Big goals from Page 1

High school seniors or graduates must apply annually. Amounts vary based upon the income available from the fund and number of applicants. Scholarships may be used for undergraduate study at an accredited institution of higher education within the United States. Further scholarship information is contained in The American Legion’s “Need a Lift?” publication, which lists scholarships, grants and loans available for veterans and their children. The information is also available on The American Legion’s Web site, and booklets are available for distribution to public and private high schools.

The trust fund remains untouched and grows with each donation. Scholarships are funded by the interest, which has awarded $291,895 in aid since 2004.

A second area of focus for this year is our increased involvement in The American Legion Boys State program. Since 1935 American Legion Boys State has been giving High School juniors the opportunity to learn about city, county and state government through “hands on” experience. Participants are exposed to the obligations and responsibilities of government officials. Practical and objective training is received over the course of several days with legislative sessions, court proceedings, law enforcement presentations, assemblies and other activities. Participants are selected by local American Legion Posts, following recommendations by High School officials. Thousands of young men have learned the function and powers of government through American Legion Boys State.

The Sons of The American Legion has been a proud advocate of Boys State with numerous Squadrons sponsoring participants over the years. Our members are also encouraged to take an active role and assist with the program in their own state. Contact your respective Department Headquarters to find out how you can be of assistance.

Opportunities abound and there is plenty of time to conduct a fund raising event for these important programs. You have the power to help make a difference in someone’s life. Please include The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund and the Boys State program in your fund raising and donation plans this year.

Americanism sights big goals

The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund, the premier project of The American Legion Riders, is now a priority for Sons of The American Legion. As well, Commander Gladden is requesting increased participation through donations to the fund by squadrons, detachments and individual members. Even though the Legacy Scholarship is relatively new, it has touched the lives of many children.

Legacy scholarships are given to children whose military parent has been killed while serving our country. Dependant children of active duty United States military and National Guard, and military reservists who were federalized and died on active duty on or after September 11, 2001 are eligible.

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Remains of three American servicemen have been identified and repatriated. The identification was made possible through the remains recovery program of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the efforts and dedication of American Legion Members and Sons of The American Legion who are known advocates of this program.

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MySAL launches on the web

By Brian J. O’Hearne
National Adjutant

“MySAL” program and the initial rollout of this on-line support system. It should be of interest to all Sons squadrons across the country. The presentation was made by Joe Gallagher, Deputy Director of the National Headquarters IT Division and included a Power Point presentation describing what the program is and features that are now available for all squadrons. For those of you who are now getting word of this new program for the first time, MySAL.org is a secure internet site linked to the membership data base for the Sons. The portal site MySAL.org provides officers with access to the membership data and member-management tools.

The squadron adjutant or his designated representative can view and edit squadron membership on this web site, including changes to names, addresses and phone numbers. Some of the features that are now available for all squadrons include:

- Creating a secure web site for your membership
- Tracking of membership payments
- Maintaining an updated roster
- Access to a portal site

As of this writing, 139 squadrons are accessing the site. MySAL.org allows officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers. The site also provides a portal for officers to view and edit membership information, including names, addresses and phone numbers.

CWF awards 2014 grants

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, in its 59th year, has awarded $644,065 to 21 non-profit organizations. These grants, determined during the annual meeting of the Board of Directors, have been awarded to support worthwhile youth-serving projects and to assist in the dissemination of information to the general public and specific target groups.

 Sons of The American Legion have contributed heavily to the CWF. Donations in the upcoming weeks are expected to push all-time S.A.L. contributions to more than $6 million. Many of the grants awarded in October were sponsored by the Sons. They included:

- Autism Speaks of New York, NY - awarded $32,350 to provide information kits on Autism and will encourage early intervention and supportive services.
- Children’s Hospital & Medical Center Foundation of Omaha, NE - awarded $14,000 to underwrite the production of an infant injury prevention program that will include the distribution of DVDs and educational booklets.
- Children’s Organ Transplant Association (COTA) recently introduced COTA Bowling for Life as a fun, easy-to-use fund raiser that many local squadrons, posts and units have already implemented to help a COTA family in their community. This program and its support materials were funded by a generous grant from The American Legion’s Child Welfare Foundation.

By following the suggestions in the COTA Bowling for Life Fund raising Event Guide, squadrons can turn an ordinary ‘bowl-a-thon’ into a turbo-charged fund raiser that can raise thousands of dollars. The trick is to take advantage of the

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Strikes to spare transplant-needy kids: COTA

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Listed the help of teachers at www.veterans-tribute.org.

Eric helped raise money to send eight veterans from his home-town on an Honor Flight trip to Washington, DC and rode alone as a guardian.

Eric sought help from Wauconda American Legion Post 911 and Lake Zurich Post 964. Commanders from both posts helped him identify veterans of various ages who had served in World War II, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. Following VHP requirements, each interview had to last more than 30 minutes, had to be recorded and time logs with transcribed questions and answers had to be submitted. All of Eric’s work was accepted into the Library of Congress and has been made a part of the VHP.

But Eric wasn’t finished. He continued on Page 6
Veterans Day tends to bring out some of the best that Sons have to offer each year. On recent Veterans Days, Sons from Mooretown, PA Sq 103 visited a nearby nursing home to meet and talk with veterans. In the process, they found a woman who had served in USSR troops a half a century ago. Sons from Saint Joseph, MO Sq 359 helped dedicate a flagpole at a homeless shelter in their community. Of course, nobody wants to see veterans’ grave left unmarked, but that’s what’s happening because of a Department of Veterans Affairs policy that says only next of kin can apply for free government-issued markers. Past S.A.L. National Commander John Dietz serves on a committee in his community near Cincinnati that is working to get the VA’s policy reversed so groups like The Sons of The American Legion can assist in honoring the graves of veterans. Dietz and others worked diligently to mark the graves of four African-American Civil War soldiers. They ran into a brick wall with the VA but wound up acquiring markers through the donation of a private monument company. More than a hundred years after their burials, the soldiers’ graves are finally marked appropriately.

Sons from Webster, MA Sq 184 recently honored one of the community’s last WWII veterans. They purchased a granite bench and engraved it with the background of 1st Sgt. Donald A. Baker, Sr. then had it placed at the entrance to nearby Memorial Beach. Baker served 41 years in the Army and another 25 years as the local veterans’ agent. (Left) Sometimes good news travels slowly. We’re just now finding out that Jeannette, PA Sq 344 had a banner year in 2012. They helped with a dinner for The Legion’s National Commander, served 500 spaghetti dinners at the Heinz VA Medical Center, carried the colors various times in the combined Legion/VFW Honor Guard, hosted a summer picnic cookout at the Heinz VAMC (the biggest event since they were chartered in 2007), took part in a POW/MIA ceremony during an event to recognize Korean War vets, organized a gun raffle and made Christmas a little brighter for others.

Here are two stories about how perseverance pays off: Ed Drown belongs to Lyndondale, VT Sq 30 and is a Past Commander of the Detachment of Vermont. When he was young he heard his father talk about a brother who was MIA during the Korean War. Starting in 1995, Ed tried to track down information about his uncle and attempted to get a Veterans Administration memorial marker for the family’s grave site. It took 16 years and a lot of refusals by government officials, but with the help of a Congress- man, Ed finally received the written reports of his uncle’s disappearance in Korea and was given a memorial grave marker. Meanwhile, almost nobody wants to see veterans’ grave left unmarked, but that’s what’s happening because of a Department of Veterans Affairs policy that says only next of kin can apply for free government-issued markers. Past S.A.L. National Commander John Dietz serves on a committee in his community near Cincinnati that is working to get the VA’s policy reversed so groups like The Sons of The American Legion can assist in honoring the graves of veterans. Dietz and others worked diligently to mark the graves of four African-American Civil War soldiers. They ran into a brick wall with the VA but wound up acquiring markers through the donation of a private monument company. More than a hundred years after their burials, the soldiers’ graves are finally marked appropriately.

Forrest the movie stars. Hollywood, CA Sq 43 recently signed up a member of Congress. Sons and Post officials presented a membership card, S.A.L. cover and license plate to Rep. Adam Schiff whose father was a veteran. (Left) The Sons of Calabash, NC Sq 503 have established a nursing scholarship at nearby Brunswick Community College. Applicants for the scholarship must have prior military service. The Sons of Le Mars, IA Sq 241 recently sponsored an “Honor Bus” to take a load of veterans to the Iowa State Fair. On August 12th the Iowa State Fair hosted a Veterans Day with a parade and several military concerts. Thanks to these guys from the S.A.L., a bunch of vets were able to enjoy the thanks accorded them by folks behind the Iowa State Fair.

The Detachment of California teamed up with another group back in September to throw an end-of-summer beach bash for the Marines, Sailors and families of the Marine Corps 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion. Food, fun, games and prizes were spread out across Del Mar Beach at Camp Pendleton.

Sons in Covington, LA Sq 16 helped convince the local mayor to sign a proclamation declaring September 11 as a Day of Remembrance and then squadron officers were on hand for the photo opportunity when the mayor made his mark. (Left) When 18 National Guardsmen from New York’s Alpha Troop 2/101st Calvary returned home from Afghanistan this summer, Sons from Geneva, NY Sq 396 were there to welcome them and host a cookout for the soldiers and their families. (Below) Cody and Peter Polega are two of the youngest members of Mountain Top, PA Sq 781. This summer they marched the two miles of the Fourth of July parade alongside Raymond Samolis, Post 781’s oldest active member, a veteran of WWII. (Left) Sons in Walkerton, IN Sq 189 are pretty well known for their Christmas basket giveaway. But they have also given out $500 scholarships to a pair of local high school graduates, sponsor a Little League team and a girls soccer team and actively help the community parks department.
Our membership theme is “Shooting for mailing labels. When used properly, this web site will become an important tool that will greatly assist in membership renewals. Now - how can you get started? Just go to the internet page www.legion.org/sons and click on the “MySAL” link. Print out and complete the authorization form, obtain the proper authorization signatures for your squadron and mail it to the address provided on the form.

We will also be working on a number of other different projects this year under each of the three big commissions. The Children & Youth Commission will be focusing on Special Olympics and Josh Dogs. The Americanism Commission will be focusing on the Legacy Scholarship Fund and Boys State. The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission will be focusing on Fisher House and the Missing In America Project. While these commissions will be focusing on these particular projects, we will be supporting all the programs of The American Legion. The national organization is here to support you with information and education. The chairmen and commission members are dedicated to providing you with as much information as you need. I have asked all the commission and committee members to make a real effort to find ways to convey the information and programs we are working on all the way into the squadron level.

It is very important that you, the blue cap member, stay abreast of what is going on in our organization. There are several ways you can do this. Your first resource is your squadron and post. Are you attending meetings on a regular basis? I have heard it stated that organizations like ours get 10% or less of their membership to attend meetings and participate. That means, if your squadron has 250 members, then 25 members will participate. Unfortunately, my own squadron is only around 8%. The real question is... are you part of the 10% that does or are you part of the 90% that don’t?

Another way to stay abreast of what’s going on is to attend district and detachment meetings. These meetings give you a different perspective on the material, seeing how it is being presented by someone new. Also, you get to meet members from different squadrons and you get to hear first hand how they do things and hear about problems that they may be having. Often times, you will find that something that you think affects only you is being felt by others. You may just find an answer to a problem that you couldn’t solve. You may just hear about a program that would work really well from a squadron that you didn’t know about.

And finally, a great resource and way to stay abreast of what’s going on is to use the many websites run by the Sons of The American Legion. Whether it is our national website at www.legion.org/sons or your detachment or district’s website, a wealth of information is available. At the national level, our chairmen are placing articles about the various programs we are working on. Each chairman’s name and e-mail addresses is available for you to contact them with questions about their programs. All types of forms and publications are available for you to download and read. Please take advantage of this incredible tool!

Past National Commander Chris Huntzinger has often said that education and communication equals success and he is right. Please get involved. I have always stated that I have gotten more from this organization than I have ever given, but that only happens when you decide to give first.

Do you have a story to share? National Update c/o Mike Pipher, Editor 612 S. State Road 446, #35C Bloomington, IN 47401 mpipher@iu.edu

Don’t forget... The next deadline is February 1, 2014

Chicago, Illinois 60604 312-280-9500

COTA Bowling For Life

MySAL from Page 1

groups, and dates of birth information. He can generate membership lists and lists of current paid mem-

COTA from Page 1

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COTA Bowling for Life

Get out and shake the family tree

Our membership theme is “Shooting for the Moon.” Our goal is to reach 375,000 members. This would be a 106.3% increase over last year.

At the same time we are boosting S.A.L. numbers we need to work equally hard at helping the overall Legion Family membership. One simple way to do this is to work on our own Family Tree. I want you to sit down and create a family tree. Look at each branch and see who are current Legion Family members and who are not. Take a look at those who are not and see if they are eligible to join the Sons, the Auxiliary and/or the Riders. Then, do all you can to sign them up. I can guarantee that each of us has at least one family member who is not a member that could be.

Anyone who signs up five new members will be eligible to receive the 2014 membership recruiter pin. The form is on line. Fill it out and send it in and you will receive your pin to wear...them and ask them to renew, or ask if they are having problem and need a hand. Membership is everyone’s responsibility.

Eric Grier is a typical high school student. In recent years, he has been thinking about his future and has considered applying to the military academies and making a military career for himself. Even though his father is an Air Force Lt. Colonel who served in Iraq, Eric took it upon himself to interview nearly a dozen veterans in his community in effort to find out what a military career might mean. It was during those interviews that Eric latched onto an idea he hadn’t expected to find.

While surfing the internet one day he came across the Veterans History Project sponsored by the Library of Congress’ American Folk life Center. As explained on its web site, the goal of the VHP is to “collect, preserve and make accessible the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand...