

## The Sons of The American Legion

P.O. Box 1055

Indianapolis, IN 46206



# NATIONAL UPDATE

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August 2012



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## Barrier from Page 1

President Franklin D. Roosevelt banned race-based exclusion from the military in 1941, services like the Marine Corps remained segregated. Hill was assigned to a training camp for black Marines built at Montford Point, about five miles from the all-white Camp Lejeune near Jacksonville, NC. He is one of a few hundred survivors of the 20,000 black soldiers who came to be known as the Montford Pointers. Many Montford Pointers would go on to fight in some of the bloodiest battles of WWII, including Iwo Jima, Saipan and Okinawa, they were never fully recognized for their service.

Last year, the Marine Corps announced plans to honor Montford Pointers. In November, President

Obama signed legislation awarding them the highest award that Congress can bestow on citizens. In late June, Hill and other surviving Montford Pointers traveled to Washington, DC to receive the Congressional Gold Medal. Finally, the men who broke the color barrier in the last branch of the military to admit blacks were awarded one of the nation's highest honors. Others who have received the Congressional Gold Medal include World War II British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and 1960's civil rights icon Rosa Parks.

Hill retired in 1987 as a fleet manager for the Citizens and Southern Bank. He currently lives in the Atlanta area and says receiving the Congressional Gold Medal is proof, "we can do whatever we have in our hearts to do."

## Make plans to attend these two conferences

Many members of the Sons have participated in various American Legion youth activities. They are all eligible to claim membership in The Legion's Youth Programs Alumni Association. A brand new Facebook page has been created that allows Youth Alumni members to post stories about youth programs in action, offer suggestions, or network with others who are interested in or are participants in programs such as: Boys State, Boys Nation, AL Baseball, Junior Shooting Sports, Boy Scouts, Junior ROTC, Oratorical Contests, Samsung Scholarships or other Legion-related activity that enriches the lives of young people.

## Nat'l Convention in Indianapolis

Hundreds of S.A.L. members from every corner of the country, and a few foreign countries, have set their sights on Indianapolis, IN, the destination for this year's Sons National Convention.

Registration for the 41st National Convention will be open from 9am-4pm on Thursday and Friday, August 24 and 25 from 8am-12pm on Saturday the 26th. The registration desk will be located in the S.A.L. staff office in Hall B (street level) of the Indianapolis Convention Center. Registration fees are \$25 for all delegates, alternates and guests. Official convention

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## Records fall for CWF donations in 2012

Just ten days before a May 31st deadline, Sons surpassed the \$400,000 goal Commander Roberts set this year for donations to The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. But Legion Family leaders could barely contain their collective amazement when the deadline passed and it became clear that contribution totals had exceeded a half million dollars. The official final tally was \$506,264, the largest single-year contribution ever made by any branch of The American Legion Family. Since the mid-1980's when Sons began putting emphasis on raising money for CWF, their all-time donations have now exceeded \$5 million

"Every Detachment in the country contributed to this year's successful fund raising efforts," said National CWF Chairman Pete Sierminski. "We saw six Detachments raise an average of four dollars or more for every member in their state. Please thank all your members for their hard work and efforts this year."

At the top of the leader board, the Detachment of

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## He helped break the color barrier

John Hill, Jr. is a dual member. For the Sons, he serves as Adjutant of the *Detachment of Georgia*. His eligibility for The American Legion stems from his service in the Marine Corps during World War II. Although



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## AL Extension Institute now available online

Have you graduated yet from The American Legion's official training program? You don't have to be a squadron, district or Detachment officer. Any S.A.L. member who wants to expand his knowledge of the nation's largest veterans service organization can go online and do so.

The American Legion Extension Institute has been rewritten, updated, streamlined and enhanced with videos, digital photos, clickable links, a historical timeline and additional features. To register and take the course, visit [www.legion.org/alei](http://www.legion.org/alei). The program is designed to take less than two hours to complete. It is divided into six sections, with a quiz at the end of each, followed by a final exam.

The sections closely follow the Four Pillars of service for the organization. They include History & Organization, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism and Children & Youth.

Upon completion, a participant must pass a fi-

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# Finishing with a big WOW!

By **James Roberts III**  
National Commander

I can't tell you how great I felt when I heard that the Sons of The American Legion once again lead the way with donations to the Child Welfare Foundation. However, I nearly passed out when I heard that we raised over \$506,000 which is the most ever raised by the Sons. All I can say is WOW and job well done.

I would like to thank all of you for the work that has been done so far this year. As a team we have done great things, but as we get closer to the National Convention, I must remind you all to report your activities through your respective detachments using the Consolidated Squadron Report Form. The strength of The American Legion Family comes in our numbers. Our 4.1 million members have a large voice and that voice can only be heard if you report...report...report. Everything you report assists The American Legion National Commander when he goes and



testifies before congress. So you see how important it is to report.

I would like to recognize Steve Cobble from the Detachment of Michigan. Steve was in the process of purchasing a new truck this past year when he heard of a need at the Wilwin Lodge in Michigan. The Wilwin Lodge provides free rest, relaxation and recuperation vacations for returning servicemen and women and their families. Steve answered the call and personally donated \$12,000 to assist with the needs of the lodge. Needless to say he

did not buy the new truck, but I am sure he will soon. As a result of this and the many other things Steve did this year that he was awarded with the Michigan Son of the Year by his Detachment. Excellent work Steve. Glad I could be a witness to the recognition you deserved.

Our last goal now is to get our ALL-TIME-HIGH in membership. So I will ask each of you to make sure to send any remaining membership in so we can make our 350,000 goal and our 90% renewal target. We are doing very well in membership because of your hard work. Our numbers over last year continue to be on the positive side, so continue to send in your membership especially those renewals.

It has been my honor to represent you this year and I am looking forward to the next few months as I travel to the various conventions and events. Let's finish strong in our quest to "Get Back to Blue" by Honoring All Who Serve and Have Served.

## Tale of two squadrons

By **Jeff Frain**  
Adjutant, Detachment of AZ

Two Squadrons began the fiscal year with high expectations of exceeding their prior year's efforts.

**Apache Junction, AZ Squadron 27**, with nearly 600 members, raised more money than any other squadron in the country this year. In hindsight, my challenge to them - to raise \$10,000 - still seems mind boggling.

Simultaneously, **Glendale, AZ Squadron 29**, with its 140 members, reviewed the previous year and determined many more opportunities existed that could directly effect their donation efforts. The contributions of Apache Junction were clearly in mind when Glendale's goal was set. To cement the effort, Squadron 29 posed a challenge to the members of Squadron 27 and notified the Detachment's CWF Chairman. What began as a friendly competition resulted in a horse race in the Sonoran Desert with each squadron pulling ahead of each other in an "East vs. West" competition.

Contributions by each squadron rolled out with the closing of their respective general meetings. \$1,000 - 2,000 - 4,000 - 5,000 - 8,000 - 9,620 - 10,113 - 11,000. The CWF chairman requested the Squadron Commanders meet and discuss where and when to stop. This was done out of concern that the overall goals of both squadrons were not suffering as a result of the friendly but tight competition.

Right! Sure! Glendale was still running in high gear and wanted to keep going. Apache Junction was up to the task, too. A second meeting between the two Squadron

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## Tale from Page 2

Commanders resulted in setting a stopping point at \$12,113. Sort of. The efforts of Squadron 29 resulted in a momentum that added one more donation threatening the agreement. To honor the agreement, and to accept the donation, it was split between the two squadrons and rounded to allow a total of \$21,500 each.

Discussions with both squadrons revealed the energy and fun both enjoyed in this horse race. A lot was learned in going the distance during the race. A tie at the finish line resulted in CWF winning more for the kids. Just as it should be.

A third Arizona squadron has expressed the desire to enter the horse race next year. That would make it a trifecta and all bets are OFF!

## Extension from Page 1

nal online exam to receive a digital certificate of recognition; a lapel/cap pin will also be delivered to those who successfully complete the course. The names of those who have passed will be recorded and indexed at The American Legion National Headquarters. Graduates will have the option to click a box upon completion to recognize their accomplishment on The American Legion national **website at [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org)**.

The online course is \$4.95 for members of The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion, or \$9.95 for non-members. Payment can be accepted securely and conveniently on the course registration page.

The American Legion Extension Institute online training program

## Records from Page 1

Arizona raised \$77,000, an amount equal to more than \$13 for each of the state's 5,800 members. Eleven other Detachments collected and donated more than \$10,000 each: Ohio, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

"Your untiring efforts and fund raising for the Sons of The American Legion is superb and have brought special meaning to 'devotion to mutual helpfulness.' Through your efforts, we will again provide grants through The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation during," said S.A.L. National Adjutant Brian O'Hearn. *(Also see remarks from National Commander Roberts, Page 2 - a Tale of Two Squadrons, Page 2 - list of Detachment contributions - Page 3)*



*(Above) Sons National Commander Jim Roberts recently completed the new online Extension Institute course. At the May N.E.C. meetings, he received his certificate from American Legion National Commander Fang Wong.*

replaces the series of printed booklets that had been printed and sold through National Headquarters.

## 2012 Renewals

Hawaii	100%
Dist of Columbia	94.1%
Wisconsin	93.8%
Iowa	92.0%
Nebraska	90.5%
Maryland	90.4%
Delaware	89.1%
Ohio	88.7%
Illinois	88.3%
Indiana	87.9%
Pennsylvania	87.8%
New York	87.3%
Louisiana	87.2%
Massachusetts	87.3%
Minnesota	86.9%
New Jersey	86.8%
North Dakota	86.1%
Michigan	86.1%
Vermont	85.1%
Georgia	84.7%
New Hampshire	84.7%
South Carolina	84.4%
Florida	84.2%
Virginia	83.9%
Montana	83.6%
Maine	83.3%
Kansas	82.9%
California	82.8%
West Virginia	82.4%
Washington	82.3%

Do you have a story to share?

Send ideas and pictures to:

**National Update**  
c/o Mike Pipher, Editor  
612 S. State Road 446 - #35C  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
or  
[mpipher@iu.edu](mailto:mpipher@iu.edu)

Next deadline is October 1, 2012



(Above) Sons representing us at the highest levels of government. These S.A.L. and dual members were chosen as staff and delegates to this summer's American Legion Boys Nation program in Washington, DC. Two representatives from each Boys State program in the country were selected to come to the nation's capitol and spend a week learning about government through a hands-on process that included meetings with high level officials at the Supreme Court, on Capitol Hill and in the White House.

(Right) Nearly 1,000 spectators flocked to this year's car show hosted by **Jacksonville, FL Squadron 137**. In just its third year, the car show displayed more than 80 vehicles and raised close to \$7,000. That money has been used to support several Legion and community service projects. Vets in nearby nursing homes received \$20 gift cards.

We could all take a lesson or two in fund raising techniques from the guys up in the **Detachment of Michigan**. This past year they raised more than \$33,000 that benefitted the state's Make-a-Wish Foundation. They also raised close to \$14,000 for CWF this year.

Speaking of fund raising, they don't call 'em Volunteers in Tennessee for nothing. Earlier this year, the **Detachment of Tennessee** made donations (Right) to the Tennessee Fisher House Foundation totaling \$15,000. Word has it that amount will grow before the end of summer.

You will find Oneida County in the heart of New York State. That's also where you'll find **New Hartford, NY Squadron 1376** delivering blankets to veterans at a nearby nursing home. The blankets carry the name of the S.A.L. and are part of a project that benefits vets who can't get out and around. Not to be outdone, during this past holiday season, members of the **Croghan, NY**



**Squadron 1663** visited veterans who reside at the Extended Care Facility of Lewis County General Hospital. (Right) More than thirty veterans were presented with blankets embroidered with The American Legion logo. The Sons are thankful for the opportunity to honor these individuals for their service to our nation.

Meanwhile, the fellows in **Hudson Falls, NY Squadron 574** cooks up a monthly breakfast. Sometimes they invite special speakers and have also performed the Four Chaplains Ceremony.

It was easier to find veterans' graves and place flags for Memorial day this year because of a project of **Cicero, IN Squadron 341**. Sons installed flag inserts into the ground at all of the cemeteries in the community. Squadron members also built a room at the Post which is used as a clothes and small appliance closet for the needy and homeless.



The Eastern Shore Police Association is made up of active and retired Maryland police officers. One of their activities involves a youth camp that teaches

flag etiquette and local history because a very old cemetery is located on the campground. Time and weather has taken a toll on the cemetery, so when the Association asked for help, their cry was answered by **Maryland Squadrons 15, 243 and 278**. Thanks to Sons, the spiffed up cemetery was unveiled in mid-June.

Norbert Lankheit was only 23 years old when he was killed just 2 days after the D-Day Invasion. He was serving on the U.S.S. Rich off Utah Beach near Normandy. According to relatives, his remains never made it back to the U.S. and he was buried at sea. Lankheit's great-nephew, Jeff Cox of **Florence, KY Squadron 4** found out that his great-uncle had earned some medals that were never delivered. So, 68 years after Lankheit's death, there was a special ceremony for him and the medals were presented.

Don't ever make the mistake of thinking smaller squadrons make smaller contributions in terms of time and effort. One very good example can be found at **Bellwood, PA Squadron 424**. After repeated efforts,



Did your squadron do anything this year to celebrate the S.A.L. National Veterans Assistance Day in May? The guys at **Clovis, NM Squadron 25** threw a luncheon (Left) for local veterans and their families in an effort to show



how proud they are of veterans everywhere.

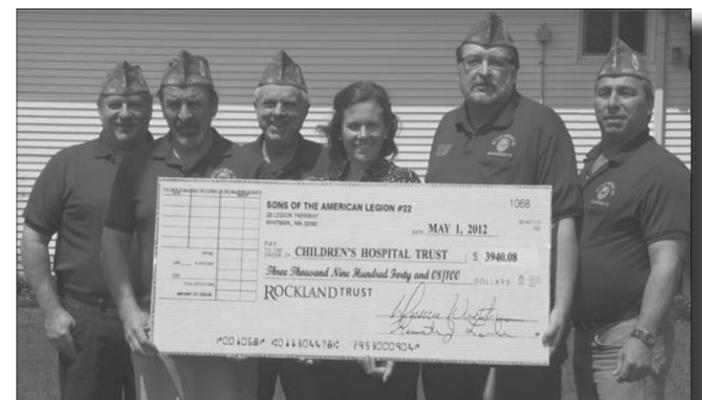
Sons from **Glen-dale, AZ Squadron 29** were on hand when a unit of Military Police left for deployment. Sons helped pass out G.I.

Josh dolls - but with a twist. Seems Josh has been promoted. Somebody slapped a set of captain's bars on the cuddly Josh. (Right) He also was pinned with a yellow ribbon.



For each of the past two years, **Towson, MA Squadron 22** has been the Detachment's leading fund raiser. Evidence of that can be seen in the recent effort that used a meat raffle to generate close to \$4,000 they handed over to Children's Hospital, Boston. (Below)

The guys in **Loudon, OH Squadron 257** have been busy helping out with a variety of community projects. When a Girl Scout Troop wanted to erect flag poles in a park, Sons were there to help. The squadron was also on hand at two huge cemeteries for grave decorating ceremonies



the squadron was finally chartered in 2009 with 11 members. One year later, they were up to 34 members, held a benefit dance for a little girl needing a kidney transplant, participated in a parade saluting our troops, donated Christmas items to a nearby veterans home, handed out a scholarship, adopted a local cemetery and helped pay the mortgage of a fellow Son who developed a brain tumor. Great job!

## Convention from Page 1

badges will be required to enter any convention sessions and the exhibit hall.

The Sons National Convention will be preceded by committee meetings (starting at 8:30a on Friday morning in Rooms 201, 202 and 203) and the pre-convention NEC meeting (starting at 10am on Friday morning in Room 210). The 41st annual S.A.L. National Convention will be gavelled to order in the Convention Center's Sagamore Ballroom (second level) by National Commander Jim Roberts at 1pm Friday afternoon.

The number of S.A.L. delegates attending the National Convention has increased in recent years, due in part to mandatory delegate fees approved by the National Executive Committee.

While there is no specific dress code during the convention, there are some guidelines. Delegates who expect to be on stage to receive awards are asked to wear a coat and tie. Otherwise, trousers, shirts and shoes always look nice when dignitaries and special guests pay a visit. Shorts, tank top shirts and flip-flops are discouraged.

All of the official convention hotels are located in downtown Indianapolis, within easy walking distance of the convention center. Nevertheless, shuttle busses will operate from 7:30am-8pm on Friday, from 7:30am-5:30pm on Saturday and from 6:30am-2:30pm on Sunday.

There will be much to see and do while in Indiana. For those arriving early, there will be a golf outing to benefit CWF held at Maple Creek Golf Course, teeing off Thursday morning at 10am. A spe-



photo: Eldon Lindsay/American Legion

cial dinner will be held at 5:30pm on Friday evening at Speedway Legion Post 500. The \$25 cost will benefit the National Emergency. A candlelight celebration will be held on the north steps of the Indiana War Memorial at 8pm on Saturday and will be followed by a Legion Riders Parade through downtown Indianapolis. There are many museums and cultural exhibits throughout central Indiana, including things such as the National Medal of Honor Memorial, the Indiana War Memorial and the U.S.S. Indianapolis Memorial. Two casinos are about 30 minutes from the center of town.

The American Legion Parade is scheduled for 4pm on Sunday afternoon, stepping off from The Legion's National Headquarters at the corner of North Street and Pennsylvania Street, proceeding south and turning west on Ohio Street, then north on Meridian Street and terminating at North Street. There will be a parade party from noon-8pm on Sunday featuring food/beverages/music sponsored by the Department of Indiana and located along The Legion Mall between Meridian Street and Pennsylvania Street.

Medical services will be readily available through several nearby hospitals including the Roudebush VA Medical Center. Scooters and wheelchairs can also be rented.

(Left) *The Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial is located along a picturesque canal that runs through parts of downtown Indianapolis. It's just one of many sites within walking distance of the convention hotels that pays respect to servicemen and women.*

## Earn another banner

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation will be continuing its incentive program. Each squadron donating at least one dollar for each member during the next award year will receive a beautiful banner/streamer suitable for display in your meeting room, or it may be attached to your squadron colors. Submit the form found on the Sons web site at [www.legion.org/sons](http://www.legion.org/sons).

## Attend these conferences

Sons are welcome to attend two important conferences taking place in Indianapolis this fall, the National Children and Youth Conference (September 21-23) and the National Americanism Conference (September 28-30). Both conferences will be held at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Indianapolis. For addition information about topics to be covered in the two conferences, go online: [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org).

## What's your DOB?

Is your squadron collecting and reporting the dates of birth for each member of the squadron? Many squadrons throughout the country have not been submitting this information. The lack of demographic detail for Sons is making it difficult for the organization to communicate effectively with members and conduct actuarial studies needed for potential insurance programs like those offered to Legionnaires. Dates of birth can be reported on official forms but can also be submitted on postcards or online at [www.legion.org/sons](http://www.legion.org/sons) in the change of address area of the web page.

## 2011-2012 CWF Donations by Detachment

	2011 Donations	2011 Membership	CWF Goal	2012 Donations	% of Goal	Per Capita Amount
ALABAMA	\$6,525.00	2,103	\$2,103.00	\$7,250.00	344.7%	\$3.45
ALASKA	\$1,468.00	1,439	\$1,439.00	\$3,525.00	245.0%	\$2.45
ARIZONA	\$36,831.23	5,896	\$5,896.00	\$77,000.22	1306.0%	\$13.06
ARKANSAS	\$475.00	532	\$532.00	\$14.00	2.6%	\$0.03
CALIFORNIA	\$18,062.61	9,843	\$9,843.00	\$27,738.39	281.8%	\$2.82
COLORADO	\$22,354.81	2,684	\$2,684.00	\$31,489.29	1173.2%	\$11.73
CONNECTICUT	\$2,383.01	1,988	\$1,988.00	\$3,800.00	191.1%	\$1.91
DELAWARE	\$1,284.00	2,303	\$2,303.00	\$2,160.00	93.8%	\$0.94
DIST OF COL	\$-	136	\$136.00	\$-	0.0%	\$-
FLORIDA	\$17,085.00	14,016	\$14,016.00	\$25,415.00	181.3%	\$1.81
FRANCE	\$200.00	280	\$280.00	\$1,255.00	448.2%	\$4.48
GEORGIA	\$6,788.53	5,179	\$5,179.00	\$5,824.75	112.5%	\$1.12
HAWAII	\$68.00	43	\$43.00	\$100.00	232.6%	\$2.33
IDAHO	\$1,081.75	524	\$524.00	\$1,142.50	218.0%	\$2.18
ILLINOIS	\$9,716.50	14,872	\$14,872.00	\$24,001.00	161.4%	\$1.61
INDIANA	\$35,183.54	37,426	\$37,426.00	\$28,220.07	75.4%	\$0.75
IOWA	\$3,110.00	3,002	\$3,002.00	\$3,173.00	105.7%	\$1.06
KANSAS	\$11,557.00	6,092	\$6,092.00	\$22,192.46	364.3%	\$3.64
KENTUCKY	\$1,825.00	4,217	\$4,217.00	\$1,300.00	30.8%	\$0.31
LOUISIANA	\$2,580.00	2,016	\$2,016.00	\$1,812.75	89.9%	\$0.90
MAINE	\$1,365.00	2,787	\$2,787.00	\$1,284.00	46.1%	\$0.46
MARYLAND	\$5,040.61	15,486	\$15,486.00	\$6,030.00	38.9%	\$0.39
MASSACHUSETTS	\$1,224.80	5,442	\$5,442.00	\$2,257.56	41.5%	\$0.41
MICHIGAN	\$13,023.97	20,746	\$20,746.00	\$13,768.59	66.4%	\$0.66
MINNESOTA	\$9,526.00	10,905	\$10,905.00	\$7,072.00	64.9%	\$0.65
MISSISSIPPI	\$150.00	564	\$564.00	\$4,500.45	798.0%	\$7.98
MISSOURI	\$4,056.24	3,345	\$3,345.00	\$2,901.02	86.7%	\$0.87
MONTANA	\$768.00	858	\$858.00	\$855.00	99.7%	\$1.00
NEBRASKA	\$4,670.00	5,613	\$5,613.00	\$6,075.00	108.2%	\$1.08
NEVADA	\$200.00	303	\$303.00	\$1,460.03	481.9%	\$4.82
NEW HAMPSHIRE	\$3,205.09	5,890	\$5,890.00	\$5,052.00	85.8%	\$0.86
NEW JERSEY	\$7,650.00	9,394	\$9,394.00	\$9,649.00	102.7%	\$1.03
NEW MEXICO	\$1,232.00	1,688	\$1,688.00	\$600.00	35.5%	\$0.36
NEW YORK	\$6,416.00	28,630	\$28,630.00	\$15,468.37	54.0%	\$0.54
NORTH CAROLINA	\$1,206.00	1,923	\$1,923.00	\$2,212.00	115.0%	\$1.15
NORTH DAKOTA	\$732.00	750	\$750.00	\$-	0.0%	\$-
OHIO	\$50,460.94	30,606	\$30,606.00	\$65,439.94	213.8%	\$2.14
OKLAHOMA	\$850.00	879	\$879.00	\$900.00	102.4%	\$1.02
OREGON	\$7,192.48	1,859	\$1,859.00	\$7,427.34	399.5%	\$4.00
PENNSYLVANIA	\$32,004.11	56,945	\$56,945.00	\$30,541.00	53.6%	\$0.54
PHILIPPINES	\$-	23	\$23.00	\$-	0.0%	\$-
RHODE ISLAND	\$-	226	\$226.00	\$-	0.0%	\$-
SOUTH CAROLINA	\$5,625.00	1,007	\$1,007.00	\$4,450.00	441.9%	\$4.42
SOUTH DAKOTA	\$750.00	573	\$573.00	\$1,426.25	248.9%	\$2.49
TENNESSEE	\$3,433.00	1,724	\$1,724.00	\$3,731.00	216.4%	\$2.16
TEXAS	\$7,474.00	6,641	\$6,641.00	\$5,978.57	90.0%	\$0.90
UTAH	\$751.00	583	\$583.00	\$585.00	100.3%	\$1.00
VERMONT	\$10,311.16	3,900	\$3,900.00	\$4,691.00	120.3%	\$1.20
VIRGINIA	\$19,247.00	4,493	\$4,493.00	\$11,607.12	258.3%	\$2.58
WASHINGTON	\$6,623.00	2,599	\$2,599.00	\$5,997.00	230.7%	\$2.31
WEST VIRGINIA	\$1,775.00	2,875	\$2,875.00	\$2,470.00	85.9%	\$0.86
WISCONSIN	\$3,902.20	3,309	\$3,309.00	\$3,750.22	113.3%	\$1.13
WYOMING	\$1,780.00	1,204	\$1,204.00	\$4,846.40	402.5%	\$4.03
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>\$392,169.58</b>	<b>348,361</b>	<b>\$353,361.00</b>	<b>\$506,264.29</b>	<b>143.3%</b>	<b>\$1.45</b>