



ROUND-UP

WE ARE QUOTA!

A weekly digest of happenings in the Sons of The American Legion

Volume 4 | Number 46 | Issue 197 | August 6, 2023

She Serves: Daughter continues family tradition of military service

Stacia Naquin, WSYX | August 3, 2023

COLUMBUS, Ohio (WSYX) — It’s not every day a father and daughter share a swearing-in.

But that’s exactly what happened on Thursday inside the home of the [121st Air Refueling Wing](#) at Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base outside Columbus. It’s her first, and his last.

With the Oath of Enlistment and pen to paper, Abigail Branson continues a legacy of service.

Giving back to my country, my family’s a military family,” said 17-year-old Abigail Branson. “I’ve always liked coming here when I was little and getting on all the planes. It’s just kind of like a family thing. I’ve just been around it my whole life and I really love it.

Just like her dad, Senior Master Sergeant Ralph Branson with the Ohio Air National Guard.



“When I look at my daughter today, I just could not be more proud. I’m so happy that she wants to join this unit, following my footsteps to be part of something bigger than herself,” said SM Sgt. Ralph Branson.

Courtesy The Branson family

He’s already served for 34 years. He says this re-enlistment will be his last.

That means six more years and serving alongside his daughter.

“She is going to be an avionics electronics technician and that is the same job that I did when I first started and I did that job for 24 years,” says SM Sgt. Ralph Branson, who now works as the Public Affairs Superintendent for the 121st Air Refueling Wing.



It’s like special,” said an 11-year-old Abigail back in 2017 about having a parent in the military. “They are in the military and they’re serving for us.”

Courtesy The Branson family

Abigail has always understood the importance of military service.

She shared her thoughts with ABC6 six years ago, as she attended the [Ohio Military Kids Camp](#) on Kelley’s Island.

see FAMILY page 20



ROUND-UP

National Commander

Chris Carlton (IN)

National Vice-Commander Central Region

David Mennel (MI)

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Ernie LaBerge (MA)

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Michael Kirschner (CO)

National Vice-Commander Southern Region

Ron Roberts (MS)

National Vice-Commander Western Region

Jack Youngs (ID)

Immediate Past National Commander

Michael Fox (CA)

Leading Candidate

Don "J.R." Hall (MD)

Trailing Candidate

Joseph Navarrete (NM)

Round-Up is a publication designed to disseminate information related to Sons of The American Legion and the American Legion Family, and is published weekly and distributed each Sunday.

Round-Up is a collection of information procured from various resources to stay better informed on happenings within The American Legion Family, and of other related topics of interest, and makes no claims or guarantees about the accuracy or currency of the contents of this publication, and expressly disclaims liability for errors and omissions.

SUBMITTING ARTICLES: All submissions are to be made electronically to jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com. If you need assistance, please send an email to same.

All information must be submitted by noon each Friday.

PNVC [Jeff Vrabel, Sr.](#), Editor

[Rusty Myers](#), Contributor

[Lou Michaels](#), Contributor



The current SAL membership report can be accessed on the national website at www.legion.org/membership/standings



**RENEW
ONLINE
TODAY**



**MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL
DELEGATE
STRENGTH**

TARGET DATE

July 26, 2023



CHRIS CARLTON

NATIONAL COMMANDER

2022 - 2023



**Chris Carlton, National Commander
Sons of The American Legion**

**“Purpose is why we journey;
passion is the flame that lights the way.”**

**PURPOSE
PASSION**



FROM THE EDITOR

Since November 11, 2019, *Round-Up* has been a way to get information out to our members. What started as a regional publication, soon went national at the request of members across the country.

For 197 weeks, *Round-Up* has provided readers with membership reports, donations to the Child Welfare Foundation reports, regional reports, committee & commission reports, information from detachments and squadrons, as well as what's going in The American Legion, American Legion Riders, and American Legion Auxiliary. It definitely takes a lot to put out a weekly publication, and I have spent thousands of hours working on it, so our members have a resource to see how other Sons are doing, and to know what is happening across the organization.

One thing that is important to our 375,000 members is hearing what our commissions and committees are doing. For many, this is the only way they have the opportunity so see Sons in action. As has been the practice all along, commission and committee reports will continue to be published as they become available. Too often our members find out what is going on after the fact. They are not involved in processes that affect the entire organization, whether at the local, state, or national level. Communication is key for any organization to be successful, and Sons of The American Legion is no different.

As a way to help with this endeavor, all chairmen are requested to send a copy of their reports to me at jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com so we can continue to inform our members of everything that is going on. Many decisions directly affect them, and they should know who their organization is operating at all levels.

To that point, detachments and squadrons are encouraged to continue to submit information, coming events, photos, etc. so we can recognize your accomplishments, invite others to your

events, and show the world how well you are doing in your area.

Finally, thank you to everyone who offered to help keep *Round-Up* alive with financial support. I will begin accepting donations immediately, and will continue this publication as long as I can. If anyone is interested in donating or purchasing an ad, please email me at jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com and I will get you the rates.

This is our newsletter, let's keep it alive!

I want to thank every member who renewed their membership during Membership Independence Month in July. We honor the veteran who made us eligible with our membership, and renewing early is part of the honor we bestow upon them. THANKS AGAIN!!

Honor the Veteran Who Made You Eligible. Renew Today!

Jeff Vrabel, Sr., Editor

jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com | [Team Vrabel](#)

click a button for more information



Central Region Extravaganza

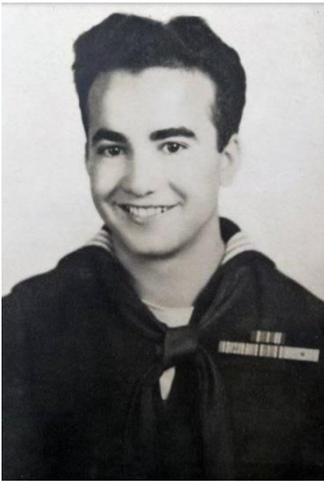
Columbus, Ohio
April 5 - 7, 2024

Remembering the Greatest Generation

To honor a World War II Veteran,
please send information to jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com

World War II veteran returned home

[Rusty Myers](#), Contributor | July 11, 2023



Nutley, NJ – After 79 years, the American Legion Post 105 Family, at the invitation of Post 70, assisted in welcoming home U.S. Navy Aviation Ordnanceman First Class Anthony Di Petta, 24, of Nutley, New Jersey after making the ultimate sacrifice in World War II. Di Petta was killed-in-action in 1944 in the Pacific, and was finally accounted for on 08 January 2023. He

returned stateside the second week of July, being buried at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

The Township of Nutley spread the word that Di Petta's funeral would be in his hometown at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Church on that Tuesday morning, after which the procession would pass the town's World War II memorial where his name is inscribed. The remains of the sailor arrived back in the U.S. on the previous Friday afternoon, according to the Department of Defense.

The town asked members of the areas patriotic and veteran's organizations, along with residents of Nutley, to be there to welcome him home on his way to be buried with his brothers- and sisters-in-arms at Doyle Cemetery in Wrightstown.

Born in Italy in 1920, and coming to the United States when he was a child, Di Petta enlisted in the United States Navy in New York City on 06 December 1939 as a Seaman Apprentice.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) reported earlier in the year that the Ordnanceman's remains had been discovered 79 years after his death, and 70 years after he had been declared 'non-recoverable' in 1949. In a release, the DPAA wrote:

"In the fall of 1944, Di Petta was the Aviation Ordnanceman assigned to the Navy Torpedo Squadron 20, USS Enterprise. On Sept. 10, Di Petta and two other crew members aboard the TBM-1C Avenger Bureau Number, 17018 took off from the USS Enterprise on a mission to conduct air strikes against enemy targets in Malakal Naval District, Palau Islands. Their aircraft was struck by enemy anti-aircraft fire and crashed into water near Malakal. Efforts to recover Di Petta's remains were unsuccessful. Following the war, the American Graves Registration Service, the organization that searched for and recovered fallen American personnel, conducted exhaustive searches of battle areas and crash sites in Palau, concluding their search in the summer of 1947. Investigators could not find any evidence of Di Petta or his aircraft. He was declared non-recoverable July 16, 1949."

"From 2003 – 2018, the BentProp Project now known as Project Recover, and the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) conducted six investigations resulted in the location of a site associated with the incident."



Excavations of the site were done in 2019 and 2021, at which point the remains of Di Petta and others on the plane were recovered, and ultimately identified in Hawaii by dental remains and DNA analysis.

Months later back in New Jersey, Belleville Post 105 Family provided the color guard, with members of the American Legion Post 70 Family of Nutley and VFW

Post 493 coordinating all veterans at the event alongside the Township's Military and Veteran Affairs Bureau. Reported by the Patch of Nutley, Bureau Director Daniel Jacoby stated, "I'm proud of Nutley for honoring this hero and giving him the welcoming home he deserved."

In a huge funeral procession of police and fireman from throughout the area, the sailor along with his family passed under a giant American Flag hoisted over the road by a Nutley Fire Department ladder truck. They then paused for a moment in front of the war memorial, where the color guard called 'Present Arms!' and Nutley High School graduate Isabella Bonilla, who is attending the University of New Haven, Connecticut in the fall, played "Taps."

WWII paratrooper famous for bringing beer to wounded troops dies at 98

Claire Barrett, [Armytimes.com](https://www.armytimes.com) | August 3, 2023



Vincent Speranza.

Bernardo Fuller/Army

Vincent Speranza, the American paratrooper who became known as the soldier who doled out beer to his wounded comrades during the Battle of the Bulge, died Wednesday at the age of 98, the [18th Airborne Corps announced on Twitter](#).

The New York native was drafted out of high school in 1943 to Company H, 501st Parachutist Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, and slotted in as an incredibly green replacement in November 1944 as the unit regrouped following the failure of Operation Market Garden earlier that fall.

Within weeks, Speranza found himself among 600,000 GIs engaged in the bitter, nearly six-week campaign against approximately 500,000 Nazis.



Speranza.

Courtesy U.S. Army Golden Knights/Vincent J. Speranza/CJ Machado

On the second day of the fierce fighting, Company H found itself surrounded, its supplies waning rapidly.

"The Germans had slipped around and they had surrounded the town and we had no place to put the wounded," Speranza told the 101st Airborne Museum in Bastogne in 2012.

The men found a bombed-out church and used it as a makeshift field hospital. Amid the chaos and carnage, Speranza heard his friend Joe Willis — who was wounded with shrapnel in both legs — begging for water.

His own canteen empty, Speranza checked a devastated tavern close by and found, to his delight, a working beer tap. Filling his helmet, which also served as his foxhole toilet, Speranza returned to the field hospital and gave Willis and other wounded soldiers the cold brew.

"I was like an old cow you know, feeding everybody with the beer," Speranza cheekily recounted.

The helmet soon ran dry, so Speranza made another run but soon found his exit blocked by the regimental surgeon.

“What the hell are you doing, soldier?” groused the major.

”Giving aid and comfort to the wounded,” came Speranza’s insolent reply.

“He goes, ‘You stupid bastard, don’t you know I have chest cases and stomach cases in there? You give them beer you’ll kill them.’”

Speranza quickly placed the helmet back on his head, the vestiges of beer leaking down his cheeks as he ran back to his foxhole. Speranza went on to survive Bastogne and the war, but upon returning home the former paratrooper largely attempted avoiding the memories of his service, becoming a history teacher and a father in the years that followed.

Unbeknownst to him, however, the private’s act of kindness on December 17, 1944, became the stuff of legend in the town of Bastogne. Brasserie Lamborelle, a brewery in Bastogne, even created Airborne Beer that was served in helmet-shaped ceramic bowls to commemorate the paratrooper’s beer-carrying mission, Speranza’s VA biography said.

Incredibly, Speranza did not become aware of his fame until 2009, when he returned to the once-besieged town for the first time since the war.

“After being a machine gunner at the Battle of the Bulge, winning a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star and (spending) two decades as a public school teacher, Airborne Beer is what I’m famous for,” Speranza told Stars and Stripes.

In subsequent years, Speranza traveled across the U.S. and Europe, recounting his wartime stories to soldiers and veterans alike — even going viral in 2016 for his rendition of “Blood on the Risers” at the Frederick Army Air Field in Oklahoma.

This past March, the 98-year-old veteran skydived as part of a ceremony commemorating WWII paratroopers.

“Jumping is the most fantastic thing in the world,” he told Staten Island Live. “The last jump I made was in 1945, and when I reached about age 80, I started training for another jump. I said, ‘I’m going to be gone soon, and I gotta just do it one more time.’”



DAVID MENNEL
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER
CENTRAL REGION
2022 – 2023

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING

Third Thursday of Each Month
8:00 p.m. Eastern Time
(720) 527-5854 | 202 4742#



ERNIE LABERGE
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER
EASTERN REGION
2022 – 2023

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING

Fourth Tuesday of Each Month
7:00 p.m. Eastern Time
(605) 313-4388 | 346 8542#



MICHAEL KIRSCHNER
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER
MIDWEST REGION
2022 – 2023

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING

First Tuesday of Each Month
7:00 p.m. Mountain Time
(605) 313-5379 | 830 520



RON ROBERTS
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER
SOUTHERN REGION
2022 – 2023

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING

Second Tuesday of Each Month
7:00 p.m. Central
(945) 218-0044 | 472 0682



JACK YOUNGS
NATIONAL VICE-COMMANDER
WESTERN REGION
2022 – 2023

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING

Fourth Wednesday of Each Month
7:00 p.m. Mountain Time
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 847 2013 6661 | 697 464

Gentlemen,

We are only 374 members short of hitting an all-time high for the Sons of The American Legion. Let's all be a part of this great honor and continue to do our part and get out there and bring our Brothers back home. Let's pull this off before National Convention.

This Region has not let us down at all this year. We have come back with a willingness and desire to excel which is second to none.

Thank you for all of your valiant efforts with this incredible and remarkable year. If it wasn't for "ALL OF YOU" we wouldn't be here right now.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE THIS YEAR BY THE WESTERN REGION ARE TRULY WHAT BEING A TEAM REALLY MEANS.

Thank you for all you do for God and Country. May God bless you, your families, the SAL, and the United States of America.

Purpose is why we journey; passion is the flame that lights the way.

BE THE ONE

If you're a veteran in crisis or concerned about one, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive 24/7 confidential support. Dial 988 then Press 1, chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat or text 838255.

Listen to Be the One

[Cameran Richardson](#) | August 2, 2023

If you could save the life of a veteran by doing one thing, what would it be?

"Listening. People want to be heard and validated," said Jim Talaska, Department of Illinois membership director, to attendees of the National Membership Workshop in Indianapolis Friday, July 28. "That veteran that is attempting or thinking about suicide wants to be heard. You've got to show them that you care about them."

Talaska said that if you ask a veteran, who you know is going through a hard time, how they are and they

say fine, "don't take that at face value. Press a little bit. Offer the open door. 'Hey, I understand you might be going through some stuff. I'm just letting you know that I'm here. Here's my phone number; let's go for a cup of coffee. Help me out. Talk to me. I'm not a mental health professional, but I'll find you help. I can make phone calls; I can figure it out.' You have to be the advocate."



Department of Illinois Membership Director Jim Talaska presents on Be the One at the 2023 National Membership Workshop in Indianapolis.

The American Legion's Be the One suicide prevention initiative is aimed destigmatizing the need for veterans to ask for help. "It takes courage and strength of a warrior to ask for help," Talaska said of the Department of Veteran Affairs slogan. "There's nobody sitting in this room that will willingly ask for help because we want to do it ourselves. That's what we're trained for. It takes strength and courage to reach out and ask for help."

The Be the One initiative is also about changing the narrative – instead of talking about the number of veteran suicides, act to save lives. Be the One to:

- Listen when a veteran needs to talk.
- Reach out when a veteran is struggling.
- Ask for help when you need it.

The road to ending veteran suicide starts by "saving one life," Talaska said. "I had a veteran that I was dealing with that was coping, was kind of doing OK. He had a dog that was his whole life. The dog was 13; the dog passed away. That was his whole world and he had nothing left to live for. Until we got him some help and showed him that he had something else to live for, he had something else to offer."

Talaska provided the following tips to help Be the One.

Listen for nonverbal signs:

- Putting personal affairs in order outside normal times.
- Engaging in self-destructive behavior.
- Planning to “get away” alone with no return plans.
- Stops normal socializing activities.
- Unexplained personality changes.

Listen to what might be said:

- I’m tired.
- I’m exhausted.
- It would be better if I wasn’t here.
- I’m going to kill myself.
- I’d rather be dead.
- No one would miss me.

Find help:

- Connect veterans with resources.
- Stay with the veteran until they are connected to help.
- Follow up with the veteran.

Reach out:

- We are family, I am here with you. And stay with the veteran until they are connected to help. “When you’re talking to that veteran, that’s my family, and I want to protect them just like I would my child,” Talaska said. “Because if I don’t, I’m not helping them. It’s one thing to take them to the hospital and say I did what I needed to do and walk away. Your job isn’t done because you wouldn’t do that to your family. Don’t do it to anybody else.”
- Ask what is something we can look forward to? “Maybe that person likes to hunt, likes to fish ... whatever it is, give them a reason to want to look toward the future. Give them a purpose. What is it that we can do?”
- Say to the veteran, “I may not be able to understand everything right now, but we can work through this. We can figure this out, together. You’re not in this by yourself.”

Ask the hard questions:

- Are you thinking about killing yourself?
- Are you considering suicide?

“When we talk about Be the One, and we talk about it’s personal, I’m not a mental health person, but you

need to be the one to say, ‘look, I know you’re going through a rough time, do me a favor. Give me 15 minutes, give me a half hour. I’m going to get you help. Give me one more day. Just hang on; give me a little bit more time. And we can work through this.’ You have to be the advocate.”

Talaska encouraged those who encounter a veteran in crisis, especially one who says they are worthless or that no one cares if they are here, to say the well-known Dr. Seuss quote, “To the world you may be one person; but to one person you may be the world.’ That is going to make them stop and think, maybe somebody really does care that I’m here still.”



NATIONAL COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Advisory Committee

Joe Mayne (MN), Chairman

Americanism Commission

Chris Casey (NE), Chairman

Fourth Thursday of Bi-monthly
7:30 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 956 9846 2868 | 840 830
(877) 853-5257



As of August 4, 2023,
697,318
flags have been placed
and reported to
honor our veterans
since September 1, 2022

Departments: be recognized for your Scouting program

The American Legion | August 1, 2023

The American Legion National Americanism Commission has presented the Frank N. Belgrano Jr. Trophy since 1936 to departments that have rendered the most outstanding support for Scouting. This period of support is annually from Aug. 1 to July 31.

The award honors 1934-1935 Past National Commander Frank N. Belgrano Jr. of California. It’s based on the number of troops organized, strength of existing troops and general welfare of the Scout movement under American Legion sponsorship within the department, based on written reports with

substantiating evidence submitted to National Headquarters. The 2022 Americanism By-the-Numbers report highlighted that there were 2,099 Scouting units chartered by Legion Family across the nation, involving 36,359 young people and 19,279 adult leaders.



The Frank N. Belgrano, Jr Trophy is awarded annually to the department which has rendered the most outstanding support to the program of the Boy Scouts of America.

P.M. Bruner Photography,
San Francisco, CA.

See past recipients of the award in the [Trophies, Awards and Ceremonials Manual](#).

Departments that want to be considered for the award are required to submit a report with a narrative description of their department's efforts and accomplishments. The design and length of the narrative is your decision; however, the selection committee wants to see something other than statistical information to consider when they determine the winner.

Reports and narratives must be received by Aug. 10. Submit material by mail or email:

The American Legion
Attn: Americanism Division-Scouting
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206
americanism@legion.org

Century Committee CENTCOM

Jeff Vrabel, Sr. (OH), Chairman

Second Thursday of Each Month

7:00 p.m. Eastern Time | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 974 1352 0429 | 473 385

(877) 853-5257

Surveys are being emailed to all detachments and to the National Executive Committee to gather information to be used in the Century Committee's Strategic Plan. If you have not received your yet, rest assured it's on the way.

With the 2025 National Convention just a few short weeks away, this month's CENTCOM meeting scheduled for August 10, 2023 is being canceled. Meetings

will resume in September at the regularly scheduled time. Have an awesome Convention!

Child Welfare Foundation Committee

Mark Nave (PA), Chairman

Third Wednesday of Each Month

8:00 p.m. Eastern Time | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 989 9129 8443 | 967 563

(877) 853-5257

Children & Youth Committee

James A. Noble (NJ), Chairman

Second Wednesday of Each Month

7:30 p.m. Eastern Time | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 934 1509 0014 | 403 800

(877) 853-5257

Greetings Fellow S.A.L. Members,

With the National Convention upon us in Charlotte NC. the National Children & Youth Committee has been working very hard all year for our many programs and completing our two goals.

1. The National Children and Youth Academy updates: the Academy will include a Power Point presentation of the 10 Ideals and the 5-Star programs. The attendees will be mentored and tested to compete one of the programs. Once completed, each of the graduates will be presented a certificate of completion along with either the 10 Ideals or Five-Star medal on the National Convention stage.

We have once again extended an invitation to the American Legion Auxiliary Junior Members to attend the Academy, the same as last year.

We have ordered National Children and Youth Academy T-shirts; these will be available for sale, outside of convention hall. We will also hold a raffle for a set of Corn Hole games: one side will have the Sons of The American Legion Logo and the S.A.L. Brand will be on the other board. All proceeds will be going towards National Commander Chris Calton's project for the Veterans and Childrens Foundation.

One of our goals has gained momentum! Several Detachments have either reported an interest or have started a Children & Youth Academy on their Detachment level; to date, the Detachment of Nebraska has already held their first academy. All

Detachments were advised that a lot of information is available on line as well as through the National Children and Youth committee.

2. Veterans and Childrens Foundation. A letter was generated to raise awareness and donations towards the Veterans and Childrens Foundation. This letter has been emailed out to all of the Detachment Adjutants and National Vice-Commanders, as well as the editor of the *Round-Up* newsletter.

We will have a video presentation from last year's Academy class, along with other submitted pictures of our younger members participating in Legion events and programs. This video will be shown at our national convention, before our final committee report.

Finance Commission

William G. Hill (MD), Chairman

8:00 p.m. Eastern Time | [Join Zoom meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 957 1342 7326 | 44846

(877) 853-5257

Internal Affairs Commission

William Clancy, III (NY), Chairman

First Thursday of Each Month

6:00 p.m. Eastern Time | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 917 1243 8217 | 914 458

(877) 853-5257

Legislative Commission

Thomas G. Deal (MD), Chairman

Third Thursday of ODD Months

7:30 p.m. Eastern Time | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 991 2070 0860 | 092 260

(877) 853-5257

Member Training and Development Committee

Mike Monserud (IA), Chairman

First Monday of Each Month

8:00 p.m. Eastern | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 918 2414 1981 | 777 490

(877) 853-5258

Membership Committee

Thom Skelley (TX), Chairman

Third Tuesday of Each Month

8:00 p.m. Eastern Time

(605) 472-5756 | 771 7294

The current SAL membership report can be accessed on the national website at www.legion.org/membership/standings.

SAL Online Renewal - members can login and renew direct via www.myLegion.org or quick renew by clicking here [SAL Online Renewal](#).

SAL New Member Kit is now online and ready for purchase. [New Member Kit \(SAL\) - American Legion Flag & Emblem](#).

Additional membership information appears later in this edition.

[How to use the Online Transmittal Process](#)

18 Detachments and
the West Region over 105%
37 Detachments and the East, South,
Central, and Midwest over 100%
374 members away from an
ALL TIME HIGH!!

**RECRUIT-RENEW-
REINSTATE** because...
**EVERY MEMBER
MATTERS**

National Convention Committee

Christopher Byrd (NC), Chairman

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 961 5391 3982 | 690 337

(877) 853-5257

National Executive Committee Liaison Committee

Jim Stewart (NV), Chairman

National Vice-Commander Selection Committee

James Hartman (MD), Co-Chairman

David Stephens (IN), Co-Chairman

Public and Media Communications Commission

Kevin Chaplin (VA), Chairman

Fourth Tuesday of Each Month

8:00 p.m. Eastern Time | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 963 1528 2340 | 075 079
(877) 853-5257

If you would like to view the **Digital Dispatch** content visit www.legion.org/dispatch or you can subscribe to the monthly Digital Dispatch newsletter by visiting www.legion.org/newsletters, click on “Dispatch” where you will be directed to www.myLegion.org where members will sign in to subscribe. For questions about Dispatch stories, email Dispatch@legion.org.



Veterans in trucking, the Air Force’s ‘Silent Warriors’ and more in August magazine

The American Legion | August 1, 2023

The August issue of *The American Legion Magazine* is now online, with features on veterans transitioning to successful careers in trucking, the quiet contributions of the U.S. Air Force Security Service and more. The clickable digi-mag is available through MyLegion.org.

- This month’s cover story by Laura Edwards profiles servicemembers and veterans who are finding the commercial trucking industry to be a great fit for their career and personal goals – a message that bolsters The American Legion’s efforts to fast-track qualified veterans into specialized careers where military experience can be applied toward licenses and credentials. “I always enjoyed driving trucks and stuff,” says Army veteran Brandy Ballay of Glenn Heights, Texas. “I figured, why not try it? ... (As a driver) you’re kind of your own boss out there.”
- In “Silent Warriors,” Ken Olsen talks with a group of former Air Force signals intelligence specialists, whose vital contributions to national security have largely gone unnoticed and unacknowledged. “I think some of the things I went through are still highly classified and always will be,” says David Husby, a member of American Legion Post 98 in Cumberland, Wis., who served on the ground and in the air in Vietnam. “And I just think nobody has to know what we did. You certainly don’t want your enemy to know.”
- The numbers are in, and The American Legion’s VA appeals and claims teams are on pace for a

record year. More than four months from the end of fiscal 2023, the Legion’s national staff representatives had processed 10,641 appeals from veterans who had disputed claims from VA and achieved \$58.3 million in disability benefits. Meanwhile, the amount in disability compensation secured by 3,000 American Legion-accredited service officers jumped \$1.5 billion in 2022, with a greater increase expected in 2023 due to the PACT Act.

- Registration is open through Aug. 9 for this year’s [American Legion Legacy Run](#), which will travel through eight states on the way to the 104th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C. Included is a stop at American Legion Post 396 in Garden City, Mich., where the first Legion Riders chapter was founded 30 years ago. “If you’re a motorcycle enthusiast, this is the Run you want to be on,” Legacy Run Road Captain Mark Clark says. “This is the one people are going to talk about for a long time.”
- Citing a recent nationwide Medicare survey of hospital patients in which VA medical centers outperform non-VA facilities by wide margins, National Commander Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola concludes that VA is a system worth celebrating. “The American Legion has spent decades fighting for adequate funding, quality and reasonable access for veterans in an ever-changing medical landscape,” he writes. “At times, we had to fight for the very existence of VA as we know it. It’s a good thing we did.”

Members can click [here](#) to access the digital magazine.

To join The American Legion and enjoy monthly digital issues of *The American Legion Magazine*, visit legion.org/join.

Subcommittee on Resolutions

Ned Fox (CA), Chairman

Subcommittee on National Appointments

Donald Allisot, Jr. (ME), Chairman

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission

Seth A. Rippe (NE), Chairman

Fourth Monday of Each Month

8:00 p.m. Eastern Time | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 941 4100 3972 | 378 079
(646) 931-3860

VA mobile medical units boost access to care for homeless veterans

The American Legion | August 3, 2023

Homeless veterans across the country will have increased access to VA health care.

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced Aug. 3 that it will release 25 mobile medical units across the country over the next six months to provide homeless and at-risk veterans the health care and support they need. The first mobile medical unit is onsite at the VA Orlando Healthcare System. See a schedule for the release of the mobile medical units [here](#).



The mobile medical units are vans or trucks that give veterans a private space to meet with medical providers, including mental health clinicians, social workers and other staff that provide primary care. Care provided also includes women's health, audiology, laboratory, and telehealth.

“Veterans experiencing homelessness face a variety of barriers to accessing health care, including a lack of transportation,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough in a press release. “With these new mobile medical units, homeless and at-risk veterans don’t have to visit VA hospitals — we come right to them.”

According to a press release, in 2022, [VA housed more than 40,000 formerly homeless veterans](#), prevented more than 17,700 veterans and their families from falling into homelessness, and helped nearly 191,700 additional veteran families who were experiencing financial difficulties keep their homes or avoid foreclosure. Veterans experiencing homelessness has fallen by 11% since early 2020, thanks in part to these

efforts. For 2023, VA has set a goal to house at least 38,000 veterans.

The mobile medical units are made possible by the VA’s [Homeless Patient Aligned Care Teams](#), whose mission is to address the unique challenges homeless veterans face with accessing and engaging in health care. Along with the mobile medical units, VA has 83 [Mobile Vet Centers](#) around the country to provide eligible veterans with counseling and other outreach services who live in rural areas far from a VA medical facility.

Veterans Employment & Education Commission

Jim Coates (NY), Chairman

Third Wednesday of Each Month

8:00 p.m. Eastern Time | [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 935 4405 3884 | 786 114
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SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION



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AMERICAN
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Don Gentile Squadron 532
Columbus, Ohio



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AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS



Facebook photo

Wisconsin Legion Riders ride to provide veterans ‘a little bit of peace and happiness’

The American Legion | August 2, 2023

Since 1925, [Camp American Legion](#) in Lake Tomahawk, Wis., has provided a respite for the state’s honorably discharged veterans and their spouse or caregiver and immediate dependent-age children, to active-duty military personnel and their families, and to the families of U.S. servicemembers and National Guardsmen killed while on active duty overseas.

Completely free of charge, the 300-acre camp offers boating, fishing, hiking, camaraderie, and a chance to enjoy Wisconsin’s beautiful Northwoods between Little Lake Tomahawk and Big Carr Lake. Across the state, American Legion posts have provided support for Camp American Legion’s mission. And so has the American Legion Riders Association of Wisconsin.

For years, Legion Riders from across Wisconsin have come together for a fall fundraising ride that culminates with a final overnight stop at Camp American Legion in late September. And for two of the past three years, the Riders have staged a summer ride

directly benefitting the camp, the most recent “Back to Basics” ride taking place July 17-19.

Corey Doehrmann, Wisconsin’s state ALR director and the ride’s coordinator, said approximately 45 people participated in the “Back to Basics” ride, which traversed around 680 miles and made stops at 13 American Legion posts and Soldiers Walk Memorial Park in Arcadia, with a drive through the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Cemetery.

Wisconsin’s American Legion Riders have staged eight state rides, the first five benefitting The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund and one other raising money for The Highground Veterans Memorial Park in Clark County, Wis.

The first ride for Camp American Legion went to purchasing a new cabin, while this year the money raised – \$31,500 so far, with more coming in – is dedicated to the interior renovation of the camp’s recreation building.

“We started planning in August of last year,” said Doehrmann, who also serves as the District 2 ALR director and is a member of both The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion at Post 486 in Jackson. “The state ride last year was in June. We took about two to three weeks off, and then we started right back in as a committee, meeting and talking and trying to figure out where we wanted to go, what we wanted to raise money for. We’ve already started talking about next year, and we’ll meet probably every other week for six months, and then the pace increases.”

Doehrmann said the desire to fundraise for Camp American Legion is based on a few different things. “(It’s) the peace and the tranquility and the beauty and everything about the Northwoods experience,” he said. “But then I think what seals the deal is when you think about the fact they’re serving veterans and their families. The veteran has to get there. That’s their only expense for the entire week that they’re there.”

“So, when you combine that experience that you know they’re going to feel supported, with the fact that it’s at no expense to them, there’s nothing better than doing that for a veteran.”

Doehrmann said he’s visited Camp American Legion many times and believes it can make a big impact on a veteran who may be struggling.

“You get up, you get your coffee in the morning and go out and watch the steam roll off the lake ... it’s almost

like riding a motorcycle the peace that you can feel,” he said. “And when I think about the struggles that a lot of our veterans have, there’s nothing better than giving them that little bit of peace. It may not last forever, but it’s a little bit of happiness and peace that hopefully will sustain them for a while.”

Sports



Palou, Chip Ganassi Racing look to move closer to championship in Nashville

The American Legion | August 2, 2023

Chip Ganassi Racing (CGR) will attempt to continue its dominance this weekend in downtown Nashville – and in the NTT INDYCAR SERIES – during the Big Machine Music City Grand Prix street race. And among CGR’s drivers in the field will be INDYCAR points leader Alex Palou, again behind the wheel in the No. 10 American Legion Honda featuring the Legion’s [Be the One](#) message.

Both Nashville street races have been won by CGR drivers – Marcus Ericsson in 2021 and Scott Dixon in 2022. Palou had a third-place finish last year and will look to extend his remarkable consistency he’s exhibited this season in building an 80-point series lead over second-place Josef Newgarden.

In 2023, Palou has finished in the top 10 in all 12 races, with 10 top fives, seven top threes, and four wins. A fifth win will make him the first CGR driver to win five races in one season since 2009. Palou leads INDYCAR in average finishing position (3.5), average starting position (5.5) and podium appearances. Palou struggled during qualifying in the most recent Iowa Speedway doubleheader July 22-23 but still managed a third-place finish in the Sunday race.

“Iowa wasn’t the best of weekends, but we got a podium in the No. 10 American Legion Honda,” Palou said via CGR media. “We kept improving every session throughout the weekend and now I am very

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families



**Vickie Koutz, National President
The American Legion Auxiliary**

excited for Nashville. We know it is going to be tough, but Chip Ganassi Racing has managed to get wins in both years, so hopefully we can make it three in a row. We've had a ton of speed there and it will be about surviving to get to victory lane on Sunday. It is exciting to get to this stretch of the championship run."

Ericsson and CGR teammate Marcus Armstrong also will both carry American Legion branding this weekend. Driving the No. 8 Huski Ice Spritz Honda, Ericsson currently sits in fourth place in the INDYCAR points standings, just 27 points out of third place behind Dixon. Ericsson has won three street course races since coming to Chip Ganassi Racing in 2020; no other driver has won more street races during that span.

"I'm excited for Nashville, where I have good memories having won the race two years ago in the first-ever Music City Grand Prix," Ericsson said. "It is one of the highlights of my career so far. For us, going back to a street course is exciting. We know we have a very strong package on street courses, and I feel very comfortable in those races myself. We're very much in a good position for the championship, and we need to have another strong weekend for the No. 8 team and for Chip Ganassi Racing."

Armstrong looks to continue his strong rookie season in his debut in the Music City Grand Prix driving the No. 11 Ridgeline Lubricants Honda. Armstrong leads the INDYCAR rookie standings despite only racing on the road and street courses, recording an average finish of 8.5 on the latter – fourth-best in INDYCAR this season. He's coming off a personal-best seventh-place finish in the Honda Indy Toronto race July 16.

"Nashville is a fantastic city, and it will be quite the vibe racing downtown," Armstrong said. "It will be tough, but I think this layout will serve our team well and we've been consistently fast on street circuits. Nashville has been one of the races that has been circled on the calendar for me. It's going to be a good one and I can't wait to show what we've learned in previous street tracks and attack it head-on. It will be bumpy and difficult, just like Toronto and Detroit, which are two circuits we've done well on. There's no reason why we can't go out there and do a great job in Nashville."

Also this weekend, CGR developmental driver Kyffin Simpson will compete in the INDY NXT by Firestone Motor City Grand Prix while carrying American Legion branding. Simpson currently sits in ninth place in the series points race, with four top-10 finishes and two podium appearances.

The 80-lap, 168-mile Big Machine Music City Grand Prix runs through downtown Nashville, running past Nissan Stadium and crossing the Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge over the Cumberland River.

Events this weekend will kick off Thursday night during the free FanFest on Broadway and will include the Pit Stop Challenge featuring six NTT INDYCAR SERIES drivers and teams as the highlight. The challenge starts at 6 p.m. local time and is co-sponsored by The American Legion, Pennzoil, and Hy-Vee.

And through its partnership with INDYCAR as an official charity of the racing series, The American Legion will select veterans to serve as honorary pit crew members for the six participating INDYCAR teams. The honorary pit crew member from the winning team will be rewarded with four three-day reserved grandstand tickets and an exclusive invitation to the Champions Party. Alongside the honorary pit crew roles, a Legionnaire will take on the role of Honorary Starter for the event.

This weekend's broadcast schedule (all times ET):

- Friday, Aug. 4 – NTT INDYCAR SERIES Practice 1, 4-5:15 p.m. (Peacock).
- Saturday, Aug. 5 – NTT INDYCAR SERIES Practice 2, 11:40 a.m.-12:40 p.m.; NTT INDYCAR SERIES qualifications, 2:45-4:15 p.m. (both Peacock)
- Sunday, Aug. 6 – INDY NXT race, 10:05-11:15 a.m. (Peacock); NTT INDYCAR SERIES race, noon-3 p.m. (NBC and Peacock).

MI Baseball Championships

Reprinted from Facebook

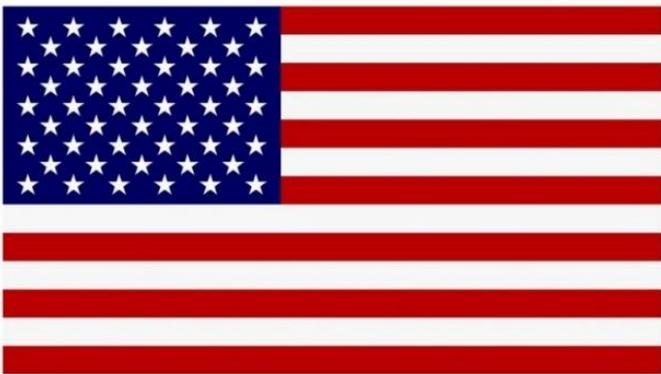
We were Blessed to have These 3 Legion Representatives, Pictured Below, as part of Our Opening Ceremonies, and for Throwing Out, the 1st Pitch, Before the Start, of Each Baseball Game, During the 2023 Michigan Class "A" State Baseball Championship, at the Don Olsen Field, in Gladstone, This Past Weekend!



Pictured, from Left to Right, Includes: Dennis Larson, 5th Zone of Michigan Commander Squadron # 50 in Iron Mountain, Sons of the American Legion John Picard, Membership Chairman, & Honor Guard, from August Mattson American Legion Post # 71 in Gladstone Gary Lane, Past 5th Zone Legion and Area and Vice Commander of Michigan and Duel Sons Past Commander of Squadron # 21 Iron River/Stambaugh of the American Legion. Current Member from Squad and Post # 11, Wakefield, MI.

Other, Legion Representatives, who Participated, but Not Pictured, Includes: Steven Viau, Delta County Commissioner and Historian and Adjutant for August Mattson Sons of the American Legion Squadron #71 in Gladstone Honor Guard from August Mattson American Legion Post # 71 in Gladstone, Don Couillard, Sons Commander Randy Bruntjens, Chaplin, George Maciejewski, John Beeman, State Commander of the Michigan Sons of the American Legion from Chelsea, MI, Don Anderson, Past Commander and Adjutant from Little Lake Squadron # 349 Sons of the American Legion, Barry Holm, Commander of August Mattson American Legion Post # 71 in Gladstone.

Thank You All So Much for Participating in Our State Baseball Championship & Thank You for Your Great Service to Our Country!



Sons of The American Legion Membership Application

Detachment of _____ Squadron No. _____ Birth Date _____ Date _____

Name _____ (First) _____ (Initial) _____ (Last) Recruited by _____ (Initial) _____ (Last)

Address _____ (Street) _____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip)

E-mail Address _____ Telephone _____

Veteran through whom eligibility is established _____

(a) Above is a member in good standing of Post No. _____, Dept. of _____

OR (b) Above is a deceased veteran who served honorably from _____ to _____

(c) Relationship of Applicant to Veteran _____

I hereby subscribe to the Constitution of the Sons of The American Legion, apply for membership, and transmit \$ _____ as annual membership dues.

Signed _____ (By Applicant or Parent)

Eligibility certified by _____ (Post Adjutant) _____

00-001(2013)

RECEIPT

Date _____

Received of _____

\$ _____ in payment of dues for 20 _____ in

Squadron _____, Detachment of _____

By _____

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By Jeff Vrabel, Sr.

Squadron Everlasting

to have a member's information listed here, please send to jeffvrabelsr@gmail.com

Lester R. Grummons



ONEONTA - Lester "Les" Raymond Grummons, 80, of Oneonta, passed away peacefully on July 27, 2023, at UHS Wilson Medical Center, Johnson City, with his family at his bedside.

Born in Sayre, Pennsylvania, on June 16, 1943, to Lester D. And Mary (Stella) Grummons, he married Sharon A. Allen on June 29, 1964, in Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Vestal. Sharon passed away on Oct. 19, 2004. He graduated from Owego Free Academy, Class of 1961. He studied at SUNY Broome and graduated from Simmons School of Mortuary Science in Syracuse.

After working in funeral service in the Oneonta and Binghamton areas, Les left the profession to pursue a career with IBM, where he became a senior accountant in the Federal Systems Division from 1966 to 1970. Because of his desire to care for grieving families, he decided to return to funeral service and purchased the Rothery-Murphy Funeral Home in Oneonta. Les had a passion for flying, and in 1972, Les along with his partner, Joseph Pondolfino, purchased a Cessna 206, and established an air hearse business (Aero Coach). Les was a faithful communicant of St. Mary's Church where he was an usher, served on the Mt. Calvary Cemetery Committee and Parish Counsel.

He was an honorary life member of the Knights of Columbus, third and fourth degree; Oneonta Sons of the American Legion, where he served as local Detachment Commander, District and State Commander and National Chaplain; Oneonta Rotary, BPOE 1312; Fraternal Order of the Eagles; Loyal Order of the Moose; Sixth Ward Athletic Club; and Oneonta Country Club. Les was a member of the Leatherstocking Funeral Directors Association, National Funeral Directors and the New York State Funeral Directors Association, where he served in all executive offices and was president from 1983 to 1984. He still served on several state committees.

In 1976, Les was elected to the Common Council and served four years as alderman for the Eighth Ward. He also served on the City of Oneonta Housing Authority and was involved in the planning and construction of Nader Towers and Lettis Apartments. In 2018, Mayor Gary Herzig appointed him to the City of Oneonta Airport Commission. In 2019 Les was honored by the Otsego County Chamber of Commerce as Citizen of the Year. He served on the operations board of Helios Care for 13 years, and was elected chairman for three consecutive years. He also served on the Helios Care Foundation Board for which he was chairman.

Les enjoyed his friends at the former Neptune Diner, and Bella Michaels, where he had a special seat of his own at the bar. He is survived by his three children, Mary-Michelle (Geoffrey) Brown, Seattle, Washington, Ann Marie Grummons of Oneonta, and Michael Allen Grummons (Joe Grimaldi) of Norwalk, Connecticut; two granddaughters, Payton (Weston) Rose, Hillsborough, North Carolina and Chandler (Darren) Yorke, Raleigh, North Carolina; brother, Leonard (Donna) Schmidt of Owego; brother-in-law, Gary Reardon of Valois; sister-in-law, Valerie Allen of Virginia Beach; and several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Friends are invited to greet the family from 3 to 8 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 6, at the Lester R. Grummons Funeral Home, 14 Grand St., Oneonta. A Funeral Mass will take place at 10 a.m., Monday, Aug. 7, at St. Mary's Church, 39 Walnut Street, Oneonta.

Les will be laid to rest with his wife Sharon in Mt. Calvary Cemetery, Emmons.

The family extends special thanks to the physicians, nurses, care providers, and friends of Les who took care of him and checked in on him during his time of illness. A special thank you goes to Les's devoted friend, Ingrid Hofbauer.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Helios Care, 297 River Street Service Road, Oneonta, NY 13820.

Arrangements are by the Lester R. Grummons Funeral Home, Oneonta.

Fond memories and expressions of sympathy may be shared at www.grummonsfuneralhome.com for the Grummons family.

David M. Crawford Sr.



David M. Crawford, Sr., age 69, lifelong Great Bend, Kan. resident, passed away on Tuesday afternoon, July 25, 2023 at Wesley Medical Center in Wichita, Kan. David was born on Sept. 4, 1953 at Great Bend, Kan. to Melva Jean and Andrew J. Crawford Sr., and graduated from Great Bend High School. He was united in marriage to Patricia Chain on Aug. 8, 2007 at Newkirk, Okla. David was self-employed as an appliance technician for many years. He was of the Christian faith and was a former member of the Sidewinders, a member of American Legion Riders Post #180 of Great Bend, a member of the Sons of the American Legion, and Founder of High On Life Recovery Center with over 40 years in recovery. David loved motorcycles and recovery.

Survivors include his wife, Patricia A. "Patty" Crawford of Great Bend, Kan.; two sons Daniel Ryan and David Crawford, Jr.; five daughters, Amanda Crawford, Tamara Dauber, Dana Burk, Michelle Laham, and Brenda Holden; 22 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren; three brothers, Andrew Crawford Jr. (and Diana), Steve (and Marcia) Crawford, and Kenneth Crawford; and three sisters, Judy Vasquez, Betty Adams, and Sue (and David) Schridde. David was preceded in death by his parents; one sister Brenda Langston; and one stepdaughter Teresa M. Dutton.

According to his wishes, cremation has been chosen and a Celebration of Life Service will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 5, 2023 at the High On Life Recovery Center, 2701 17th Street, Great Bend, Kan. with Reverend Dick Ogle officiating. The family requests that Memorial Donations be directed to the High On Life Recovery Center in Great Bend.

Funeral arrangements provided by Charter Funerals, 2115 Washington St., Great Bend, KS 67530.

William S. Thorn



William S. Thorn, 68, of East Liverpool, passed suddenly due to natural causes, Tuesday, August 1, 2023, at his residence. Born, March 16, 1955, in East Liverpool, he was the son of the late Robert Thorn and Betty Humphrey McGurren.

William was a graduate of East Liverpool High School Class of 1974. He dedicated 43 years of his life to the steel mill before retiring as Safety Coordinator from Allegheny Ludlum in Midland.

William lived a life of servitude. He was proud to serve as Past Master of East Liverpool Masonic Lodge #681, most currently serving as the treasurer and secretary. He was also a member of The Sons of the American Legion Post 121.

William will be deeply missed by the love of his life, Diane Wolfe Thorn, whom he married on October 1, 1975. Left to cherish his memory are his children, Marissa (Paul) Tucker of Huntsburg, OH, and Shaun (Sarah) Thorn of Berlin Center, OH; grandchildren Macy and Carter Tucker and William and Katelyn Thorn; siblings Robin Aikens, Kenneth (Mary) Thorn, Richard (Denise) Thorn and Rachel Krosky; mother-in-law Margaret Wolfe.

William was an accomplished and gifted craftsman who enjoyed working with his hands. He made custom pieces for his family and enjoyed creating stained glass windows. He was giving with his time and effort. He believed in the importance of helping others and his legacy will always be one of kindness and compassion. His family, especially his grandchildren, were the light of his life. William was the best "Pap Pap" he absolutely adored his grandchildren. He taught each of them about unconditional love and unwavering support. He would always attend their sporting events and school activities and loved cheering them on.

Visitation will be held Saturday, August 5, 2023, at Arner Funeral Chapel, from 2-4 PM and 6-8 PM.

2024 IS NOW
SONS OF THE

AMERICAN
LEGION
RENEW TODAY!!!



That shift has been made possible due to the extraordinary dedication of and amazing generosity shown by American Legion Riders and supporters since our very first Legacy Run in 2006. Year after year, the Riders raise the bar and set new records, which has helped make the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund self-sustaining.

I have no doubt their generosity will continue throughout this year's run and into the future.

Starting in 2024, the annual fundraising motorcycle ride will shift gears to the V&CF. The foundation funds two significant areas for The American Legion:

- Emergency grants for military families under the Legion's [Temporary Financial Assistance \(TFA\)](#) program. Military families with minor children at home can apply for the grant when they are hit with unexpected financial crises. In just the last decade, The American Legion has allocated more than \$6 million in TFA grants.
- Training for more than 3,000 accredited American Legion service officers who provide free assistance to approximately 750,000 veterans at any one time, all the time. American Legion service officers are directly responsible for veterans' disability compensation of more than \$16.3 billion per year.

While the mission of The American Legion Riders is changing, their dedication to supporting children will remain a constant.

“The Legacy Run, really, is about continuing our legacy of service to others, to our veterans and their children,” said [Riders Chairman Mark Clark](#). “So, it's really about the legacy we leave, more than it is attached to any one thing. I have always believed that the national Legacy Run should represent the fundraising priorities of our national leadership. They've come to us and asked us for help, and I think the Riders can rally behind that, and they'll be excited for the opportunity to ride for another cause, having been so successful supporting the Legacy Fund. I think they'll be excited and see another opportunity for us to do something great with the Veterans & Children Foundation.”

The Legacy Scholarship has its own legacy of sorts. Throughout the years, it has helped students like [Colton Clay of Colorado Springs, Colo.](#) “This scholarship is special because it helps honor my dad and his service and sacrifices that he's made. It's awesome that I'm able to represent him going forward through this scholarship,” says Colton, the son of retired Army Lt. Col. Christopher Clay, an American Legion member.



Continuing a legacy of service

August 2, 2023

Dear American Legion Family members and friends,

The American Legion Riders are at a crossroads in their inspiring annual fundraising drive.

After this year's Legacy Run, we expect the overall total raised by the Riders to exceed \$18 million for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship, including a record \$1.3 million last year. Thanks to the commitment of the Riders and our Legion Family, the scholarship fund has reached a point where it can sustain itself through the foreseeable future. This year's Legacy Run will be the final one in direct support of the scholarship that has provided life-changing funding for hundreds of college students who lost a parent or who is the child of a veteran who received a 50% or greater Department of Veteran Affairs service-connected disability rating since 9/11.

I am so pleased that American Legion Riders will continue to support children in need. As they say, “We ride for the kids.”

Let's be clear that our commitment to fallen and disabled veterans has not changed. We are simply shifting resources to focus on another great cause, the [Veterans & Children Foundation \(V&CF\)](#).

Chairman Clark is excited not just for the future but the final drive for the Legacy Scholarship. In fact, he has set a goal to break \$1.5 million in donations during this year's campaign.



Let's all rally behind the Riders. You can [make a donation](#) to support this year's ride, [register to join the Legacy Run](#) or if you live along the route, come out and cheer them on.

Vincent J. "Jim" Troiola, National Commander
The American Legion



What to eat, do and experience in Charlotte

[Henry Howard](#) | July 24, 2023

The American Legion National Convention returns this year to Charlotte, N.C., for the third time since 2002. Whether convention attendees will be visiting the Queen City again or for the first time, there are plenty of options for entertainment, food and more. Among the highlights:

C — Chow down. Various types of barbecue are found in North Carolina via the state's diverse population. One style to try in Charlotte is Eastern-style,

characterized by using every part of the hog. Eastern-style sauce is vinegar- and pepper-based, with no tomato.

H — Honor NASCAR's history. Connected to the Charlotte Convention Center is the [NASCAR Hall of Fame](#). The venue is celebrating NASCAR's 75th anniversary with special features, in addition to its regular exhibits featuring drivers, cars and teams.

A — Activate your skills. Wind down from a busy day by challenging friends at one of the many places to test your playing skills. Among them: indoor miniature golf, bowling alleys with nontraditional menus, and the [Super Abari Game Bar](#) (arcade games).

R — [Ride the rails](#). The 26-station, 19.3-mile LYNX Blue Line light rail is a good way to get from Uptown to nearby neighborhoods in Charlotte. It also connects to the CityLYNX Gold Line. The 4-mile-long streetcar line has 17 stops and connects the Historic West End through Center City Charlotte to the Elizabeth neighborhood.

L — Lose your illusion. The [Museum of Illusions](#) offers a mind-bending experience of optical illusions. (Note: The museum is wheelchair-accessible, but some rooms have slanted floors and are not accessible.)

O — Order different meals. [The Market at 7th Street](#) offers eclectic options for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The nonprofit culinary and retail incubator helps entrepreneurs and minority businesses grow while promoting the region's varied food and artisans.

T — Take in history. The [Charlotte Regional History Consortium](#) offers a wealth of resources, museums and other opportunities to learn about the region's history dating back centuries.

T — Tour the city. Horse carriage rides offer a laid-back, relaxed tour of the city. A plethora of options are available.

E — Explore the area. The [NoDa \(North Davidson\) neighborhood](#) offers a vibrant mix of food, drinks, and artists. Take a mural tour through the city's art district.

For more details about convention-related events, resources and more, visit [legion.org/convention](#).

FAMILY continued from page 1

It's like special," said an 11-year-old Abigail back in 2017 about having a parent in the military. "They are in the military and they're serving for us.

Now, she will serve alongside her dad. It gives even more meaning to the term 'military family.'



With the Oath of Enlistment and pen to paper, Abigail Branson continues a legacy of service.

Courtesy The Branson family

"My father also served," says Col. Barb Bartch, 121st Maintenance Group Commander who also conducted the Oath of Enlistment for the Bransons on Thursday. "He was in the U.S. Army. He was my mentor and I see that same relationship. So, I think father and daughter relationships are key and to see that she actually wants to follow in his footsteps and to the point where she is joining his same career field – avionics - it's just really special."

Abigail Branson will finish her senior year of high school, participating in drill on the weekends. Then, she'll head to basic training and officially become an airman in the Ohio Air National Guard.

There's a lot that she is looking forward to in the years of service ahead.

"Deployments, travel, being in the planes and working on them, using my hands and fixing stuff," says Branson.

Hers is a commitment to service before self, just like her dad.

"When I look at my daughter today, I just could not be more proud. I'm so happy that she wants to join this unit, following my footsteps to be part of something bigger than herself," said SM Sgt. Ralph Branson.



Now, Abigail will serve alongside her dad. It gives even more meaning to the term 'military family.'

Courtesy The Branson family



U.S. Navy and Republic of Korea Navy SEALs shoot at targets during a bilateral training exercise at Silver Strand Training Complex, November 29, 2022.

U.S., allies work to deter Korean War II

Alan W. Dowd | August 4, 2023

As of July 27, the Korean War armistice has held for 70 years – thanks only to the deterrent strength and steely restraint of the U.S.-ROK alliance. The bad news is that North Korea is severely testing that restraint. The good news is that there appears to be a renewed commitment to deterrence in Seoul and Washington.

High stakes and a low bar Let's start with the bad news, which emanates from North Korea.

With its growing nuclear arsenal, spasms of missile tests and unpredictable leadership, North Korea has put South Korea, Japan, and the United States on edge. In [2022](#), Pyongyang test-fired more than 90 missiles, including 23 on a single day. Pyongyang has fired off dozens more this year, including ICBM launches in [April](#) and [July](#).

Recall that Pyongyang has a terrifying vision to turn Seoul into “a sea of fire,” “sink” Japan “into the sea,” and “reduce the U.S. mainland into ashes” – and a nuclear arsenal to make that vision a reality. Indeed, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reports that North Korea now has 30 nuclear weapons – five more than it deployed in 2022.

North Korea's conventional capabilities are almost as terrifying: 1.3 million men under arms, 4,300 tanks, 13,600 artillery pieces and rocket-launch systems, and hundreds of missiles. If war returns to the peninsula, U.S.-ROK forces [expect](#) that every third artillery round fired by North Korea will be a chemical weapon. Just 35 miles from the DMZ, Seoul would bear the brunt of

the blow. Even a short war, even a conflict contained to the peninsula, even a preemptive strike that gets “most” of Kim's nuclear, rocket and artillery capabilities would trigger, in former Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. James Dunford's estimation, “a loss of life unlike any we have experienced in our lifetimes.”

The toll from the Korean War should give us pause: 38,000 Americans, 103,000 South Koreans, 316,000 North Koreans, 422,000 Chinese and some 2 million civilians killed during three years of conventional warfare. And today, we have the specter of a mushroom cloud hanging over the sequel. The Pentagon [projects](#) more than 200,000 U.S.-ROK military casualties in the first 90 days of Korean War II.

All of this explains why the measure of success in Korea for U.S. presidents is simply getting through another day, another year, another term without another war. That's a low bar, to be sure, but it's preferable to the alternative.

Words and actions By word and deed, Seoul and Washington are taking the North Korean threat seriously.

“A nuclear attack by North Korea against the United States or its allies and partners is unacceptable, and will result in the end of whatever regime were to take such an action,” President Joe Biden bluntly declared during an April summit with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol. A post-summit [declaration](#) soberly reaffirmed that “U.S. commitment to extend deterrence to the ROK is backed by the full range of U.S. capabilities, including nuclear.”

The major byproduct of that summit was the establishment of a [Nuclear Consultative Group](#) (NCG), which includes U.S. and ROK defense and national-security officials. The NCG elevates South Korea's role in nuclear deterrence on the peninsula by enhancing information sharing, developing procedures “to enable joint execution and planning for ROK conventional support to U.S. nuclear operations in a contingency,” and establishing a “joint approach to planning for nuclear contingencies.” The NCG held its first meeting in July. The U.S.-ROK alliance goes much deeper than words and meetings. Unlike some allies, South Korea isn't free-riding on the back of America's military. South Korea fields 500,000 active-duty troops, deploys 2,300 tanks and is pouring resources into a fleet of F-35 stealth fighter-bombers. In addition, Seoul is building an aircraft carrier, fortifying, and networking its missile defenses, training alongside U.S. and Japanese forces, and investing in deterrence: South Korea is increasing defense spending by 7% annually between

2017 and 2027, while earmarking nearly 3% of GDP for defense.

The United States is doing its part as well. Some 28,500 U.S. troops are deployed in South Korea. U.S. forces are [training](#) ROK forces on a U.S.-built THAAD missile-defense system based in the central part of the country. And at Seoul's request, Washington is conducting "regular" deployments of "strategic assets to the Korean Peninsula," such as nuclear submarines and aircraft carrier strike groups (CSG). The [Nimitz](#) CSG visited South Korea in March of this year. The [Reagan](#) CSG made a port of call in South Korea in late 2022. USS *Michigan*, a nuclear-powered submarine laden with 150 cruise missiles, [docked](#) in Korea a few weeks ago – the first such deployment in six years. "Our commitment to the defense of the ROK remains ironclad," as Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin observed during a visit to South Korea earlier this year.

Going nuclear One of the reasons Washington has been so forceful – rhetorically and demonstrably – flows from Seoul hinting that it might join the nuclear club.

With North Korea spasmodically firing off missiles and simulating nuclear attacks against its southern neighbor, Yoon matter-of-factly [noted](#) in January that South Korea "could acquire our own nuclear weapons, such as deploying tactical nuclear weapons here in South Korea." It was the first time an ROK president had made such a statement, though a large majority of South Koreans ([71%](#)) support fielding an ROK nuclear deterrent.

Controlling and containing nuclear proliferation has been an enduring goal of U.S. statecraft throughout the nuclear age, especially since the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) came into force in 1968. But the free world's failure to prevent North Korea from breaching the NPT in the 1990s badly weakened the NPT. And the free world's failure in [2014](#) to defend Ukraine – which gave up its nuclear arsenal in [1994](#), in exchange for a commitment from Moscow to respect Ukraine's borders and sovereignty – further hobbled the cause of nuclear non-proliferation. Ukraine serves as an object lesson of the deterrent power of nuclear weapons – and the danger of not having them. From allies such as South Korea to enemies such as Iran, governments around the world are learning that lesson.

Through the establishment of the NCG and the deployment of "strategic assets" to the peninsula, Washington aims to deter North Korea, reassure South Korea, and shore up the NPT. But with Pyongyang adding to

its nuclear arsenal, testing more rockets, and delivering a constant barrage of threats, U.S.-ROK efforts to bolster nuclear deterrence on the peninsula may not be enough. One middle-ground solution that could deter Pyongyang and provide greater reassurance to Seoul is the re-deployment to South Korea of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons. Washington withdrew its tactical nukes from the peninsula in 1991, in a sign of goodwill and confidence-building that led to an agreement between Pyongyang and Seoul to "not test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy or use nuclear weapons." Pyongyang observed that pact for about 20 months.

Former State Department official Bennett Ramberg [argues](#) that in an era of strained defense budgets and rising instability, "reinstallation of nuclear weapons into South Korea ... would enhance deterrence" and "reassure the South Korean people."

Helping hands Shifting back to some good news, South Korea and other free world partners are deepening cooperation on a range of security issues.

New leadership in Seoul and Tokyo has opened the way for closer ROK-Japan cooperation. The two longtime U.S. allies this year resumed their security-dialogue meetings. During [meetings](#) with Austin in June, the defense ministers of South Korea and Japan pledged to stand up by the end of the year a system that will allow the three nations to share real-time data on missile launches. Maritime assets from Japan, the ROK and the United States conducted missile-defense [exercises](#) this past spring. And a U.S.-Japan-ROK flotilla held antisubmarine drills in late 2022.

With North Korea recklessly and relentlessly conducting missile tests, Japan in February took the head-turning step of purchasing 500 U.S. land-based Tomahawk cruise missiles. As the Japanese government explains, the Tomahawks give Japan "the capability to halt ballistic missile attacks within the territory of our adversaries" (code for North Korea and China). Japan's deployment of Tomahawks also happens to help South Korea by providing a kind of offshore second-strike capability – and giving North Korea something more to worry about.

Beyond the peninsula, South Korea is participating in NATO's Cyber Defense Center. The United States, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are forging the Chip4 Alliance to ensure a steady supply of semiconductor microchips to the free world. And South Korea is playing a key part in the free world's efforts to defend Europe and liberate Ukraine: Seoul is delivering hundreds of main battle tanks, howitzers and rocket

systems to Poland, and Seoul has [shipped](#) artillery shells to Ukraine via the United States and Poland and, more recently, [directly](#) to Ukraine.

In short, South Korea recognizes that there can be no free-riders in the free world – and that it has an opportunity today to give something back to the free world. Indeed, there’s an interesting symmetry on display here. Just as free-world powers from North America and Europe came to South Korea’s [assistance](#) when it was under attack in 1950, South Korea is partnering with other free-world powers from North America and Europe to assist a European nation under attack today.



Hilary Ott/The American Legion

Indiana Legion bringing in younger members while investing in gaming program

The American Legion | August 3, 2023

On July 1, it was announced that [The American Legion became the official veteran service organization of REGIMENT Gaming](#), the nation’s largest veteran gaming community.

Just a few weeks earlier, Frank Huntzinger American Legion Post 45 in Noblesville, Ind., had moved into a new facility. In that new facility is a room designated as a computer lab. And now, four gaming PCs have been installed, thanks to the combined effort of the post, REGIMENT Gaming and Paradox Customs, which custom builds gaming systems.

Post 45 Commander John Morris said the decision to purchase the components for the gaming PCs – which were delivered to the post and then assembled there – is part of a bigger strategy to bring in younger members. “In our early stages of me serving as commander, I knew we needed to start addressing something with the younger vets,” Morris said. “We went no smoking. That helps. My son and my son-in-law game. My

daughter (Post 45 Adjutant Taylor Munoz) is a (U.S. Navy) vet, and she doesn’t game as much as he does, but she still games. And I knew I wanted to put a computer lab in because once I’m not commander and I actually have some free time, I want to start opening it up to computer classes, skills development, and stuff.

“Then I was talking to (6th District Commander Judy Pearson), and she mentioned REGIMENT Gaming and what they were about. So, I reached out to (REGIMENT founder Chris Earl) through social media, and a couple of days later we ended up talking on the phone for a while. We went over what we were thinking and what he was thinking. What other posts had done.”

Morris said Post 45 had finished its move to and renovation of the new facility under-budget, which allowed it to spend \$20,000 on the PCs.

Earl went over with Morris what a typical gaming station setup was like and settled on what Morris called “top-of-the-line CPUs and high-end microprocessors ... and high-end gaming monitors.” The post also switched over to satellite so its internet would be used mostly for Wi-Fi and to hardwire into the gaming stations “so there’d be no lag,” Morris said.

Post 45 became a sponsor of the Noblesville High School Esports program earlier this year and will invite the team to the post to check out the gaming stations.

“We’ve been kind of going outside the norm supporting this Esports team,” Morris said. “We sponsor the middle school robotics program. We do girls softball sponsorships. Kind of youth activities outside the norm. Kind of stirring a little buzz in the community with stuff like that.”

Morris said he’s shared into on the gaming stations and other projects the post has taken on using social media. “I got tremendous feedback instantly,” he said. “Thousands of people that are on that platform – ‘Hey, I live in Indiana. I’m going to have to make it by there. I never thought of going there, but you’re not that far away.’”

“So, I think (gaming) is a major recruitment tool. The days that dad gets off work and goes and hangs out at a (veteran service organization facility) for four hours and then he goes home, those days are over. You better have a place for him or her, for their spouse and hopefully for their kids. You’d better have some other activities designed around the rest of the family. Or else ... mom or dad aren’t going to have the opportunity to go there.”

Since July 1, Post 45 has picked up 20 new members, most of which Morris said are 40 years old or younger. “I tell people when they say moving your post is a huge accomplishment that my biggest accomplishment is that four years ago when I became second vice, I was the youngest officer by a mile at 49 years old,” Morris said. “Now, at 53, I’m the oldest officer. That’s one of our biggest missions right now. If we don’t start getting younger people in, it’s going to be hard to sustain.”

Earl said he’s glad to Post 45 and other Legionnaires look at bringing gaming into their posts. “I am extremely excited to see post commanders across the country expressing interest in gaming,” he said. “Video Games are much more than just twiddling your thumbs on a controller. It’s a bonding experience and allows you to connect with old battle buddies and meet new friends online”



U.S. Embassy in Niger – Niamey

No American left behind

The American Legion | August 3, 2023

The American Legion today responded to ongoing developments in Niger and recent evacuation announcement of nonemergency personnel and families from the U.S. Embassy. The American Legion will continue to monitor the stability of the region and safety of U.S. servicemembers, diplomats, and their families. Should the country become unstable, and a full evacuation be required, The American Legion will encourage the nation’s leaders to ensure the safety of all U.S. servicemembers, diplomats, and their families.

The American Legion was founded on four key pillars of priority to include National Security. American embassy personnel play a [vital role](#) in successful diplomacy and help ensure the country’s national security.

American Legion National Commander Vincent J. “Jim” Troiola issued the following statement:

“The American Legion is actively monitoring the unfolding situation in Niger – with the safety and security of U.S. servicemembers, diplomats, and their families front of mind. We strongly encourage our nation’s leaders to prioritize their protection. On behalf of The American Legion’s 1.6 million members, we reaffirm our commitment to the wellbeing of our troops in harm’s way.”



July Impact: Bills addressed, scholarships awarded, Be the One promoted

The American Legion | August 2, 2023

Two of The American Legion’s capstone youth programs – Junior Shooting Sports and Boys Nation – hit their stride in July. Champions were crowned in Colorado Springs, and young men from across the country gathered in Washington where they prepared legislation, visited memorials, met with top officials, and held elections.

American Legion Policy Analyst Joshua Hastings presented the organization’s positions on five bills in Congress that aim to improve VA health care and benefits processing, and two more American Legion Baseball alums were enshrined in the National Baseball Hall of Fame. And a Virginia American Legion post staged an outdoor event to promote Be the One.

[To see the July 2023 American Legion Membership Impact Report, as well as reports from previous months, click here.](#)

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2022-2023 Consolidated Squadron Report as
of August 2, 2023

Detachment	No. of Squadron	CSR submitted	CSR%
DELAWARE	14	14	100.0%
PUERTO RICO	6	6	100.0%
VERMONT	35	35	100.0%
WISCONSIN	125	113	90.4%
OHIO	307	216	70.4%
NEW MEXICO	34	19	55.9%
ARIZONA	78	41	52.6%
CALIFORNIA	210	106	50.5%
TENNESSEE	46	23	50.0%
WYOMING	25	12	48.0%
ILLINOIS	284	136	47.9%
IOWA	152	64	42.1%
INDIANA	294	123	41.8%
ALASKA	22	9	40.9%
GEORGIA	119	47	39.5%
MARYLAND	102	40	39.2%
IDAHO	26	10	38.5%
VIRGINIA	88	32	36.4%
OREGON	34	12	35.3%
COLORADO	63	22	34.9%
FLORIDA	190	65	34.2%
SOUTH CAROLINA	27	9	33.3%
CONNECTICUT	50	16	32.0%
SOUTH DAKOTA	41	13	31.7%
NORTH CAROLINA	73	23	31.5%
NEVADA	16	5	31.3%
ALABAMA	68	20	29.4%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	62	18	29.0%
NEW YORK	581	150	25.8%
MONTANA	51	13	25.5%
MISSISSIPPI	44	11	25.0%
TEXAS	253	60	23.7%
OKLAHOMA	96	22	22.9%
KANSAS	128	29	22.7%
PENNSYLVANIA	467	104	22.3%
LOUISIANA	73	15	20.5%
NEBRASKA	161	33	20.5%
MEXICO	5	1	20.0%
PHILIPPINES	5	1	20.0%
NEW JERSEY	211	42	19.9%
NORTH DAKOTA	46	9	19.6%
FRANCE	11	2	18.2%
HAWAII	11	2	18.2%
WEST VIRGINIA	49	8	16.3%
MISSOURI	118	17	14.4%
MASSACHUSETTS	196	28	14.3%
MAINE	72	10	13.9%
WASHINGTON	72	10	13.9%
ARKANSAS	29	4	13.8%
MICHIGAN	211	27	12.8%
MINNESOTA	267	33	12.4%
UTAH	42	4	9.5%
KENTUCKY	77	6	7.8%
DISTRICT OF COL	3	0	0.0%
RHODE ISLAND	12	0	0.0%
Total	5882	1890	32.1%

Regional Breakdown as of August 2, 2023

Central	NVC Mennel (MI)		
Detachment	Sqdn	Submitted	CSR%
WISCONSIN	125	113	90.4%
OHIO	307	216	70.4%
ILLINOIS	284	136	47.9%
IOWA	152	64	42.1%
INDIANA	294	123	41.8%
MISSOURI	118	17	14.4%
MICHIGAN	211	27	12.8%
MINNESOTA	267	33	12.4%
Totals	1758	729	41.5%

Midwest	NVC Kirschner (CO)		
Detachment	Sqdn	Submitted	CSR%
NEW MEXICO	34	19	55.9%
WYOMING	25	12	48.0%
COLORADO	63	22	34.9%
SOUTH DAKOTA	41	13	31.7%
MONTANA	51	13	25.5%
TEXAS	253	60	23.7%
OKLAHOMA	96	22	22.9%
KANSAS	128	29	22.7%
NEBRASKA	161	33	20.5%
MEXICO	5	1	20.0%
NORTH DAKOTA	46	9	19.6%
Totals	852	223	26.2%

Western	NVC Young (ID)		
Detachment	Sqdn	Submitted	CSR%
ARIZONA	78	41	52.6%
CALIFORNIA	210	106	50.5%
ALASKA	22	9	40.9%
IDAHO	26	10	38.5%
OREGON	34	12	35.3%
NEVADA	16	5	31.3%
PHILIPPINES	5	1	20.0%
HAWAII	11	2	18.2%
WASHINGTON	72	10	13.9%
UTAH	42	4	9.5%
Totals	1804	517	28.7%

Eastern	NVC Laberge (MA)		
Detachment	Sqdn	Submitted	CSR%
VERMONT	35	35	100.0%
DELAWARE	14	14	100.0%
MARYLAND	102	40	39.2%
CONNECTICUT	50	16	32.0%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	62	18	29.0%
NEW YORK	581	150	25.8%
PENNSYLVANIA	467	104	22.3%
NEW JERSEY	211	42	19.9%
FRANCE	11	2	18.2%
WEST VIRGINIA	49	8	16.3%
MASSACHUSETTS	196	28	14.3%
MAINE	72	10	13.9%
DISTRICT OF COL	3	0	0.0%
RHODE ISLAND	12	0	0.0%
Totals	1865	467	25.0%

Southern	NVC Roberts (MS)		
Detachment	Sqdn	Submitted	CSR%
PUERTO RICO	6	6	100.0%
TENNESSEE	46	23	50.0%
GEORGIA	119	47	39.5%
VIRGINIA	88	32	36.4%
FLORIDA	190	65	34.2%
SOUTH CAROLINA	27	9	33.3%
NORTH CAROLINA	73	23	31.5%
ALABAMA	68	20	29.4%
MISSISSIPPI	44	11	25.0%
LOUISIANA	73	15	20.5%
ARKANSAS	29	4	13.8%
KENTUCKY	77	6	7.8%
Totals	840	261	31.1%

Comparison			
Year	Sqdn	Submitted	CSR%
2022-2023	5882	1890	32.1%
2021-2022	5827	1553	26.70%
2020-2021	6211	1163	18.72%
2019-2020	6211	1353	21.78%
2018-2019	6211	1638	26.37%
2017-2018	6211	1723	27.74%

2023 SAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT AS OF: AUGUST 3, 2023

#	DETACHMENT	2023 DET. YEAR END GOAL	NEEDED TO MEET 105% TARGET 12/31/2023	2023 ACTUAL MBRSHIP	% OF YEAR END GOAL	2023 RENEWAL %
1	HAWAII	77	-38	119	154.55%	100.00
2	PUERTO RICO	123	-24	153	124.39%	95.08
3	SOUTH DAKOTA	1,362	-165	1,595	117.11%	90.28
4	PHILIPPINES	70	-5	78	111.43%	100.00
5	WEST VIRGINIA	2,362	-97	2,577	109.10%	87.54
6	GEORGIA	4,490	-125	4,839	107.77%	88.68
7	OREGON	1,414	-38	1,523	107.71%	81.69
8	NEVADA	357	-8	383	107.28%	80.27
9	ALASKA	1,608	-36	1,724	107.21%	82.60
10	MICHIGAN	24,271	-524	26,009	107.16%	91.75
11	COLORADO	2,729	-58	2,923	107.11%	86.32
12	WASHINGTON	2,485	-48	2,657	106.92%	80.78
13	ARIZONA	8,004	-115	8,519	106.43%	82.19
14	FLORIDA	21,519	-286	22,881	106.33%	84.34
15	NEW MEXICO	1,483	-12	1,569	105.80%	81.09
16	NEW HAMPSHIRE	5,677	-33	5,994	105.58%	89.45
17	VIRGINIA	4,109	-14	4,328	105.33%	86.87
18	SOUTH CAROLINA	1,473	-4	1,551	105.30%	86.92
19	DELAWARE	2,430	1	2,551	104.98%	87.25
20	FRANCE	158	1	165	104.43%	94.23
21	OKLAHOMA	1,348	13	1,402	104.01%	80.20
22	CALIFORNIA	10,714	163	11,087	103.48%	83.41
23	MAINE	2,617	45	2,703	103.29%	87.36
24	MEXICO	31	1	32	103.23%	54.84
25	WISCONSIN	4,187	81	4,315	103.06%	87.01
26	MARYLAND	16,058	364	16,497	102.73%	90.08
27	TENNESSEE	1,718	46	1,758	102.33%	80.24
28	TEXAS	5,569	169	5,678	101.96%	80.02
29	MISSOURI	3,219	99	3,281	101.93%	85.28
30	RHODE ISLAND	336	11	342	101.79%	86.67
31	OHIO	30,636	1,095	31,073	101.43%	91.13
32	PENNSYLVANIA	60,803	2,231	61,612	101.33%	90.71
33	NEW JERSEY	9,386	379	9,476	100.96%	87.33
34	NEW YORK	29,864	1,252	30,105	100.81%	89.91
35	IDAHO	644	28	648	100.62%	79.42
36	ILLINOIS	13,398	618	13,450	100.39%	88.86
37	MISSISSIPPI	722	36	722	100.00%	80.33
38	VERMONT	3,818	201	3,808	99.74%	88.83
39	IOWA	4,857	258	4,842	99.69%	86.10
40	UTAH	449	24	447	99.55%	75.49
41	INDIANA	36,387	2,018	36,188	99.45%	88.80
42	KANSAS	5,919	334	5,881	99.36%	87.19
43	LOUISIANA	1,790	103	1,777	99.27%	86.19
44	NORTH DAKOTA	1,056	65	1,044	98.86%	86.29
45	ALABAMA	2,066	130	2,039	98.69%	82.81
46	NORTH CAROLINA	2,727	173	2,690	98.64%	78.38
47	MINNESOTA	11,378	837	11,110	97.64%	87.42
48	CONNECTICUT	1,867	139	1,821	97.54%	84.82
49	NEBRASKA	7,015	530	6,836	97.45%	91.47
50	MASSACHUSETTS	5,442	440	5,274	96.91%	83.47
51	MONTANA	1,108	104	1,059	95.58%	87.31
52	WYOMING	1,298	144	1,219	93.91%	81.45
53	KENTUCKY	2,609	409	2,330	89.31%	73.61
54	ARKANSAS	447	74	395	88.37%	72.23
55	DIST OF COL	114	32	88	77.19%	60.18
Grand Totals:		367,798	11,021	375,167	102.00%	88.08

2023 SAL REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

WESTERN REGION - JACK A. YOUNGS (ID)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
HAWAII	77	119	154.55%
PHILIPPINES	70	78	111.43%
OREGON	1,414	1,523	107.71%
NEVADA	357	383	107.28%
ALASKA	1,608	1,724	107.21%
WASHINGTON	2,485	2,657	106.92%
ARIZONA	8,004	8,519	106.43%
CALIFORNIA	10,714	11,087	103.48%
IDAHO	644	648	100.62%
UTAH	449	447	99.55%
Totals:	25,822	27,185	105.28%

MIDWEST REGION - MICHAEL L. KIRSCHNER (CO)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
SOUTH DAKOTA	1,362	1,595	117.11%
COLORADO	2,729	2,923	107.11%
NEW MEXICO	1,483	1,569	105.80%
OKLAHOMA	1,348	1,402	104.01%
MEXICO	31	32	103.23%
TEXAS	5,569	5,678	101.96%
KANSAS	5,919	5,881	99.36%
NORTH DAKOTA	1,056	1,044	98.86%
NEBRASKA	7,015	6,836	97.45%
MONTANA	1,108	1,059	95.58%
WYOMING	1,298	1,219	93.91%
Totals:	28,918	29,238	101.11%

CENTRAL REGION - DAVID J. MENNEL (MI)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
MICHIGAN	24,271	26,009	107.16%
WISCONSIN	4,187	4,315	103.06%
MISSOURI	3,219	3,281	101.93%
OHIO	30,636	31,073	101.43%
ILLINOIS	13,398	13,450	100.39%
IOWA	4,857	4,842	99.69%
INDIANA	36,387	36,188	99.45%
MINNESOTA	11,378	11,110	97.64%
Totals:	128,333	130,268	101.51%

EASTERN REGION - ERNEST E. LABERGE (MA)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
WEST VIRGINIA	2,362	2,577	109.10%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	5,677	5,994	105.58%
DELAWARE	2,430	2,551	104.98%
FRANCE	158	165	104.43%
MAINE	2,617	2,703	103.29%
MARYLAND	16,058	16,497	102.73%
RHODE ISLAND	336	342	101.79%
PENNSYLVANIA	60,803	61,612	101.33%
NEW JERSEY	9,386	9,476	100.96%
NEW YORK	29,864	30,105	100.81%
VERMONT	3,818	3,808	99.74%
CONNECTICUT	1,867	1,821	97.54%
MASSACHUSETTS	5,442	5,274	96.91%
DIST OF COL	114	88	77.19%
Totals:	140,932	143,013	101.48%

SOUTHERN REGION - RONALD E. ROBERTS (MS)			
Detachment	Goal	Actual	% of Goal
PUERTO RICO	123	153	124.39%
GEORGIA	4,490	4,839	107.77%
FLORIDA	21,519	22,881	106.33%
VIRGINIA	4,109	4,328	105.33%
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,473	1,551	105.30%
TENNESSEE	1,718	1,758	102.33%
MISSISSIPPI	722	722	100.00%
LOUISIANA	1,790	1,777	99.27%
ALABAMA	2,066	2,039	98.69%
NORTH CAROLINA	2,727	2,690	98.64%
KENTUCKY	2,609	2,330	89.31%
ARKANSAS	447	395	88.37%
Totals:	43,793	45,463	103.81%



08/03/23		NATIONAL Christopher Carlton (IN), National Commander					
Region	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Quota Date	
1 Western 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	25,822	27,185	1,363	105.28%	21	05/25/23	
2 Southern 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	43,793	45,453	1,660	103.79%	23	05/17/23	
3 Central 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	128,333	130,268	1,935	101.51%	123	06/12/23	
4 Eastern 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	140,932	143,013	2,081	101.48%	146	06/15/23	
5 Midwest 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	28,918	29,238	320	101.11%	5	06/22/23	
TOTALS 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	367,798	375,157	7,359	102.00%	297	06/08/23	

08/03/23		CENTRAL REGION David Mennell (MI), National Vice-Commander							
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date	
1 Michigan 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	24,271	26,009	1,738	107.16%	25	91.75%	10	04/27/23	
2 Wisconsin 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	4,187	4,315	128	103.06%	2	87.01%	25	05/17/23	
3 Missouri 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	3,219	3,281	62	101.93%	9	85.28%	29	06/08/23	
4 Ohio 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	30,636	31,073	437	101.43%	-	91.13%	31	06/12/23	
5 Illinois 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	13,398	13,450	52	100.39%	1	88.86%	36	06/15/23	
6 Iowa 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	4,857	4,842	(15)	99.69%	71	86.10%	39		
7 Indiana 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	36,387	36,188	(199)	99.45%	14	88.80%	41		
8 Minnesota 5, 6, 7, 8	11,378	11,110	(268)	97.64%	1	87.42%	47		
TOTALS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	128,333	130,268	1,935	101.51%	123		3	06/12/23	

08/03/23		WESTERN REGION Jack Youngs (ID) National Vice-Commander							
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date	
1 Hawaii 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q, 10	77	119	42	154.55%	-	100.00%	1	10/10/22	
2 Phillippines 8, 9, Q	70	78	8	111.43%	-	100.00%	4	04/10/23	
3 Oregon 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	1,414	1,523	109	107.71%	-	81.69%	7	04/17/23	
4 Nevada 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	357	383	26	107.28%	-	80.27%	8	05/08/23	
5 Alaska 3, 6, 8, Q	1,608	1,724	116	107.21%	-	82.60%	9	06/05/23	
6 Washington 7, 8, Q	2,485	2,657	172	106.92%	2	80.78%	12	06/01/23	
7 Arizona 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	8,004	8,519	515	106.43%	6	82.19%	13	05/15/23	
8 California 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	10,714	11,087	373	103.48%	11	83.41%	22	06/01/23	
9 Idaho 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, Q	644	648	4	100.62%	2	79.42%	35	06/22/23	
10 Utah 5	449	447	(2)	99.55%	-	75.49%	40		
TOTALS 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	25,822	27,185	1,363	105.28%	21		1	05/29/23	

08/03/23		SOUTHERN REGION Ron Roberts (MS), National Vice-Commander							
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date	
1 Puerto Rico 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	123	153	30	124.39%	-	95.08%	2	03/02/23	
2 Georgia 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q, 10	4,490	4,839	349	107.77%	-	88.68%	6	04/19/23	
3 Florida 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	21,519	22,881	1,362	106.33%	12	84.34%	14	04/24/23	
4 Virginia 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	4,109	4,328	219	105.33%	1	86.87%	17	05/08/23	
5 South Carolina 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	1,473	1,551	78	105.30%	11	86.92%	18	05/15/23	
6 Tennessee 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, Q	1,718	1,758	40	102.33%	1	80.24%	27	06/29/23	
7 Mississippi 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, Q	722	722	-	100.00%	-	80.33%	37	07/17/23	
8 Louisiana 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	1,790	1,777	(13)	99.27%	8	86.19%	43		
9 Alabama 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	2,066	2,039	(27)	98.69%	-	82.81%	45		
10 North Carolina 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	2,727	2,690	(37)	98.64%	(1)	78.38%	46		
11 Kentucky	2,609	2,330	(279)	89.31%	-	73.61%	53		
12 Arkansas 1	447	395	(52)	88.37%	1	72.23%	54		
TOTALS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	43,793	45,463	1,670	103.81%	33		2	05/17/23	

08/03/23		MIDWEST REGION Michael Kirschner (CO), National Vice-Commander							
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date	
1 South Dakota 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q, 10	1,362	1,595	233	117.11%	-	90.28%	3	02/09/23	
2 Colorado 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	2,729	2,923	194	107.11%	-	86.32%	11	05/15/23	
3 New Mexico 8, Q	1,483	1,569	86	105.80%	3	81.09%	15	06/15/23	
4 Oklahoma 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	1,348	1,402	54	104.01%	-	80.20%	21	05/11/23	
5 Mexico 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	31	32	1	103.23%	-	54.84%	24	03/13/23	
6 Texas 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, Q	5,569	5,678	109	101.96%	1	80.02%	28	06/15/23	
7 Kansas 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	5,919	5,881	(38)	99.36%	1	87.19%	42		
8 North Dakota 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8	1,056	1,044	(12)	98.86%	-	86.29%	44		
9 Nebraska 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	7,015	6,836	(179)	97.45%	-	91.47%	49		
10 Montana 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	1,108	1,059	(49)	95.58%	-	87.31%	51		
11 Wyoming 1, 4, 5, 6	1,298	1,219	(79)	93.91%	-	81.45%	52		
TOTALS 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	28,918	29,238	320	101.11%	5		5	07/24/23	

08/03/23		EASTERN REGION Ernie LaBerge (MA) National Vice-Commander							
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date	
1 West Virginia 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	2,362	2,577	215	109.10%	10	87.54%	5	04/17/23	
2 New Hampshire 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	5,677	5,994	317	105.58%	9	89.45%	16	06/09/23	
3 Delaware 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	2,430	2,551	121	104.98%	-	87.25%	19	05/08/23	
4 France 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	158	165	7	104.43%	-	94.23%	20	06/26/23	
5 Maine 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	2,617	2,703	86	103.29%	-	87.36%	23	05/22/23	
6 Maryland 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	16,058	16,497	439	102.73%	5	90.08%	26	05/17/23	
7 Rhode Island 4, 5, 7	336	342	6	101.79%	-	86.67%	30	05/08/23	
8 Pennsylvania 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	60,803	61,612	809	101.33%	71	90.71%	32	06/12/23	
9 New Jersey 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	9,386	9,476	90	100.96%	1	87.33%	33	07/06/23	
10 New York 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	29,864	30,105	241	100.81%	40	89.91%	34	06/29/23	
11 Vermont 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	3,818	3,808	(10)	99.74%	-	88.83%	38		
12 Connecticut 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	1,867	1,821	(46)	97.54%	10	84.82%	48		
13 Massachusetts 4, 6, 7, 8	5,442	5,274	(168)	96.91%	-	83.47%	50		
14 Dist. of Columbia	114	88	(26)	77.19%	-	60.18%	55		
TOTALS 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	140,932	143,013	2,081	101.48%	146		4	06/15/23	

08/03/23		2023 SUPER SIX STANDINGS							
Detachment	Goal	Actual	Needed for Quota	Percent	Increase	Renewal Rate	National Rank	Quota Date	
1 Michigan 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	24,271	26,009	1,738	107.16%	25	91.75%	10	04/27/23	
2 Florida 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Q	21,519	22,881	1,362	106.33%	12	84.34%	14	04/24/23	
3 Ohio 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	30,636	31,073	437	101.43%	-	91.13%	31	06/12/23	
4 Pennsylvania 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	60,803	61,612	809	101.33%	71	90.71%	32	06/12/23	
5 New York 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	29,864	30,105	241	100.81%	40	89.91%	34	06/29/23	
6 Indiana 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	36,387	36,188	(199)	99.45%	14	88.80%	41		
TOTALS	179,209	181,859	2,650	101.48%	137				
National Totals 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Q	367,798	374,839	375,167	101.91%	-	88.08%		06/08/23	



Q Quota

- 1 Met 09/14/22 goal of 10%
- 2 Met 10/13/22 goal of 25%
- 3 Met 11/09/22 goal of 35%
- 4 Met 12/14/22 goal of 45%
- 5 Met 01/19/23 goal of 60%

- 6 Met 02/15/23 goal of 75%
- 7 Met 03/15/23 goal of 80%
- 8 Met 04/19/23 goal of 90%
- 9 Met 05/17/23 goal of 100%
- 10 Met 07/26/23 goal of 105%





**SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
51st NATIONAL CONVENTION AGENDA FLYER
CHARLOTTE CONVENTION CENTER
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA
AUGUST 25 - 27, 2023**

DETACHMENT COMMANDERS TRAINING

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25 - HALL C2, EXHIBIT HALL - 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM

NATIONAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE MEETINGS

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25 - ROOM 205, SECTION A

8:30 AM INTERNAL AFFAIRS
10:00 AM MEMBERSHIP
11:30 AM FINANCE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25 - ROOM 205, SECTION B

8:30 AM CHILDREN & YOUTH
10:00 AM VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION
11:30 AM CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25 - ROOM 201, SECTIONS A - B

8:30 AM AMERICANISM
10:00 AM COMMUNITY SERVICE SCRAPBOOK /HISTORY BOOK CONTEST
11:30 AM LEGISLATION AND RULES

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25 - HALL C2, EXHIBIT HALL, GREEN ROOM (BEHIND STAGE)

11:00 AM CREDENTIALS

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25 10:00 AM PRE-CONVENTION NEC
SUNDAY, AUGUST 27 2:00 PM POST-CONVENTION NEC

NATIONAL CONVENTION GENERAL SESSIONS

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25 1:00 PM - OPENING
SATURDAY, AUGUST 26 9:00 AM
SUNDAY, AUGUST 27 8:00 AM

TRANSITION MEETING - ROOM 208, MEETING LEVEL

MONDAY, AUGUST 28 8:00 AM (NATIONAL OFFICERS AND CHAIRMEN ONLY)

NATIONAL STAFF OFFICE - RICHARDSON BALLROOM, LEVEL 3

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
THURSDAY, AUGUST 24 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
FRIDAY, AUGUST 25 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
SATURDAY, AUGUST 26 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
SUNDAY, AUGUST 27 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

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BE THE ONE

As of: 7/07/2023 ** subject to change