Travels with Commander Nate, President Debbie, and SAL Commander Dave...

The Officers travelled to Palmer Post 15 and our 3 Post up North - Post 11, Post 57, Post 30. As you can tell they had a wonderful time at all the Post. While in Fairbanks they tested their skills at the Escape Room. The ALA held their initiation for the Auxiliary and the Juniors at Post 57.

Another year down and what a great record of all our posts serving our veterans and our communities! Job well done!!! Here we are at the start of a new year, and one that brings us to our second century of service! This organization has done incredible things in the last 100 years and has a bright future of service ahead. Our posts right here in Alaska are continuing their own journeys and several are reaching their 100 year celebrations; all have some significant stories to tell as well of their continued mission of service. Hopefully, we will see more of those journeys on the legion.org Centennial Site!

As you will notice, many articles within this month's Legionnaire are on upcoming events. One of the first and most popular will be the S.A.L. annual 32 oz. steak feed being held at Spenard Post 28 on January 26th. Please look for details to be announced here in the newsletter and on our Department Facebook site. The proceeds from this event are split between the Boys and Girls State program.

We are doing this of course by our newsletter but also the more timely update a local firefighter or law enforcement officer that you think should be recognized, or just someone who made a contribution that you would like to promote. We have some amazing people up here that do some heroic work that isn't seen much in "the Lower 48." Just know their applications have been submitted to Congress as to the accomplishments of The American Legion during the year is the Consolidated Post Report. The information that you submit is consolidated into one compiled report and this information is reported to Congress as to the accomplishments of The American Legion during the year. Everything you do at the post, can meet one of the criteria in the report. Also, a many of us do outside volunteer hours in other organizations, those hours can be included as well. You'll be amazed what we really do if we think about it. Having a personal log or even a calendar to write your hours can be included as well. You'd be amazed what we really do if we think about it! You should be working on our Boys and Girls State applications. Let's give the Auxiliary and the Juniors at Post 57.

As a final word, I want to thank everyone for their support as I transition into this position; it was (and still is) a steep learning curve, and as I don't know what the new year will bring for me, all I want to say once again is thanks, and I look forward to seeing you "at the post!"
Do you realize that as a member of the American Legion Auxiliary that all legislation from your City Council, Borough Assembly, State and Nation that affects a military person or a veteran also affects you as a spouse, mother, sister, grandmother or daughter.

From the earliest beginnings of our American Legion Auxiliary we have been involved in supporting legislation that affects our military or veterans. When there was a Presidential veto of pensions to returning WW1 veterans the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary came together to encourage their Senators and Representatives to over ride the veto and so it happened. Ever since then our organization has continued to be involved in the encouragement for the passage of legislation that affects our military, veterans, and the families.

How can you be involved? Check out the Legislative Agenda for the 115th Congress 2nd Session at https://legion.org. You can download the pamphlet/To quote from the Legislative handbook, which can be downloaded “Do not fall for the line that you, as just one person, can’t make a difference in changing old laws and making new ones, or that the legislative process is complicated”. “Can one person make a difference? Absolutely! Because most American are reluctant to write to members of Congress, the average representative and senator treats each letter received as the opinion of 150 to 200 people. Thus, your one personal letter carried significant weight.”

Marge Blankenship, ALA Department Legislative Chair
Greetings Legionnaires,

What a year! It seems as though it was only yesterday that we were all looking toward 2018 and all the gifts and challenges that lay ahead. Once again the New Year is ahead, ripe with excitement and celebration.

As we move into 2019 take a moment to remember 2018 and all that has occurred. So many amazing events, at Post’s across our great state, that are just too numerous to list. Veterans, helping Veterans, through good times and bad. Working hard, to fulfill the many missions, which make up the Four Pillars of the nation’s premier service organization. What part did you play? What program is held near and dear to your heart? Where did you spend your valuable time and money? Then ask yourself why?

As we head into our 100th year of service to God and Country, it is important that every single one of us evaluate our role in the beginning of the American Legion’s second century of devotion to Veterans. Each of us plays a vital role, not one more important than the other. You may be the outgoing, loud and humorous individual that seems to always be at the center of the action, or the quiet member, who shows up for a few events and has an occasional coffee, meal or cocktail at the Post. It is important that you know that your involvement is what has brought us through the last one hundred years and is the key ingredient in making sure that, after we are long gone, this organization will still be growing and serving Veterans as they celebrate their 200th Anniversary.

Remember the day when you joined the American Legion. REALLY, stop and think of that day when you signed the application and joined this amazing family. What brought you to it? Were you invited by a friend? Was it at an event where there was a table set up recruiting individuals? Were you thinking of your own time in service and just said “I always meant to stop in and check it out, so I did”? No one was born a member of the Legion. How has your experience been?

The chances are that if you are taking the time to read this, you are a Legionnaire at heart and have experienced, first hand, the difference you can make in the lives of others. Our founders worked tirelessly for years to bring the American Legion to life. We, as members at the start of our next century, have a duty to make sure that we do all that we can to keep the organization strong and growing in the future.

I have left a lot of questions for you to think on. I would say that they are all at the heart of our future. Please take just a few minutes, ask these questions of yourself and look into your heart. We struggle, as a group, bringing new members on board and keeping our Department alive and healthy. It truly is up to each of us to turn this tide. I know you have all heard it before, but now is the time to make the commitment. It is time to bring 1 new member on board. Not a huge task. We all know one person who has served and is not a member. So bring them in help us grow and continue to serve our Vet’s for the next hundred years.

For God and Country

 hopefully the New Years was good to you and re-instilled a shining new vision to you and yours in the belief of this great organization and everything we do for God and Country.

This will be our 23rd year doing this event. This years STEAK FEED will be held on Saturday, January 26, 2019 at Spenard Post #28, in Anchorage, Alaska. This fantastic dinner will be held from 4:00 pm – 9:00 pm. The price this year will be $30, with the proceeds going toward The American Legion Alaska Boys State and The American Legion Oratorical Contest. See one of your Detachment Officers for tickets.

There will be a Detachment Executive Committee Meeting at 1:00 pm on the day of the Steak Feed at Spenard Post #28. It is never too early to start organizing your activities for each month, get started as soon as possible in order to ensure success.

February is the month that The American Legion Family has dedicated to Americanism Month. Be sure to start planning your Americanism activities for your Post, Unit and Squadron.

Several American Legion Posts will be having a Four Chaplains Ceremony. This solemn ceremony pays tribute to the World War II Heroes. For more information on this go to www.legion.org and look under Americanism – Publications for “Saga of Four Chaplains”.

The Four Chaplains Ceremony is normally held on the first Sunday in February although I have heard that some of the Post may postpone the Ceremony until the second Sunday due to not wanting to compete with the events around the Super Bowl. Be sure to check with your local American Legion Post to find out when it is scheduled.

The American Legion Oratorical Contest is usually held (If you are in Anchorage the local level will be held at Jack Henry Post #1 on February 9th). This Contest is a great event in which High School Students give an 8-10 minute speech on some aspect of the Constitution of the United States, which also gives emphasis to the duties and obligation of citizenship. Then each of the Contestants will present a speech from an assigned topic that usually tests their knowledge of that topic which is also on some phase of the Constitution of the United States. Check with your local Post, District and Department Oratorical Chairmen to see how you might be able to assist them with the program.

Americanism is one of the Americanism programs is The American Legion National Emergency Fund. The National Emergency Fund (NEF) has provided over $3,000,000 in direct financial assistance to Legion family members and posts. The National Emergency Fund has kept posts from closing and enabled Legion family members to begin to rebuild their homes and their lives. Eligibility is open to Legionnaires, Auxiliary ** and Sons members, Legion Posts. (** If Auxiliary membership is less than 5 years continuous. Otherwise, the request will be forwarded to the National American Legion Auxiliary for consideration). The Legion Family member has to be in good standing – in other words they have to be current with their membership and it has to have been processed at National Headquarters – yet another reason to transmit your membership timely.

There were Legion Family members in California that did not receive assistance from the National Emergency Fund because their membership was still at their Post, Squadron or Unit – this is not been sent into their Detachment or Department to be processed and sent to National – they were not members in good standing.

One area that we should always keep in mind is the education of our communities and our youth in Proper Flag Etiquette, The proper presentation and proper folding of the Flag of our Country.

Remember that if you have a nomination for Eagle Scout of the Year, their application needs to be into The American Legion Department Headquarters before March 1st.

The American Legion was formed in the spring of 1919 between March 15-17. Hopefully everyone will help his or her Post celebrate the 100th Birthday of The American Legion.

The Detachment as a whole has 757 members transmitted out of our year-end goal of 1422 (so far). This is equivalent to 52.6% of our goal. Remember that membership is everyone’s responsibility! Keep up the great job!

As of writing this article we have had all except two (2) Squadrons turn in membership so far for the 2019 Membership year, This is Fantastic – Thank you and keep the membership coming.

The second Membership Postcard Renewal Notice for the 2019 Membership year will be sent out by National Headquarters in January and our members should be sending in their membership dues.

The challenge for you is to send in a transmittal with as many members as possible prior to the 60% goal on January 17th and the 75% goal on February 13th.

We need your cards into Detachment Headquarters about 1 week prior to the Target Dates in order to get them processed at National in time to count as reaching the goal.

Let’s meet or beat each and every one of our goals this year – let us show everyone what the SONS from Alaska can do.

Remember that membership is everyone’s responsibility!

The National Membership Goal is 400,000 Members. The National Membership theme this year is “Team 100” – Keep bringing the membership in and sending it into Detachment weekly!

Honor our Veteran’s Service whom our membership eligibility came under by renewing your dues or if you are eligible to become a member of the Sons of The American Legion and have not joined – join the SONS and honor the service of the veteran who has sacrificed so much to protect this great country.

Remember it’s Cool to be Dual!!!

Who will be our Top Recruiter for the 2019 Membership Year?? Will it be you???

...continues on page 6
News from the 2nd Vice, Hunter Davis

A New Year has arrived. That pesky calendar just doesn’t stop flipping pages, does it? Day by day, week by week, month by month, we advance toward our personal, professional, and Post goals. What goals have you set for the Post this year? Membership is probably high on the list, but isn’t it always? It seems that recruiting active members is like finding unicorns or warrant officers, rumors abound about sighting in the wild, but no one ever seems to see either one. How do you set goals for a Post? Is there an Executive Board meeting to discuss and plan the new year? Or does a tentative plan come out at the monthly Post meeting? Or does your Post just cut and paste the same plans from the last three decades? I bring these questions up as a way to get into an Americanism mood. So much of our yearly calendar is to support the Americanism pillar. Holidays, solemn occurrences, baseball, other sports teams, Oratorical, Boys State, and so many more activities seem to fill our day planners. Do you plan them or wait for them to arrive? I watched the Army-Navy game this weekend. Wondered why National did not look into running a 15-second ad. Seems like the fan base for that game would make a natural cross-over to membership. One of the repeated commercials did have a brief glimpse of a Legion Rider, but I’m thinking we, as an organization, really missed the chance of huge access. Now is a good time to start thinking of resolutions, nominations, and awards. Remember some require cut-off dates to meet bylaw requirements.

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For God and Country

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Department Chaplain, Deb Davis

What to write, what to write? Unlike some folks I know, ideas for a column do not come easily to me. So, I look for inspiration from things happening around me. I am writing this in early December, but you will not see it until January. A lot can happen in that time, but I can't know what may be. I can only write about now. There has been a lot of inspiration lately. From members of our deeply divided congress who came together to honor our 41st President George H.W. Bush (who, by the way, was an American Legion member) at his memorials calling him “a good man, a compassionate man.” Then, there was the November 30 earthquake and continuing aftershocks. Story after story of people helping others, (like Jack Henry Post 1 providing a warm, safe place for anyone needing it), calm Anchorage air traffic controllers directing aircraft while they are evacuating the tower (if you have not listened to the recording from Nov 30, it is worth it), to roads getting fixed in record time. Every one of these folks have homes and families of their own at risk but they reached out, helped out, did their jobs and made life better for all of us. “There is more that unites us than divides us” (Mauricio Macri). Now that is inspirational!

Department Secretary, Barb Nath

I trust that 2018 was a successful year for all the year. As most of you are aware, we ended our year with a BANG! Literally. Recovery efforts continue as a result of the earthquake. To the best of my knowledge, most of our units and members did not have any major catastrophic damages. A lot of people had many items fall off the walls and subsequently broken (including aquariums, pictures, knick knacks, etc.). However, the bottom line is that while there were injuries, I don’t believe there were any casualties as a result of the earthquake. Things can be replaced; people cannot. So, let us give thanks to God for watching over all of us in this time. If anyone needs help with anything, please let me know and we will see what we can do.

As the New Year begins, we will see a definite increase in activity. The Call to Department Convention will be going on in January. The official recommended changes to the governing documents for the Department of Alaska will go out with the Call to Department Convention (to be voted on at the Department Convention). Our Honorary Junior President will be attending Mission Training in February. The Department Convention will be held in April followed by the Department Leadership National Convention in May. Alaska Girls State and Alaska Boys State will be in June at the Elks Camp in Sutton. And that only takes us halfway through the year.

PDC Scott Kline presents Ketchikan Kayhi Kings basketball team a check from Post 3.


The ALA Juniors with April Sinclair, Executive Committeewoman, receiving their initiation Certificates at Post 57.
Happenings at your Post

Jack Henry Post 1
Monday - Homemade Pizza 5:00-7:30
Tuesday - Cribbage 4:30
Wednesday - Tacos 5:30-7:00
Thursday - Burgers & Brew 5:30-7:00
Friday - Steaks 5:30 - 7:30
Saturday - LOL Drawing 3:3

Seward Post 5
Taco Tuesday
Friday Night Steaks
Food Served every night

Wrangell Post 6
MARCH
3/6 & 3/20 - Taco Tuesday 5pm
$1 Tacos + $3 Frybread + $5 Indian Tacos
Family Games, Pull Tabs, Raffles

APRIL
4/3 & 4/17 Taco Tuesday 5pm
$1 Tacos + $3 Frybread + $5 Indian Tacos
Family Games, Pull Tabs - 50/50 Raffle

Matanuska Valley Post 15
Tuesday Pool League
Thursday Night Darts League
Friday Prime Rib and Live Band
Saturday Cajun Food and Karaoke

General Buckner Post 16 Family
2nd Saturday Auxiliary Dinner 6pm
Friday Burger & Brew 6 - 8 pm
1st Friday of the month Special $1 Tacos - $3 Frybread - $5 Indian Tacos
Thursday Burger Night 5:30-9:00 PM
2nd Saturday Auxiliary Dinner 6 pm

George H. Plumley Memorial Post 20
Sunday Breakfast 10am - 1pm
Every Friday is Steak Night 6-8 pm with an added Special Dish
Every Sunday Breakfast Menu Dishes 10am -1pm
Every Sunday must be present 2 pm
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THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Want to begin by wishing everyone “Happy Holidays”. It is really hard to believe that it is Christmas time again. My grandchildren are getting bigger. Hope everyone made it through the earthquake ok. I was in Anchorage when it happened. I made it to Kenai. There are a lot of really great people there at the Post. I like all of the young SAL members. The young ones are the future. We older members aren’t going to be around forever, so we need to bring in the younger generation to take our place. We have to show them the ropes.

We went to Palmer and Post 28. Thank you for the hospitality while we were there. I love the little lake at Palmer. There are lots of things to do for the holidays. I know the posts can use help. Also, if you know a Vet that is home alone, they would sure appreciate a visit. See you at the Posts.

From Kevin Collier
SAL Detachment Adjutant

Hello to you all,

ALA Alaska Girls State is closer than you might think. But, let’s not get ahead of ourselves. By this time all the information should be in the schools. The flyers are out and about and I hope you are using the QR Code. I’ve been all over the state promoting the use of this new technology. The teenagers I’ve spoken to are excited and believe this to be the correct direction for recruiting and applications. Members seem to like how easy and convenient it makes getting the correct information to the potential participants.

The website, alaskalegionauxiliary.org has the QR Code on it, and it can be printed on stickers or on anything you would like to put it on. The website also has any and all current information about the program. Please feel free to utilize this resource, it is here for you.

Please be sure to get those interviews done no later than March 28th, 2019. There is still a lot of paper work to be done after the application process is over. I cannot stress enough how important it is to get those interviews done before April. I need the information on who you will be sponsoring and any travel arrangements need to be done as early as possible. The earlier they are made the cheaper they are. I really appreciate your cooperation and am looking forward to working with you in the months to come.

The cost of each girl this year will be $400.00. Fundraisers are a great way to raise the money to sponsor your participants. Get the Legion and SAL involved in fund raising, I have found that they are pretty handy when it comes to raising money. Also, you can raise money for both ALA Alaska Girls State and TAI Alaska Boys State at the same time. These two programs are well worth the time and money, these are our future leaders and we need to invest in them now.

From Dave Dieckgraeff
SAL Detachment Commander

Remember the three “R’s” “Renew”, “Recruit” and “Reinstate”. Do not just sit on it! Keep it rolling in.

The flyers are out and about and I hope you are using the QR Code. I’ve been all over the state promoting the use of this new technology. The teenag...
Hello: 
As visitations wind down for this administration year and we start 2019 I want to say how much of a joy it has been to visit so many units. I have learned so much from each of you. Everyone is doing such a good job of serving our Veterans and Communities in so many varied ways. I applaud you.

I have been blessed this year with such a great team of Officers and Chairman. They really want to work hard and get their program messages out there. As I’ve said before they are energetic and enthusiastic, so reach out to them you need fresh program ideas. I am confident that with this team of upcoming Officers the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Alaska has nothing but great milestone years ahead. Keep up the good work.

I have traveled with two chairmen on my visitations to help me show that my administration is not a one-woman show, we are a team. As a team it takes all of us working our programs together to accomplish our mission and reach our goals. This is what makes American Legion Auxiliary Department of Alaska strong.

The Anchorage earthquake may have rattled some of us a little bit, but not for long. The Domiciliary Gift Shop had to enact an emergency plan, but thanks to the Co-chair team of Ann Robinson and Jane Larson the job got done. It did bring about some innovative ideas on how we can to serve even more Veterans and their families next year. I cannot be remiss and I must thank Marge Blankenship for all the time she spent crocheting bell ornaments for every one of the Domiciliary Veterans. Well done ladies, we all appreciate your hard work even under such hazardous situations you faced in the storage facility during the earthquake.

Thank you to all Units who reported prior to the December 5th deadline. We improved our mid-year reporting ratio over last year, but we were still not 100% without having to reach out to several units. I realize life sometimes gets in the way but let’s really try and get all year end reports in to the Chairman by the April 5th deadline.

For God and Country

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How are National Security and Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation different?

- National Security deals with active duty military and their families, some of whom do not live on military bases.
- Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation promotes our Mission to enhance the lives of veterans and their families.

The main focus of the National Security program is “maintain & promote a strong national defense by strengthening & supporting military service members & their families.”

How might you do this?

We have an excellent resource: Military Family Readiness Guide! For easy reference, you can download it at http://www.alaskaflaglibrar.org/National%20Security.htm

The American Legion Auxiliary Military Family Readiness Action Guide provides information for the service member about emergency financial relief, education, employment and transition, financial services, health, legal assistance, morale and youth development, peer support and service coordination. But for our use as volunteers, it will help us determine where the Auxiliary’s help can be most beneficial and how to do that. Please use this as your “Go To” resource this year when it comes to National Security!

The American Legion Auxiliary Military Family Readiness Action Guide will help us support active, reserve and transiting service members and their families by matching ALA units to a Family Readiness Group or to an individual military family in need. Most of you are aware that American Legion Auxiliary National President Kathy Dungan’s focus is on women veterans and the specific issues they face, particularly homelessness. How can you try to incorporate that focus into your Unit’s programs?

Ideas for National Security include:

- Ensure male military spouses that are seeking employment have and maintain meaningful employment in order to prevent or reduce financial hardship for our military families.
- Participate in the career e-mentoring network through Academy Women.
- Get involved with military spouse job fairs in your community and offer staff an information booth about the ALA.
- Deployed servicewomen are often in need of care packages specific to them. Consider preparing women specific care packages or work with an organization like Operation Courage is Beautiful, which provides high quality products for deployed servicewomen. For more information visit www.operationcourage.org
- Join the ALA National Security Facebook group.

Did you know that simply by working the Mission and concentrating on women veterans, your Unit could win one of the prestigious National President’s Awards for Excellence? Now you might be asking, “how do we apply?” It’s quite simple! Report what your Department or Unit has done in any specific program, and how you incorporated the National President’s focus into your program activities. Provide a narrative as well as photos! Highlight details on how her focus was an integral part of your program. And of course, submit it to the appropriate Division Chairman by the June 1, 2019 deadline, using the National Award and Report Cover Sheet. The Award form and additional information can be found by clicking https://www.alaforgveterans.org/Awards/National-President-s-Award-of-Excellence/

By Lisa Williamson, Department National Security Chairman