



American Legion Training Newsletter

National Headquarters Internal Affairs & Membership Division

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Engage - Train - Empower

It's hard to keep a good Legionnaire down



*Jay Bowen (CO), Chairman
National Membership & Post
Activities Committee*

Our National Membership & Post Activities (M&PA) Committee and Internal Affairs staff work hard to create ideas and programs, provide training, and equip members with tools necessary to grow our great organization.

Our committee members and Internal Affairs staff are committed and passionate about their job, and we take our responsibilities very seriously. We not only preach, but we also practice what we preach.

A recent example of our passion and commitment happened with Walter Geraghty of American Legion Post 336 in San Antonio, Texas. Walter is a past post commander, current judge

advocate, and a more than six-year member of the National M&PA Committee. Walter was eating dinner with his wife at a local restaurant in September when he experienced a life-threatening medical issue and passed out. 911 was called and he was taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital.

Walter ended up spending 11 days in the intensive care unit (ICU) and a total of 32 days in the hospital. During his 11-day stint (no pun intended) in the ICU, Walter was in and out of consciousness. It was during those periods of lucidness that he made small talk with the medical support personnel tending to his illness. As what is only natural for Walter, who is a multiple Gold Brigade recipient for recruiting 50 or more new members, the conversation eventually found its way to asking the medical personnel if they were a veteran. By the time Walter was moved from the ICU to a different unit in the hospital, he signed up three new Legionnaires! Wow!

At a time when most people would have been freaking out from being declared dead on two separate occasions as he was when being transported to the emergency room, Walter knew in his heart (again, no pun intended) that he was going to survive this ordeal. And he focused on what he is very passionate about – growing our great organization.

Walter has been recovering at home and is in conversation with his post and department, as well as with the departments he has been assigned to for direct support with the M&PA Committee – Alaska, Kansas, and Louisiana.

I've spoken with Walter on a couple of occasions as he is convalescing and undergoing physical therapy. As it would be, he was more interested in finding out what's going on with membership and training than he is talking about recovery.

I don't think anyone would ask or expect this level of membership commitment from its members, but I can tell you that my personal commitment has increased

through Walter's example. What about you? How is your level of commitment?

Please don't go to the same drastic measures as Walter. It doesn't have to be through

conversation with medical personnel as they treat you for a serious illness and work diligently to keep you alive. It could be during a conversation with your mail carrier, or at the grocery store in the checkout line, or with

members of your church or work, or talking with the server in your favorite restaurant. Just don't pass out when you're there.

**ENGAGE. EDUCATE.
EMPOWER.**

Resources for Recruitment & Retention

The American Legion's success depends entirely on active membership, participation and volunteerism. The monthly **Membership Impact Report** provides a summary of membership, participation and volunteerism making an impact in the lives of veterans, families, and communities.

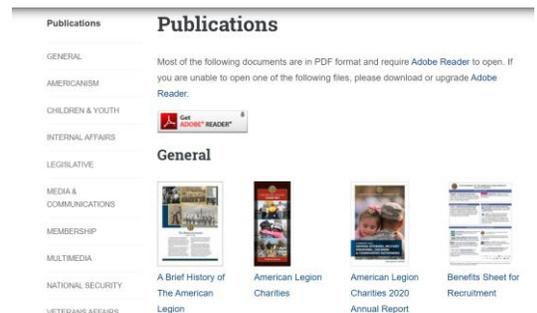


The Membership Impact Report consolidates many pieces of information into a one-page report to show your members and potential members the real-life impact of The American Legion's work in local communities and on the national stage. Access the report at www.legion.org/membership/impact.



The **Legiontown** website contains inspirational stories submitted from American Legion Family members on a variety of topics. You can see how other posts are helping their communities or share your own story at www.Legiontown.org.

The **publications web page** is a wonderful resource to find information on all things American Legion. The page has sections for each national division with their specific publications for download. These are not only good for handouts, but if you're looking for a way to explain some Legion history or a program, you can use the verbiage from these brochures and know they are accurate and approved by the National Headquarters. Visit www.legion.org/publications to find many resources to download.



The recently updated **Public Relations Toolkit** will help you enhance the image of The American Legion through positive communication and messaging. It can also be found in the publications section, specifically via the following link: <https://www.legion.org/publications/160968/public-relations-toolkit>

Importance of Training

The American Legion 21st Century Ad Hoc Committee and the Sons of The American Legion Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee noted training as an essential focus needed to improve the effectiveness and engagement with members in both organizations.

To instill these training vehicles into The American Legion, all levels of the organization need to own their piece and promote the other pieces of the plan. The responsibilities each level should integrate to fully implement these vehicles are listed below.

MEMBER: *Drives the vision, activity, and direction for entire organization.*

- Attend available training events
- Take online BASIC TRAINING
- Use available American Legion resources, manuals and publications
- Provide training in the form of mentorship to other members
- Represent The American Legion productively

POST: *Supports training needs of members.*

- Keep members informed
- Promote training events
- Request and attend district training
- Use training to promote member engagement and retention
- Create and implement a membership development plan with emphasis on mentoring

DISTRICT/COUNTY: *Supports training needs of posts and members.*

- Encourage post leadership attendance at training events
- Assess post training needs and schedule training events with department
- Support strategic goals to accommodate succession and training plans
- Promote mentoring and post best practices

DEPARTMENT: *Supports training needs of districts/counties, posts and members.*

- Operate a Department American Legion College (DALC)
- Actively assess and determine training needs in districts
- Coordinate and promote training events
- Maintain qualified trainers and facilitators
- Share training items and links to national training web page

NATIONAL: *Supports training needs of departments, districts/counties, posts, and members.*

- Produce Training Newsletter
- Expand online course availability on Legion.org/training website
- Focus National American Legion College (NALC) on problem solving and vision development
- Produce and promote Training-In-A-Box modules on legion.org
- Continually update training materials and methods of distribution

Training Tuesdays



November 30 - Veterans Strengthening America

The vision and mission statements, along with the value principles and motto, help define the purpose of The American Legion, align the organization's resources toward a successful future, provide clear and effective decision guidance.

The last Tuesday of each month the Internal Affairs and Membership Division has committed to conducting training. These 60-minute sessions are aimed at post commanders and adjutants. Each Training Tuesday session is recorded for later viewing. Video presentations and PowerPoints are available at www.legion.org/training/training-Tuesdays.

There will be no Training Tuesday in December but tune in for the new year on January 25, 2022!

National American Legion College Alumni Association

Did you attend National American Legion College?

The National American Legion College Alumni Association (NALCAA) promotes the National American Legion College and its graduates to exchange best practices and ideas, and plans for continuing the ideals and values learned. Any graduate of the National American Legion College, who is a member in good standing of The American Legion, is eligible for membership in the NALCAA.



Graduates are encouraged to take the knowledge back to their districts to help their departments with training and engagement efforts. Many of these graduates are now leaders at department and national levels, to include some past national commanders.

The NALCAA grow the ranks annually following each class. Two National American Legion College sessions are taking place in 2021. The postponed 2020 class was held in Indianapolis the week of Nov. 14-19. The 2021 class will be held the week of December 12-17.

For more information about the NALCAA, visit <https://www.legion.org/nalcaa>.

About this newsletter

This periodic and Legionnaire-driven newsletter, produced by the Internal Affairs & Membership Division, is designed to address best practices, ideas, and training that every Legionnaire needs to know to engage our membership through effective training now and into the future.

Are you a trainer? A writer? We need your submissions!

Send your training ideas and articles to LegionTraining@legion.org.