



CHANGES TO TEMPORARY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

“Since its establishment in 1925, The American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program has awarded cash grants to minor children of current active duty or American Legion members. These grants help families in need meet the cost of shelter, food, utilities and health expenses, thereby keeping the child or children in a more stable environment.”

The above is the core statement of the Temporary Financial Assistance program. However during the 2017 Fall National Executive Committee (NEC) Meetings changes to this program were made. Resolution No. 8 was submitted by the National Finance Committee regarding the restructuring of The American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program.

Due to steadily declining membership of The American Legion that adversely impacts operational program budgets, the restructure of the Statement of Policy under which the Temporary Financial Assistance program is administered was recommended by the Americanism Commission.

Resolution No. 8: Restructure of Temporary Financial Assistance Statement of Policy was approved. Below are the Resolved clauses. *To read American Legion National Executive Committee Resolution No. 8 in its entirety go to: <https://archive.legion.org/handle/123456789/6966>*

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 11-12, 2017, That the statement of policy governing the Temporary Financial Assistance hereby be restructured as follows for enhanced fiscal administration and efficiency of the program: • A single onetime non-repayable Temporary Financial Assistance grant of up to \$1,500 will be permitted in accordance with the conditions set forth in Exhibit A for the minor child(ren) of a qualifying veteran • A qualifying veteran is defined as a member of the United States Armed Forces serving on federal orders current under Title 10 of the United States Code, inclusive of all components, or any veteran possessing an up-to-date membership in The American Legion 2 • Formal documentation is required as part of the Temporary Financial Assistance investigation process and application packet for verification that all other forms of financial assistance available have been sought and applied for, or have already been denied • Annual cumulative expenditure of Temporary Financial Assistance grants may not exceed \$700,000 without prior approval of each chairman of the Americanism and Finance Commissions and the national commander; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the statement of policy governing the Temporary Financial Assistance program found in Exhibit A incorporate the above new criteria and the following additions previously authorized by Resolution No. 38 of the National Executive Committee, May 2000, titled Addition to Temporary Financial Assistance Statement of Policy: e. A child (not included in 1(a-d) above) in custody of the veteran, or spouse of the veteran, living in the household of the veteran or surviving spouse, provided: (1) The veteran or spouse of the veteran is legally responsible for the child and has the legal right to exercise parental control and responsibility for the welfare and care of the child as stipulated by court order, or other legal documentation, transferring custody of the child to the veteran or spouse of the veteran, or f. A child in joint physical custody of a veteran and/or veteran's spouse, except that: (1) Resources of both households must be considered in determining the needs of the child, without regard to the present location of the child.

RESOLVED, That Exhibit A, updated as attached, be adopted in its entirety for governing the Temporary Financial Assistance program; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 27 of the National Executive Committee, May 1990, titled Statement of Policy Regarding Temporary Financial Assistance Program and Resolution No. 38 of the National Executive Committee, May 2000, titled Addition to Temporary Financial Assistance Statement of Policy are both hereby superseded and rescinded.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

AS OF
DECEMBER 19, 2017

TOP 10 DISTRICT AND DIVISION RANKINGS

District	Commander
7	Bickley
1	Mittlestaedt
13	Kraut
19	Coventry
18	Torbet
17	Helsel
20	Flowers
16	Hinton
14	Gosney
22	Gindler

Division	Commander
4	HOFFMAN
3	AARON
2	ABDELNOUR
5	ROSCOW
1	SICILIANO



From The Desk of Department Commander Bob Henderson



I hope everybody had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

In the last month I have been to Teutopolis, IL. for the 76th Year Anniversary of Pearl Harbor. There was a special mass for the veterans and a breakfast later that morning.

There was a revitalization in Moultrie County in the 19th District, which went real well.

Then onto a Finance meeting of the Dept. Finance Committee. Then I went to the SAL Winter D.E.C. in Edgewood, IL.

Just getting back from spending about 3 days in Minneapolis, MN checking everything out with what we need to

know about the 2018 National Convention in August. I took a tour of our hotel. We will be staying at the Hyatt Regency, which is only 2½ blocks from the Convention Center, the rooms there were really nice.

I have made a few Christmas parties but still have kept an eye on Membership. The state of Illinois is in 13th place on the National level at 78.5%.

While we are on membership I would like to see all the Districts utilizing their membership committees. If you would like to be in the **TOP 10** you can do it if you use your Committee. All the ones that are in the **TOP 10** now are utilizing their committee, **it works**. I would like to see the state at 85% by the time the American Legion Family Membership Caravan starts.

Speaking of, the CARAVAN it will start on

the 11th of January and end on the 20th of January. Go out and get those cards and come to your District stop on the Caravan. I would love to see a lot of you on these stops.

We have a very motivational speaker for this years Caravan. He is Paul Martel, a Past National Vice Commander from Florida. If you haven't heard him you need to come to your District stop it will be an experience.

My goal is to see the state of Illinois at 100% this year, 2018, and we can do it with your help.

I want to **Thank You** for what you have done this membership year for your Posts, Districts, Divisions and State. You have done a wonderful job, **KEEP IT UP.**

SEE YOU ALL ON CARAVAN!



From The Desk of Department Sr. Vice Commander Micheal Carder



I hope that everyone in the Department of Illinois had a great Christmas and a Happy New Year. Hopefully everyone's waist line stayed the same and all were safe.

Well, as you all know as of December 15, 2017 the Department Membership was 79.41% and by the time you read this article the Department will be over 80%. I must say that I am very proud of the work that is being done on membership by everyone and maybe the Santa wish of Commander Bob and all of the Department for 100% membership will be granted.

The past months have been busy with Revitalizations in the 22nd and 19th Districts, as well as attending Division and District Officer meetings.

Now, the next big event in membership is The American Legion Family Membership Caravan January 11 - 20, 2018, the schedule is online and in this issue of the Department News. Commander Bob and I are hoping for a good turnout at each stop and Bob is hoping maybe for a 2% increase in our membership from the caravan.

Now is the time for TEAM ILLINOIS to kick up our quest for members who did not renew early. We must not forget them for they are the foundation of our organization. Division and District Commanders once again look at your posts to find those who are having

problems with their members. Division Commanders review your districts, see who needs your leadership help. Posts who are doing well, commanders, are you reaching out to your fellow posts who are down and offering a helping hand? With every legionnaire pitching in we can achieve something which we will be proud of in our membership.

Remember, we are a Team striving for the best for veterans, and our country.

Once again there is no "I" in our quest for membership, we are simply a TEAM where Together, Everyone, Achieves, More.



From The Desk of Department Auxiliary President Marsha Haag



We have had our gatherings with family and friends and it was wonderful. So many times during this season, we think of the less fortunate. I know our American Legion Family tries very hard to help make Christmas a little happier. We can not solve all the troubles but can help comfort those in need.

I revel in watching our young grandchildren, older ones too, as they open their gifts. Such joy in their eyes. Remember back when it was us beaming with excitement or better yet, our kids. As we serve our veterans and children, they too have that look of joy and excitement. A huge thank you to all who have made their day a bit brighter.

In a couple weeks our caravan will be in towns in your vicinity. Scorekeeper Janet and I look forward to seeing our American Legion Family turn out in

droves. We have a membership goal date of 75% on January 19th so I hope your Units bring in membership. Plan to come early and visit. We have a schedule which doesn't always give a lot of time to address all concerns. We can all be reached via phone or email. Bring your questions along.

It's time to have the Oratorical Contest rules to the schools. Wow, that competition will soon be here. What a wonderful opportunity for our students. On our Fall Forum pamphlets were distributed along with the Americanism Essay contest rules. We look forward to great participation. Last year was my first time to be involved at the Oratorical and thoroughly enjoyed the day.

ALA Illini Girls State, Premier Boys State and the Youth Police School were also promoted. These young people have a lot of opportunity for learning at government and law enforcement. My ALAIGS Director and Dean hope for a full venue. Please help promote for us. If you have girls without a sponsoring Unit, Posts and other businesses and organizations have been know to

furnish funds. Let's work together and make this summer a memorable one. We also let them know about the Legion baseball and shooting sports. Website was encouraged since we didn't have information to share.

Our Patriotic Conference will be held at the Marriott, Normal. This is open to all members of the American Legion Family. Date is March 23, 2018. Luncheon reservation forms can be found on our website. We will have a fundraising booth for our Junior Activities program to assist in the cost of their upcoming conference in April. Come and support our Juniors.

In closing, I personally want to say THANK YOU to all of our volunteers. I attended a few of our ALA Christmas Gift Shops. Each are different from the next. Where I went, you could see the joy in everyone's eyes. We made their day a bit brighter and that is what it's all about. Service, not Self. I have told the ladies all year, there is no "I" in team.

We are "Striving For Gold For Our Veterans".



From The Desk of Detachment Commander Paul A. Hayse



As you know, membership is the back bone of The American Legion Family. Without a strong membership our programs will not stand and will disappear.

That is why I chose my theme this year of Retain, Recruit, and Remember.

- ★ Retain our knowledge with old friends and American Legion members.
- ★ Recruit new ideas with our new friends and new family members. And Lastly, always
- ★ Remember our departed comrades.

Membership drives are important because they let people know they are appreciated for what they are doing. Each post, unit, and squadron are needed throughout the state to keep

our Family strong, viable and going. We want to thank you for service and your commitment through your membership.

Work prohibits me from attending this years American Legion Membership drive. However, I wish all a safe trip and good health throughout all the days. Abraham Lincoln's birthday is just around the corner and we hope to see all at the CMN tour on February 11 and Lincoln Pilgrimage on February 12th.



Did You Know?

Office: 312-980-4266 Email: Raymond.Toczec@va.gov

That once again it is the start of a New Year and with that brings personal resolutions which we all seem to make (and most break or give up by February). Last January I listed most of these and got many good comments. But when I asked if they acted upon them most didn't! Here are those ideas tailor made for our Legionnaires. As a Service Officer if our comrades took these resolutions seriously my job would be so much easier.

1. If you are enrolled in the VA hospital system then sign up for Myhealthvet. You can do this online at <http://www.va.gov/health/> and once signed up you can check your appointments, e-mail your doctors with medical questions, refill your prescriptions and a host of other things.
2. Check your property taxes. If you are a service-connected disabled vet rated 30% or more you should be receiving a reduction in your assessed value. If you are 70% or more you pay NO taxes if your home is valued under \$750,000. Be proactive too, if your spouse is NOT on the title then this exemption will not pass to them. While you're at it, be sure you are getting your senior discount if you are 65 or older. That law was changed and you must sign up each year for the senior break.
3. If you are 30% or more service connected disabled are you claiming all your dependents? Did you have another child or did you marry in 2017 and become a step-parent; or did your adult child who hasn't gone to school since they turned 18 suddenly decide to enroll in college or a trade school? You can claim that adult child up to the age of 23 if they attend school (even part-time). And on the flip side did you divorce or lose a dependent due to a death this year? If so you need to notify the VA to avoid and overpayment.
4. If you have VA life insurance or for that matter a commercial policy did you update your beneficiary due to a death, remarriage or divorce last year? Did your good for nothing adult child become a substance misuser? Do you really want to leave him or her your insurance now?
5. Due to a fire, flood, robbery or tornado did you lose your military discharge papers? If so contact me for standard form 180 to get a replacement. Believe me, sooner or later you will have to have a certified copy. 2017 was especially a horrible year for fires our west and hurricanes down south.
6. Are you being proactive and making arrangements for your demise? If you would like a free VA government headstone you might want to get the application ahead of time and fill it out. That way you will have exactly what you wish engraved on that marker. Call 1-800-827-1000 and ask for VA form 1330. And to save your next-of-kin the time and effort how about choosing an undertaker ahead of time.
7. Are you getting either VA compensation or pension benefits and have not yet signed up for Ebenefits? If not got to <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal> and do it today. Then from the privacy of your home computer (24/7) you can print out VA award letters, statements of service, home loan certificates and verification of your disability percentage. You can also check the status of your claim and/or appeals, review your last 24 months of payments and change your address or direct deposit information.
8. When was the last time you asked the VA to review your service-connected compensation. That bad knee you got in Vietnam probably has gotten worse in the last 40+ years. Or that busted shoulder blade from an explosion in Iraq is acting up. And that minor diabetic problem you got from Agent Orange may have become more severe and led to other complications. Very few medical conditions stay the same and most get more severe with the passage of time. Contact us today to discuss this further. THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT WITH THE NEW PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS.
9. Finally, resolve to sign up at least one new member for your post. Someone from your neighborhood, church or community group? Perhaps a friend or relative on active duty. Your post always needs your support in getting new members.

Well I hope some of these ideas are helpful. If you should need any further information on any of the above resolutions please contact me. Also, I've been collecting more rumors that are out there for a future article. If you have any let me know and I'll check them out. Until next time stay safe and warm.

Let our New Year's resolution be this: we will be there for one another as fellow members of The American Legion, in the finest sense of the word Comradeship.

Springfield Post #32, The American Legion
1120 Sangamon Avenue - Springfield, Illinois 62702-1853

www.springfieldamericanlegion.com spfldpost32@outlook.com

84th Annual National American Legion Pilgrimage **to the Tomb of Abraham Lincoln** **February 11 & 12, 2018**

The 84th Annual National American Legion Pilgrimage to the Tomb of Abraham Lincoln will be held in Springfield, Illinois, **February 11 & 12, 2018**. Springfield Post #32, Auxiliary Unit #32 and Sons of The American Legion Squadron #32 extend a most cordial invitation to you to attend and participate.

National Commander Denise Rohan, National President Diane Duscheck, SAL National Commander Danny Smith, our Illinois Department Commander Bob Henderson, our Department President Marsha Haag and our Detachment Commander Paul Hayse, will be attending and participating in the activities. Additionally, many other Legion, Auxiliary, S.A.L., and state and local dignitaries will be in attendance to honor President Abraham Lincoln on this very special day.

The Commemoration begins Sunday, February 11, 2018:

AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY LEADERSHIP RECEPTION--4:30PM--6:00PM Wyndham Springfield Ballroom. All of the National and Department Leadership are participating in this complimentary meet and greet reception that is open to our entire American Legion Family. **OPEN HOUSE at Springfield Post # 32--5:00PM--1:00AM** located at 1120 Sangamon Ave., Springfield. A **FREE shuttle** will run continuously between the **Wyndham Springfield City Centre** and Post 32 from 5:00PM--1:00AM. Dinner service will be available at the Mess Hall Restaurant located inside Post 32, from 4:00PM. -- 8:30PM. Reservations are not required however they are recommended. To place dinner reservations phone 217/523-3415 to reach the Mess Hall Restaurant. We will have a **DJ**, plenty of fun, refreshments and a chance to renew old acquaintances and make new ones. The National and Department Officers will be at the Open House to greet everyone.

Room rates for the Wyndham Springfield City Centre are \$101.00 per night, single or double occupancy, and the rate includes free parking. **The preferred way to reserve your room is by calling for reservations at (217) 789-1530 (press 1 for reservations—for reduced rate mention you're with The American Legion Lincoln Pilgrimage group)**

The following program has been planned for February 12, 2018:

- 8:00 a.m.** **American Legion Family breakfast honoring our National Commander and National President, with National President Diane Duscheck as the keynote speaker, at the Wyndham Springfield City Centre mezzanine.**
- 10:00 a.m.** **Pilgrimage departs Wyndham Hotel for journey to Abraham Lincoln's Tomb.**
- 10:30 a.m.** **Ceremonies and wreath placing from inside Mr. Lincoln's Tomb, Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield, Illinois.**
- 12:30 p.m.** **Lincoln Commemoration Luncheon with National Commander Denise Rohan as the keynote speaker, at the Wyndham Springfield City Centre Mezzanine.**
- 4:30-6:30 p.m.** **American Legion Family Leadership Reception, all are welcome at the Wyndham Springfield City Centre.**

Breakfast tickets are \$20.00 each, and luncheon tickets are \$30.00 each with tax and tip included. Please specify when ordering breakfast tickets if they are for the Legion or Auxiliary breakfast. Luncheon tables of eight (8) will be assigned and may be reserved by sending your check for \$240.00 to the below listed address. If you are from Illinois, please indicate your Illinois District number on all luncheon reservations. Checks should be made out to **Springfield Post #32, The American Legion**. Tickets, reservations and further information please write to: American Legion Lincoln Pilgrimage, ATTN: Phil Drum, Ticket Chairman, 1120 Sangamon Avenue, Springfield, Illinois 62702-1853. Phone 217/523-3415. Post 32 e-mail is spfldpost32@outlook.com **SPECIAL NOTICE: All meal checks and/or reservations must be received or canceled by February 2, 2018. No refunds can be made after that date. Please make your plans and reservations early, as we may not be able to seat you if you do not order your meal tickets early.**

We sincerely hope that you will be able to be with us to honor our 16th President, Abraham Lincoln, on his birthday in his "Hometown", and that you make time to visit the beautiful **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum and Library**, which is only three short blocks from the Wyndham City Centre. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum will be offering their Group Rate to our attendees by merely showing your membership card on Feb 10, 11, 12, 2018.

Illinois Bicentennial Honor 200 Veterans



Governor Rauner and Department of Veterans' Affairs Director Erica Jeffries announced on November 8, 2017 the launch of **HONOR 200 Veterans, a signature program of the Illinois Bicentennial Celebration.**

In partnership with the Illinois Bicentennial Office the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs will honor the work of 200 Veterans from across the State whose contributions are above and beyond the call of duty. Nominations will be evaluated on their achievements and on the extent to which their contributions have aided, benefited and provided inspiration to their community.

The Boeing Company is a Presenting Sponsor of the Illinois Bicentennial Veterans program and the Illinois Bicentennial HONOR 200 campaign. Please read the Guideline for Nominations before completing the nomination. There are two nomination forms to use either by going to <https://www.illinois.gov/veterans/Documents/honor200fillable.pdf> or <https://www.illinois.gov/veterans/Documents/honor200print.pdf>. Once completed, nominations can be sent two ways either by mailing them to: **Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs George W. Dunne Office Building--Attn: Illinois "Honor 200" Bi-Centennial Award--69 W. Washington Street, Suite 1620 Chicago, Illinois 60601** or email your completed, nominations to Harry.Sawyer@illinois.gov (<mailto:harry.sawyer@illinois.gov>).


The Official Illinois Bicentennial Celebration will begin this December 3rd, 2017 with events in Springfield and Chicago and will be commemorated with programs and events throughout 2018, culminating with the Bicentennial Birthday Party on December 3rd, 2018 in the United Center. The HONOR 200 veterans will be recognized during the Birthday Gala. For information on the Bicentennial and to find out how your community can participate go to www.illinois200.com (<http://www.illinois200.com/>).

GIFTS TO THE YANKS WHO GAVE - 17th District Chairman, Ron Umdenstock


As the 17th District Gifts To The Yanks Chairman I would like to thank everyone that helped with the program this year. I'd also like to THANK everyone for your generous contributions. Without your support the program would not be so successful.

A little reminder, the deadline date for credit in the Department Convention Book is April 15, 2018. Your donations are needed so we can start planning for the 2018 Christmas.

On a personal note: I would like to thank everyone for all the support over these past 15 years when I served as Gifts To The Yanks Chairman for the Department of Illinois. I enjoyed working with all our members seeing that our comrades received a Christmas gift. As I told Commander Bob, I feel it was time to get a younger member for the program, as I need to slow down a bit. Please keep supporting the Gifts To The Yanks it a good program for our comrades.



Gifts To The Yanks Who Gave Fund



Send Donations To: Gifts To The Yanks Who Gave
Department of Illinois
2720 E. Lincoln St.
Bloomington, IL 61704

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

POST# _____ DISTRICT# _____ DIVISION# _____

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Christmas Day
DEPT OFFICE CLOSED
December 25th--26th

~ ~ ~
85% Target Date
December 31st

~ ~ ~
New Year's Eve
December 31st

~ ~ ~
New Year's Day
DEPT OFFICE CLOSED
January 1st

~ ~ ~
2nd 100% Post Cash Award
Cut-off 1:00 pm
January 2nd

~ ~ ~
**American Legion Family
Membership Caravan**
January 11th--20th

~ ~ ~
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
DEPT OFFICE CLOSED
January 15th

~ ~ ~
90 % Target Date
Gold Pin Cut-off 1:00 pm
January 31st

~ ~ ~
Lincoln Pilgrimage
Springfield, IL
February 11th--12th

~ ~ ~
Lincoln's Birthday
February 12th

~ ~ ~
Div. & Dist. Jr & Sr. Vice
Cmdr. Training
10:00AM--3:00PM

~ ~ ~
@ Dept. HQ
February 17th

~ ~ ~
Washington Conference / DSO
Washington DC
February 25th--28th
#

2018 ILLINOIS AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY MEMBERSHIP CARAVAN SCHEDULE

JANUARY 11 - 20, 2018

January	Div#	Dist#	Post #	City	Program Start
JANUARY 11	2	10	281	HOMER DAHRINGER	6:00 PM
JANUARY 12	2	12	337	GENOA	8:30 AM
JANUARY 12	2	13	296	STERLING	11:30 AM
JANUARY 12	3	14	1166	REYNOLDS	6:00 PM
JANUARY 13	3	15	381	ABINGDON	8:30 AM
JANUARY 13	3	16	323	HENRY	11:30 AM
JANUARY 13	2	11	312	MAPLE PARK	6:00 PM
JANUARY 14	1	9	973	TATTLER	8:30 AM
JANUARY 14	1	5	256	COMMODORE BARRY	12:00 PM
JANUARY 14	1	8	697	EDWARD SCHULTZ	6:00 PM
JANUARY 15	4	17	174	FORREST	12:00 PM
JANUARY 16	CARAVAN OFF				
JANUARY 17	5	22	485	DUPO	6:00 PM
JANUARY 18	5	24	176	FAIRFIELD	12:00 PM
JANUARY 18	5	25	1961	ORIENT	6:00 PM
JANUARY 19	5	23	120	EFFINGHAM	8:00 AM
JANUARY 19	4	19	71	URBANA	12:00 PM
JANUARY 19	4	18	210	DANVILLE	6:00 PM
JANUARY 20	4	21	1922	STATE POLICE	12:00 PM
JANUARY 20	3	20	129	MENARD COUNTY	6:00 PM



Past National Vice Commander Paul Martel will be our special guest during the 2018 Illinois American Legion Family Caravan.

Please take time to come to one of the caravan stops nearest you and if you plan on attending the meal you will want to R.S.V.P. to the post.



Bring any membership cards with you that need to be turned in...even if it's just ONE.

Bipartisan support for legislation expanding caregiver benefits



The American Legion and several other veterans service organizations (VSOs) recently delivered more than 180,000 signed petitions to Congress that urges lawmakers to pass bipartisan legislation that will expand caregiver benefits for all disabled veterans under the Department of Veterans Affairs Comprehensive Caregiver Assistance Program. The bill, which the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs passed on Nov. 29 by a 14-1 vote, would help improve existing health care and services provided under the VA by expanding eligibility for veterans of all generations, including Vietnam-era servicemembers. It would also provide permanent, streamlined access to health care and services with a new Veterans Community Care Program.

The petitions were delivered during a press conference on Dec. 6 at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. VSO representatives spoke about the importance of ensuring equal benefits to veterans of all generations. House and Senate leaders, including sponsors of the [Caring for Our Veterans Act of 2017](#), were also present to voice their support and celebrate the bill's passage last week in the Senate VA committee.

"Far too many veterans and their caregivers have been denied access to VA's comprehensive caregivers benefits for the wrong reason," said American Legion National Legislative Deputy Director Derek Fronabarger. "The American Legion believes eligibility for veterans' benefits should not be based on when a veteran served, but rather how they served and their physical and mental condition upon returning home."

"As the daughter of a World War II veteran who visits with veterans in my home state of Washington, I have seen firsthand the vital role that caregivers fulfill," said Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., a senior Senate VA committee member who is the bill's lead sponsor. "It is impossible to overstate the value of having a family member or a loved one, by your side, while overcoming an illness or coping with an injury."

"The sacrifice that many caregivers make to provide vital day-to-day care for our wounded veterans often goes unnoticed. Taking care of our veterans means taking care of the caregivers who help make their recovery possible."

Under VA's current Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, only veterans who served on or after 9/11 are eligible for enhanced support. The Caring for Our Veterans Act seeks to provide caregiver benefits to veterans injured before May 7, 1975. Veterans who were injured between 1975 and 2001 would be eligible two years after this bill is enacted.

"We made a promise to care for our brave men and women when they return home from war – that includes supporting our caregivers," Murray said. "We cannot stop until we get this done."

Fronabarger said the nation should not and cannot treat veterans differently based only on their service. He said that withholding caregiver benefits of those who served before 9/11 is not giving them the respect and dignity they deserve.

"It is our hope to correct a serious flaw in the original caregiver legislation by removing the discriminatory barriers that prevent some of our nation's most deserving veterans, and their caregivers, from receiving the comprehensive assistance they have earned," he said. "The American Legion supports any responsible legislation that expands caregiver support to all veterans."

"Caregivers are true partners in the delivery of health care to veterans and they deserve quality support," said Rep. Ryan Costello, R-Penn. "It is time that we expand this program to veterans of all generations."

The Caring for Our Veterans Act is now awaiting a vote in the full Senate. If passed, the bill would provide about \$4 billion for the Veterans Choice Fund and create standards for timely payment to community care providers.

"Often, caregivers put their lives on hold to provide full-time assistance to the veteran. This can take an immense toll on families, relationships, bank accounts and the health and well-being of caregivers," said Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., SVAC's ranking member who introduced the bill. "We cannot rest easy until our efforts to expand the VA's caregiver support program comes to fruition. Republicans, democrats and independents must continue to work together to get this legislation across the finish line and signed into law."

100 YEARS OF VETERANS STILL SERVING AMERICA

American Legion Department of Illinois

Centennial Coin



Coins are numbered
001 - 500



Coin number not Guaranteed

**NOW
AVAILABLE**

Order one today!

(309)663-0361

Call Department Headquarters today to order this one of a kind collectable coin!



During the Cold Temperatures



PLEASE don't forget to check on our comarades who are alone or can not get out!



Take a few minutes
to make sure they are
warm and have food





THE HAVEN RECEIPT OF SPECIAL GIFTS

American Legion Post 1239 from Aviston donated two 8 Burner Event Grills for the Haven today. Mark Hilmes Post 1239 Sr. Vice Commander and Wayne Madison 5th Division Sr. Vice Commander delivered and assembled them.



WREATHS *across* AMERICA



Wreaths Across America A Humbling Tradition

(photo top right) On December 16th, during the Wreaths Across America event in Arlington, Virginia, a caravan of 11 Semi-trailers full of wreaths drove past onlookers and volunteers on Memorial Ave. as they entered Arlington National Cemetery.

The Wreaths Across America caravan traveled earlier this month from Columbia Falls, Maine, where the wreaths were made. The caravan went through several states before arriving in Arlington.

(photo middle right) Thousand and thousands of volunteers, including volunteers from Illinois, placed wreaths at every gravesite at Arlington National Cemetery. Each volunteer was instructed to say the name out loud when a wreath was placed on a grave of somebody who served so it made a connection.

(photo bottom right) A wreath placed at every gravesite honoring over 400,000 buried in Arlington Cemetery.

A total of 1.2 million wreaths will be placed on markers across the country in 1,238 locations.

<http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/>

2017—2018 DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST./ DIV.	TIME	POST	CITY
01/06/2018	3RD DISTRICT	11:30 AM	CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY	CHICAGO
01/07/2018	22ND DISTRICT	1:00 PM	EDWARDSVILLE POST 199	EDWARDSVILLE
01/08/2018	23RD DISTRICT	1:00 PM	TEUTOPOLIS POST 924	TEUTOPOLIS
01/14/2018	24TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	CARMI POST 224	CARMI
01/14/2018	25TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	THE HAVEN	CARBONDALE
01/17/2018	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	MORTON GROVE POST 134	MORTON GROVE
01/19/2018	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	SHARVIN POST 397	NORTH CHICAGO
01/21/2018	5TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	BREESE POST 252	BREESE
01/21/2018	21ST DISTRICT	1:00 PM	OTIS B. DUNCAN POST 809	SPRINGFIELD
01/24/2018	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	HOWARD H. RHODE POST 888	NORTHLAKE
01/25/2018	8TH DISTRICT	8:00 PM	REHFELDT-MEYER POST 474	MATTESON
02/03/2018	3RD DISTRICT	11:30 AM	CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY	CHICAGO
02/04/2018	19TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	LOVINGTON POST 429	LOVINGTON
02/16/2018	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	LAKE ZURICH POST 964	LAKE ZURICH
02/18/2018	12TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	GENOA POST 337	GENOA

It's that time of year again. If your District or Division would like your scheduled meeting dates, time and location posted in the Department News please submit them to:
 American Legion, Dept. of IL ~ P.O. Box 2910 Bloomington, IL 61702 ~ ATTN: JOY WILSON
 If you have internet access you may email your schedule to: joywilson@illegion.org

NOTE: Please remember if any changes or updates regarding said posted meetings occur submit them as soon as possible to Joy Wilson in writing (or Email).

YOUTH PROGRAM DATES TO REMEMBER

★ Oratorical Contest--March 3, 2018*

(*new location—Crowne Plaza-Springfield)

★ Boys State--June 9th-15th, 2018

★ Illini Girls State--June 17th-23rd, 2018

★ Youth Police---June 24th-29th, 2018



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Now Is The Time To Stand Together For Our Flag

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Newletter articles must be at Department Headquarters by the 15th of each month for it to be in the next months issue.

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JANUARY TRIVIA?

1. What does National Freedom Day celebrate?
2. What is the purpose of National Freedom Day?
3. When is National Freedom Day celebrated?

ANSWERS:

1. This day celebrates the signing of the 13th amendment to the United States Constitution by Abraham Lincoln. This amendment outlawed slavery.
2. To promote harmony and equal opportunity among all citizens of the United States.
3. February 1st.



Let it snow!

BLIZZARD
COAT
COLD
DECEMBER
EARMUFFS
FEBRUARY
FIREPLACE
FLURRIES
FROZEN
GLOVES
HOT CHOCOLATE
ICE
ICE SKATES
ICICLE
JANUARY
MITTENS
SCARF
SHOVEL
SLED
SLUSH
SNOWBALL
SNOWFLAKE
SNOWMAN
SWEATER
WINTER

Name: _____