use new members. But how do we go about doing that? Most of us would likely say sending emails or letters. Phone calls too if you have their information. Maybe a membership drive to attract new members. But education? How does that work?

It works in many ways, on many levels. You're reading this because The Sons of The American Legion is an

organization you believe in and want to participate in. And that is because you have seen the work we do, the causes we support, and the difference we make. But you could know more. We all could. And that knowledge can be used as a membership tool, maybe without you even realizing it.

Why are you a member of The Sons of The American Legion? I am because my father signed me up when I was about 8 years old. But he didn't sign me up and leave me at home. He saw to it I participated in things, attended meetings, honored veterans on Memorial Day, and generally got involved. When I got my first squadron handbook, I saw these things I was eligible to achieve, the Ten Ideals and Five Star Awards. Participating, studying for those awards, and achieving the awards made me appreciate the organization. If we are signing up our youth, we need to make sure they don't just carry a card. They need to be educated in the patriotism we believe in, the Americanism we cherish. If we have young members that are not being shown these things, we will likely not retain them as they get older. Retention is key and education works.

And as our younger members grow up, and for those who were not fortunate enough to be raised in the organization but are adult members, The American Legion offers ways you can get that additional education. Having been a member of The Sons of The American Legion for 45 years, I thought I had a good idea what this organization is about. I heard about the newly revised online education tool called "Basic Training." It's free for any member of The American Legion family as long as you have a valid member ID number by visiting www.legion.org/training. It made me realize how little I knew about the history and intricacies of our organization. But as a result, I can now recruit members with a wealth of knowledge that I had been missing all this time. And as you

sign up new members, urge them to take the course as well. Much like what happened to me as a child, when they learn about the organization and the work we do, they will WANT to renew, not drag their heels until the last possible moment. Recruiting and retention are vital and education works.



And for those who want to take that extra step, [The American Legion College](#) is available to you as well.

Established at the National level and offered annually at National Headquarters, this weeklong training is designed for those who want to advance within the organization at the District, Department, or National levels. In addition, many Departments have adapted this training to suit the needs and schedules of their respective states. This is also a live, in-person course stressing the core values and contributions of The American Legion. These are generally available to members of The Sons of The American Legion, on a space available basis. The curriculum typically centers on the core values of the organization and also considers topics such as media relations, membership recruiting and retention, community relations, and tips for serving today's veterans. Members completing this course will be well suited to take on leadership positions and have the knowledge to promote the organization and inspire those around them to follow suit and seek further education themselves. Leadership is critical and education works.

As you can see, education works as a membership tool. When the young are educated, they become inspired. They are retained. When the adult is educated, they share that knowledge with others which leads to increased membership. They are recruiting and retaining new members. And when our leadership is educated, they inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

The educational tools are out there. Remember to use them as membership tools as well.

Butch Ray

What's in a name?

Fellow Sons, have you ever visited an American Legion Post during your travels and have wondered who it is named after and why?

The first post of The American Legion was the General John Joseph Pershing Post # 1 in Washington DC, organized on March 7, 1919, and obtained the first charter issued to any post in the Legion on May 19, 1919. The St. Louis caucus that same year decided that Legion posts should not be named after living persons, and as such the very first post changed its name to the George Washington Post 1.

Since that time hundreds if not thousands of American Legion Posts nationwide have been named after deceased veterans in honor of their service to our country.

Wayne Miner American Legion Post 149. The 101-year-old Wayne Miner American Legion Post 149 in Kansas City is the second-oldest African American legion in the nation.

This legion is named after a heroic former Kansas City resident, Pvt. Wayne Miner, a soldier in the Army's all-Black 92nd Division. As World War I drew to a close, Miner died when he volunteered to take ammunition to the front line. He is believed to be among the last soldiers killed in that war. This legion is dedicated to making sure his heroism and dedication to country are remembered.

Becker-Chapman American Legion Post 138. Most residents of Waterloo, Iowa, likely know that their city was the home of the five Sullivan brothers, all members of the USS Juneau crew who died when the cruiser

was sunk on Nov. 13, 1942, during World War II.

But some of those same residents did not know there were two other military heroes from their community who perished in combat decades earlier in World War I.

This is the story of Fred Becker and Carl Chapman, local football stars who went on to play in college before joining the U.S. military in World War I. Both were killed in action in 1918.

Becker and Chapman were both 22 years old at the time of their death. They gave up their lives for the freedom of this country.

Becker and Chapman were both local football stars in rival teams. After high school, Fred Becker played football at the University of Iowa before joining the U.S. Marines. He was killed while leading an attack on a German machine gun nest near Vierzon, France, on June 18, 1918. He was responsible for destroying the gun emplacement but died when hit by a shell fragment. His service earned him the U.S. Distinguished Service Cross and the French Croix de Guerre.

Carl Chapman, who graduated from West Waterloo High School, attended Amherst College in Massachusetts before leaving to join the ambulance corps in World War I. He eventually became a pilot and transferred into the Army's 94th Aero Squadron. He was shot down during a dogfight over France on May 3, 1918, and is buried at a Lafayette Escadrille Memorial Cemetery in France.

Over time, this series will tell brief stories of some of these posts that honor our legacy. If your post home has a story to share about the Veteran for which it is named, please send me that information for future articles.

Jim Coates, Chairman

Veterans Employment and Education

Hello from the Veterans Employment and Education Commission. By the time you read this article the Washington Conference will have come and gone. As many of you know, VE&E was one of three commissions who will now receive a call to attend the Washington Conference for a commission meeting. Of course, the tradeoff is that VE&E will no longer receive calls for the Spring and Fall NEC Meetings.

This is the schedule that TAL Commissions have, so the decision was made to follow the same schedule with the SAL. Initially, I was upset (as are others) because, without the call to the NEC meetings, many VE&E Commission members might not be able to attend these Spring and Fall meetings, and would miss out on the person to person contact we get when meeting together.

However, the more I thought about it, the more I think that this change can be more beneficial in the long run. I have been coming to the Washington Conference now for several years and have come to view this event as one of the most important things we do. First, by honoring our veterans who have fought in the wars that have ensured our Country's freedom, and second, by communicating to Congress the position of The American Legion on legislation that has a direct impact on those who fought and continue to fight for that freedom.

Furthermore, one of our goals in VE&E is to establish a relationship with TAL VE&E Commission(s) at National, Department, and Detachment levels. This change allows all our VE&E Commission members the opportunity to attend our parent organizations meetings at the national level and get a better perspective on what our national organization is working on.

Our commission members continue to work on improving reporting on regional meetings and what is happening with VE&E at the Detachment level and identifying that Children and Youth Program for members 16 years of age and younger.

Thank You For All That You Do!

Jeff Vrabel Sr.

Flying Flags for Heroes

As we approach Memorial Day, many squadrons are also preparing to place flags on the graves of our military veterans. This is a great time to have a small Flying Flags for Heroes ceremony prior to your graves decoration. It's easy to do, and helps people understand not only why we are placing flags on graves, but who those veterans may be.

In Mahoning County, Ohio, Sons of The American Legion Mahoning Valley Squadron 15 conducts a brief ceremony that includes the Pledge of Allegiance, brief remarks, and decorating instructions.

We have Legionnaires, members of the Auxiliary, Sons, Riders, and community members including Scouts of America, Girl Scouts, leadership clubs at our local public and parochial schools, and citizens.

Part of our instructions are that we ask those placing flags on graves to say

the name of the veteran out loud. Even if its just for that brief time, that veteran is recognized verbally for his or her sacrifices.

We also instruct those placing flags to salute each time, if in proper uniform, including scouting uniform. When our participants place their first flag, they are instructed to stay at that first grave, and to hold their salute, as a Squadron 15 member plays Taps.

For us, we decorate nearly 2,000 graves in just under a half-hour.

But this is not the end of our Flying Flags for Heroes duties. We must now, or in the near future, visit www.flyingflagsforheroes.com to log our work. The goal is to reach at least one-million flags placed, which can happen any time between national conventions.

Let's work hard, especially on our reporting, and see if we can hit the two-million mark. We all do this honorable work, so let's take five minutes and report it.

We must also add this information to our mandatory annual Consolidated Squadron Report.

Thanks for all you do!





**The American Legion
National Headquarters
Indianapolis, Indiana**



**The American Legion
John H. Geiger Operations Center
Indianapolis, Indiana**
The home of Emblem Sales



**The American Legion Auxiliary
National Headquarters
Indianapolis, Indiana**

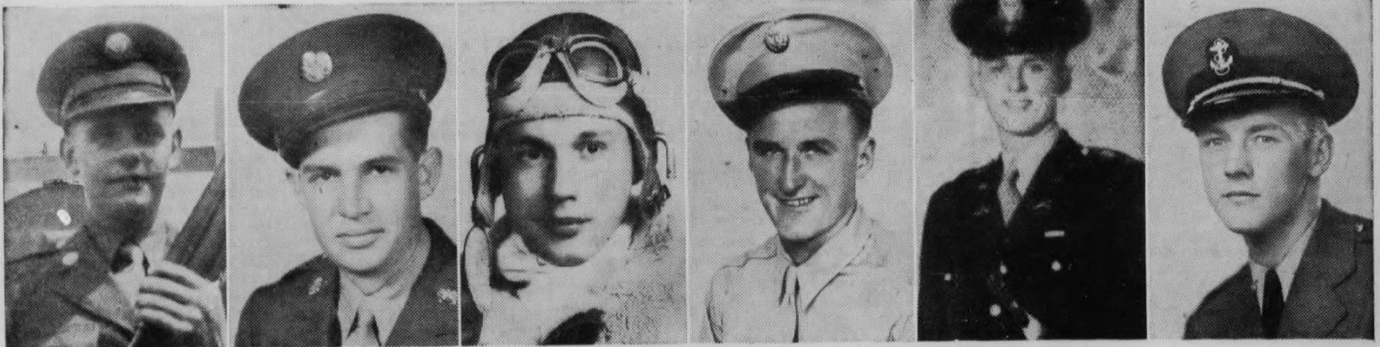
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Six Legion Sons Who Gave Their Lives to Their Country



The nation has paid a terrific price to safeguard the liberty of its people, and the security of its future. In these six pictures are seen a part of that price—six young men who were called upon to die for their country because savage aggressor nations with a greed for power deliberately brought on a war they thought they could win. These young men, and thousands more like them, paid the supreme sacrifice to make our continued liberty and freedom possible.

From left to right, these heroes are:

Pfc. Vernon R. Rockefeller, 21, who was with the 180th Infantry, 45th Division, was killed in action at Anzio, Italy, on May 23, 1944. Prior to his death he had shot three drunken Germans, one of them an officer who was attacking his lieutenant, for which he had received commendation. He is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Rockefeller, of Germantown, N. Y., where he was a member of SAL Squadron 346.

Sgt. Kenneth W. Rohman, 24, lost his life in India June 6, 1945, when a bolt of lightning struck the tent in which he was quartered. He is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William F. Rohman, of St. Louis, Mo.; his widow, and an 18-months-old son. An original member of Terminal Railroad Squadron 85, where he was on the rifle team, the basketball team, and was squadron adjutant, he transferred to Missouri Pacific Squadron 141 when Squadron 85 was inactivated. He left for overseas on April 15, 1945.

2nd Lieut. Charles G. Bieber, bombardier, serving in the European Theatre, was killed when the bomber in which he was serving was attacked at 23,000 feet by 21 ME 109's. The airplane was so vitally hurt that the pilot ordered it abandoned. The crew

jumped at 6,000 feet, but Lieut. Bieber was unable to open his parachute in time because of the plane following him down, and crashed to his death. Lieut. Bieber is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph G. Bieber, of Ridgewood, Long Island, N. Y., where the young officer was a member of SAL Squadron 562.

Staff Sergeant Wilbur E. Cole, 24, Roann, Ind., was killed when the bomber in which he served as a turret gunner collided with another airplane in heavy weather over occupied Greece on January 11, 1945. He has been in service since October 8, 1944, and had completed 21 missions. He is survived by his wife and a son born after he entered service, and by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Orville Cole. His SAL membership was in the squadron at Wabash, Ind.

1st Lieut. Gordon Burt, 23, while in action on Leyte Island in the Philippines, was killed by a land mine on February 14, 1945. He is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harlow E. Burt, of Chicago, who is with the U. S. Indian Service. The young officer was a charter member of SAL Squadrons at both Bemidji, Minn., and Lander, Wyo., where he was active in the squadron drum and bugle corps. He was a member at Lander at the time of his death.

Larry A. Temmey, ARM 3/c, USNB, was killed in the Pacific theatre when the Navy dive bomber on which he was radio-gunner, was in action against a Japanese-held island on May 18, 1945. He was a SAL member and the son of Lt. Col. and Mrs. Leo A. Temmey, of Huron, S. D. Colonel Temmey, now on duty, in Washington, D. C., has for a long time been a member of the National Defense Committee of the Legion.