

David Stephens

I was elected National Commander in 1981 during the Hawaii convention. I was 25 years old. I became a member at birth through my father's service in the U S Navy during WWII. Highlight of the year was initiating a new Squadron on board the U.S.S. Guam in port at Norfolk. I traveled to 15 or so Detachments. The SAL didn't travel to Hawaii or Alaska back then. The Commander could travel to the Detachments he felt needed the most assistance. 2015 membership year is my 59th year as a member. I would say to a blue capper, to stay true to the 4 Pillars of The American Legion. Find your niche and strive to learn all you can. Look for positive people that want to have a positive impact in our communities, to our Veterans and Children and youth. I was home very little my year as National Commander, I would travel to nearby events in Indiana and nearby Detachments. We didn't have a restriction of only one visit to a Detachment. My other highlight was the Washington Conference.

As a side note, I have 7 brothers and sisters that has produced 1 National Commander, 1 National Vice Commander, 2 National Chaplains, 3 NEC, 4 Detachment Commanders, 4 District Commanders, and 4 Squadron Commanders. 2 District Presidents of the ALA., 4 Unit Presidents. 2 Post Commanders and 1 District Legion Commander that served 2 different terms. We were taught to help others our entire life. I would run for National Commander again because we have come so far and feel I could utilize all of the positive things to really help us to grow and reach out. My project for the year was the National Kidney Foundation. We presented over \$12,000.00 to an up and coming T.V. star, I don't remember his name, but evidently he didn't go to far. My theme for the year was "Working Together for America" with all 3 emblems of the Legion Family. This was many years before we would be known as The American Legion Family. We didn't work with CWF Back then. We raised membership by 7,470 members, not bad considering we only had around 59,000 members. I'm still active on all levels, I completed 2 years as 6th District SAL Commander 8/2014, I serve on 2 Detachment Committees, 6th District Assistant Finance Officer and head up P.R. and I am the general go to guy for newer members. I've served on the BOD for the Indy Vet House, Inc. (Like a Fisher House), prior to the building of the house, over 4 years. I served on the Indianapolis Veterans Day Council for 4 years, with 3 terms serving as V.P. of P.R. and Then a Vet program..

Again if you need any other info let me know. I served as National SAL Commander at the same time as my triplet brother Don was serving as Detachment Commander. I served as 6th District SAL Commander during the same time my Triplet sister Dorothy served as 6th District ALA District President and my oldest brother Cliff was serving as 6 District American Legion Commander. We were promoting The American Legion Family and working together for the betterment of our Veterans, Children and our Communities