

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS Department News



The American Legion Family



2018–2019 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER MICHEAL M. CARDER

JANUARY 2019



LEGION FAMILY CARAVAN Prepares for a boost in Membership

This month the Department of Illinois American Legion Family will be traveling north to south, east to west for its annual membership caravan. With each stop you will hear inspiring messages, see hustle and bustle of membership cards being collected, awards presented, and have an opportunity to visit with your State and National leadership.

It was 22 years ago when the membership caravan began Past Dept. SVC Marty Conatser noticed the decline in membership after the holiday season, seeing membership never moving more than two percentage points during the month of January.

Today PNC Marty Conatser, says “during this time of year the caravan encourages our members to go out and work membership, get the renewals or sign up new members so they have something to turn in at their caravan stop.” “Instead of a big winter lull, this gets us back to doing what we know we should have been doing all along, which is focusing on membership”, says Conatser.

Every year since, to get membership back on the minds of Legion Family members, a caravan of 15 plus—National, Department, Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion—members visit 19 posts in several districts over the course of nine days in January (17th through the 26th). Letters were mailed to all 733 post Commanders and Adjutants to notify their members of where and when the caravan will stop encouraging them to attend, and asking the posts, units, and squadrons to turn in membership cards they may have—even if it’s just one! Last year, the caravan collected almost 1,000 legion membership cards.

Department Membership Director Chad Woodburn said, “Since I’ve been involved I find that the caravan is a great motivational tool for the entire legion family. It increases our membership during the winter season and encourages us all to actively get back to working membership.

“It also gives us a the opportunity to take a national representative to an individual post. Many posts say they’ve never had a national officer visit before. So it’s a great honor that out of 733 Illinois posts, only 19 are selected. We are truly a family caravan and make it a point during our travels to express that ‘We are an American Legion Family’.” said Chad.

This year Past National Commander, Denise Rohan will be our special guest in the 2019 American Legion Family Membership caravan. If you haven’t heard PNC Rohan speak before this is the time to hear her passionately speak on Legion issues, answer questions, and promote ‘Family First’ as she did during her year as National Commander. You won’t want to miss her inspiring message.

We will also be promoting our “4 Pillars -100 Years of Service” pin (pictured on the right). We will have pins and certificate on caravan for those who want to purchase this unique piece of history that gives back to four Illinois programs.



2019 Caravan Schedule
located on page 5

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

AS OF
JANUARY 3, 2019

TOP 10 DISTRICT AND DIVISION RANKINGS

District Commander

7	Hoffman
8	Lange
17	McCulley
20	Flowers, Jr.
13	Kraut
16	Rice
11	Reece, Jr.
18	Rowe
19	Walker
23	Devore

Division Commander

4	NARGELENAS
3	DAVIS, III
2	BENIGNO
1	LAMPERT
5	MADSON



From The Desk of Department Commander Micheal M. Carder



Happy New Year to all! December ended the year on a busy note, it all began with the Big 4 meetings at Department and I can report that the department is on solid ground for now and it is full speed ahead. Then it was on to Indianapolis with the senior vice and department adjutant to survey our location for housing at the National Convention and to find a venue for the Chicago Party. Everything went together nicely, the department will be housed at the Omni which is located across the street from the convention center, this is easy walking distance for all events. The Chicago Party will be held at the Speedway Post, a fine dinner is planned, a DJ for your

listening pleasure, and transportation will be available.

The month was very busy for myself, the membership director, senior vice, and department adjutant. We were able to meet with the leadership of all divisions and districts to explain the new membership program announced by the National Headquarters. The new program will allow posts to contact past post members from the years of 2014, 2015, 2016 and the membership fee will be \$21.00. Be sure to mark the new membership cards Membership Special. You have done a great job with department membership, as a department we stood at 80% at Christmas break. This is due to the great job you the blue caps have done and due to the guidance of senior vice Roy Weber.

Starting January 15, 2019, The Membership Caravan will begin and continue through January 26, 2019. Our guest speaker this year is Past National Commander Denise Rohan. I encourage

everyone to come to a stop in your district and meet the commander and hear her words. Also Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, and Legion Riders members be at the stop and come with a bag full of membership renewals for your respective organization.

December ended with Mike Walton retiring from law enforcement in Springfield, it was a great party and I understand that in Mike's honor the crime rate was 0 for that night. Mike Thank You for service to the city of Springfield.

Well blue cappers here we go into our second century, we must continue to bring in non renewed membership and build a strong foundation for the Department of Illinois. How well we do will be our legacy. Continue to serve Legion Programs and your community. Speaking of programs don't forget to donate to my special program THE HAVEN, the shining veterans light of our department.



From The Desk of Department Sr. Vice Commander Roy Weber



Greetings Legionnaires. I hope everyone had a Blessed Christmas and brought in the New Year safely. If you are like me the temptation to over eat was present. A little extra exercise this year is in order for me I hope.

We made a site visit in Indy for this year's National Convention. The hotel for Illinois is just around the corner from the convention center. It is a beautifully restored hotel, with many restaurants within walking distance. We will have a great convention. Indianapolis is an easy drive by car for Department of Illinois, so I imagine many people will attend. Mike Wal-

ton works tirelessly to ensure a safe smooth National Convention. Congrats to him on his recent retirement from the Sheriff's department!!!

The membership caravan has been planned and will begin 17 January at Tremont Post 1236. Denise Rohan, last year's National Commander is our guest speaker this year. She is a very motivational speaker, so I hope we have a great turnout at every stop with many cards to turn in. I am looking forward to seeing many of you while traveling throughout the state on the caravan.

By now every Division and District officer has been informed of the membership promotion from National and Department. With over 22,000 members eligible from 2014, 2015, 2016 I expect a successful membership drive. Only 10%, (2,200) gain would place our department near the top nationally for membership!! Remem-

ber it is a win win situation for the post. Also our National Commander has an award for those that sign up 3 new members. At present we seem to be stagnant for turning in cards.

The DC Conference is fast approaching and National Commander Reistadt will be testifying on the "Hill". Our collective membership provides backing for Congress to fund our VA and our Veterans benefits.

My thanks to all of our members for going the extra mile to see your District succeed!! Leadership, do not hesitate to contact the Department for any training sessions as our training team is always ready to help you. There are numerous voids in our POST and DISTRICT leadership positions. It is very important that we TRAIN and ASSIST our members to be successful leaders. HAPPY NEW YEAR to all!!!

From The Desk of Department Auxiliary President Debra Lewis



Hello Legionnaires- It's hard to believe this Auxiliary year is almost half over! January is an interesting month, with the holiday rush behind us and the stillness of winter surrounding us, it lends itself taking a deep breath and a few moments to self-reflection. As you are thinking about your plans for 2019, please recommit yourself to the mission of the American Legion Family. In our 100th year, our programs and services are still vital to Veterans, their families, and our communities. One of my favorite aspects of our organization is our ability to individualize our activities to the needs of our community. Take some time this month to look at the needs in your community and think about how your Post can impact these needs.

There is never a bad time to start planning your next project.

During December I was able to attend 5 Christmas Gift Shops/Gift to Yanks Who Gave events. It was truly an honor to serve hospitalized Veterans. At each visit I had time to spend visiting with patients' it was heartwarming to feel the gratitude and appreciation from these men and women. It was clear to me how one short visit can lift the spirits of a patient; I will remember these experiences the next time I volunteer at the VAMC and hope you will too.

As I write this article, we are about 1500 members behind where we were at this time last year. It is time to personally contact those hold-outs; make a phone call, plan a visit, or send a letter/email to talk with them about their membership and what is preventing them from renewing this year. The Illinois American Legion Family Caravan is coming to an area near you soon! We will be traveling across the state January

17th--January 26th. Please come and join us for this wonderful opportunity. Bring your Auxiliary members and your questions, we want to hear from you.

We also have Lincoln's Pilgrimage in Springfield on February 11th--12th. February 11th there is a reception with all the National guests having time to visit with attendees. It is a great opportunity to meet our National leadership on a more personal level.

In closing, at the beginning of 2019, (leave you with a quote from author Neil Gaiman: "I hope that in this year to come, you make mistakes. Because if you are making mistakes, then you are making new things, trying new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You're doing things you've never done before, and more importantly, you're doing something." Now get out there; make, try, learn, push, LIVE!



From The Desk of Detachment Commander Eugene Gort

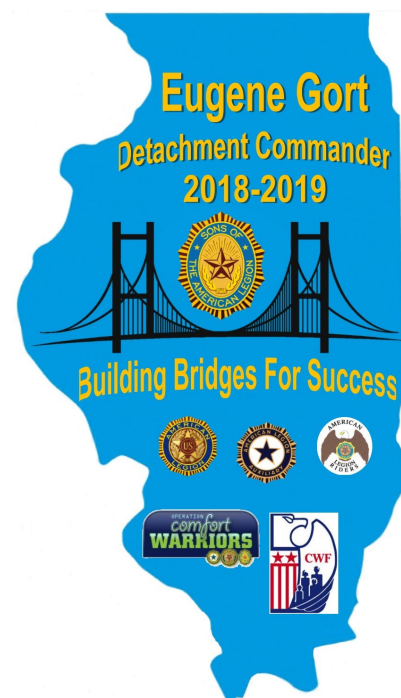
Greetings, I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year on behalf of the Detachment of Illinois. I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season. As we start the new year, we are approximately halfway through our membership year. It is time to kick it up a notch as we push to reach our 100% goal.

2018 was a good year for our Detachment. With the help of the American Legion, we were able to start 7 new squadrons last year. Hopefully

we can start a few more, and will be able to win the Hartline award at National Convention for the Detachment that starts the most squadrons.

As a way to kick start our membership we will soon be going on our membership caravan. I hope to see many of our Legion Family members as we travel the great state of Illinois. Please encourage your posts, units, and squadrons to bring membership cards and attend a stop near them.

See you soon.





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 great comments. But when I asked if they acted upon them most didn't! Here are those ideas again; 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. 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 an 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 and floods out 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 go 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 dislocated shoulder you got in field training probably has gotten worse in the last 40+ years. Or that minor Bilateral Hearing Loss from an explosion in Iraq is worse and you now wear hearing aids. Or 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.

2019 AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY January 17 - 26, 2019 MEMBERSHIP CARAVAN SCHEDULE

January	Div#	Dist#	Post #	City	Meal
JANAURY 17	3	16	1236	TREMONT	6:00 PM—Dinner
JANUARY 18	3	15	644	FAIRVIEW	8:30 AM—Breakfast
JANUARY 18	3	14	569	MILAN	12:00 PM—Lunch
JANUARY 18	2	13	497	FRANKLIN GROVE	6:00 PM—Dinner
JANUARY 19	2	12	181	SANDWICH	8:30 AM—Breakfast
JANUARY 19	2	10	911	WAUCONDA	12:00 PM—Lunch
JANUARY 19	2	11	57	ELGIN	6:00 PM—Dinner
JANUARY 20	1	7	42	EVANSTON	8:00 AM—Breakfast
JANUARY 20	1	2	923	FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT	10:30 AM—Snack
JANUARY 20	1	3	220	ILLIANA	1:00 PM—Lunch
JANUARY 21	CARAVAN OFF				
JANUARY 22	5	24	585	SHAWNEETOWN	6:00 PM—Dinner
JANUARY 23	5	25	487	CHESTER	6:00 PM—Dinner
JANUARY 24	5	22	110	NASHVILLE	8:30 AM—Breakfast
JANUARY 24	5	23	252	BREESE	12:00 PM—Lunch
JANUARY 24	4	21	554	CARLINVILLE	6:00 PM—Dinner
JANUARY 25	3	20	152	PITTSFIELD	12:00 PM—Lunch
JANUARY 26	4	19	102	DELAND	8:30 AM—Breakfast
JANUARY 26	4	18	503	LODA	12:00 PM—Lunch
JANUARY 26	4	17	79	LEROY	4:00 PM—Dinner



Past National Commander Denise Rohan will be our special guest during the 2019 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.

100 YEARS OF SERVICE

American Legion Department of Illinois

4 Pillars Pin



\$100 each

100% of the money will be distributed evenly to four American Legion Department of Illinois programs.

- ★ Special Olympics
- ★ Boys State
- ★ Gifts to the Yanks
- ★ Oratorical Contest

A certificate of program support will be included with each purchase.

(This stylish pin will be a 1.5" inch dual plated gold & silver 3D pin with gold and blue stones inserted in each pillar)

100 Years of Service ~ Department of Illinois ~ 4 Pillars Pin

Please complete this form and mail with payment to:

American Legion Department of Illinois, 2720 E. Lincoln Street, Bloomington, IL 61704

Post Number _____ Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Total Cost \$ _____ Payment type: VISA MC Discover Check number _____

Credit Card Number _____ CVC _____ Exp. Date ____/____/____

Signature _____

Springfield Post #32, The American Legion

1120 Sangamon Avenue - Springfield, Illinois 62702-1853
www.springfieldamericanlegion.com spfldpost32@outlook.com

85th Annual National American Legion Pilgrimage **to the Tomb of Abraham Lincoln** **February 11 & 12, 2019**

The 85th Annual National American Legion Pilgrimage to the Tomb of Abraham Lincoln will be held in Springfield, Illinois, on **Tuesday, February 12, 2019**. 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 Brett Reistad, National President Kathy Dungan, SAL National Commander Greg Gibbs, our Illinois Department Commander Micheal Carder our Department President Debra Lewis and our Detachment Commander Eugene Gort, 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 on Monday evening, February 11, 2019, with The American Legion Family Leadership Reception, 4:30 – 6 p.m. at the Wyndham Hotel. From 5 p.m. – 1 a.m. everyone will journey to an Open House at Springfield Post #32, 1120 Sangamon Avenue, Springfield. A **FREE shuttle** will run continuously between the Wyndham and Post 32 from 5 p.m. – 12 a.m. A delicious Buffet Dinner service will be available at the Mess Hall Restaurant located inside Post 32, from 4:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Reservations are recommended. An “FREE open juke box” will play your favorites from 8 p.m. until 11:00. To place Monday evening dinner reservations phone 217/523-3415 to reach the Mess Hall Restaurant. We will have 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. A special 85th Anniversary Lincoln Day Pilgrimage Commemorative PIN will be available for purchase.

The headquarters hotel is the Wyndham City Centre, 700 East Adams Street, in downtown Springfield. Room rates are \$105.00 per night, single or double occupancy, and the rate includes free parking. **Reservations can be made by telephone at 217-789-1530 (press 1 when prompted)** Remember to tell the clerk that you are reserving a room for the American Legion Lincoln Pilgrimage to receive this special rate. **All hotel reservations must be received by January 19, 2019.**

The following program has been planned for February 12, 2019:

- 8:00 a.m.** **American Legion Family Breakfast** with our National Commander Brett Reistad, and our key note speaker for the breakfast event will be the National President of the American Legion Auxiliary Kathy Dungan, Wyndham, Springfield.
- 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 Distinguished Guests and National Commander Brett Reistad as the keynote speaker. Wyndham Ballroom.

Breakfast tickets are \$25.00 each, and luncheon tickets are \$35.00 each with tax and tip included. Luncheon tables of eight (8) will be assigned and may be reserved by sending your check for \$280.00 to the below listed address, all other seating is “open seating”. 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 Day Pilgrimage, ATTN: Barb Lush, 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 4, 2019. 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 - Springfield. 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, 2019.

Tony Libri
General Chairman

Gold Star 500

Gold Star Mission truly appreciates the support and assistance provided by American Legion Posts throughout Illinois. This is only our second Gold Star 500, but we intend on continuing this well into the future. The first year we road from Cairo, IL to St. Charles, IL. This year from Springfield back to Springfield, looping through central and southern Illinois. Next year we are planning on a Central West, Northwest and Northern loop. Again thank you for your consideration. Any questions, please contact the undersigned at emurray63@comcast.net or 217-625-5541.

The 2018 Gold Star 500 Team thanks all their great supporters! During the period 26-29 September 2018, 35 bicyclists took part in a 513 mile journey, riding to preserve the memories and honor our nearly 300 Fallen Illinois Service Members since 9-11. The bicyclists, mostly Veterans or Service Members, had the great opportunity to meet and interact with many Gold Star Families, Veterans, Schools, Communities, and well...just Patriots, as they rode through central and southern Illinois.

I was honored to be a member of the team supporting these men and women for the duration of the ride. We could not have completed this grueling 513 mile journey without the generous support of many. When we conducted the pre-ride route reconnaissance and logistics coordination in early August, we were blown away with the response we received from everyone! Not only did they provide what we asked for, but they overwhelmingly asked "how else can we help?" or "what else do you need?".

We leaned heavy on our Veteran Service Organizations, especially the American Legion and VFW Posts in our communities to make this ride happen. We didn't have to explain the significance of the phrase "Gold Star", these organizations "got it"! These organizations were tremendous supporters and we couldn't have done it without their support.

The American Legion and VFW Posts along the route did an outstanding job getting the word out about the ride, inspiring their communities to recognize and promote the purpose of the ride, and finally they re-energized and motivated our riders on the many grueling legs of the ride. The Flags, Honor Guards, and just showing up at a rest stop was truly uplifting.

I'd like to personally single out some of the American Legion Posts that supported the Gold Star 500 this year:

- | | |
|--|---|
| * <i>Carlinville American Legion Post 554</i> | * <i>Chatham American Legion Post 759</i> |
| * <i>Decatur American Legion Post 105</i> | * <i>Edgewood American Legion Post 1168</i> |
| * <i>Effingham American Legion Post 120</i> | * <i>Gibson City American Legion Post 568</i> |
| * <i>Illioopolis American Legion Post 508</i> | * <i>Kincaid American Legion Post 905</i> |
| * <i>Mount Vernon American Legion Post 141</i> | * <i>Neoga American Legion Post 458</i> |
| * <i>Salem American Legion Post 128</i> | * <i>Sesser American Legion Post 560</i> |
| * <i>St. Libory American Legion Post 683</i> | * <i>Steeleville American Legion Post 480</i> |
| * <i>Sullivan American Legion Post 68</i> | * <i>Troy American Legion Post 708</i> |

There were many more Posts that stood up early and volunteered to host a rest stop or meal, but unfortunately we were unable to ride through every community or stop at every VFW Post that offered support. That's a very good problem to have!

Thank you all again for the great support you provided to our riders, but more importantly we thank you for your role in preserving the memories and honoring our Fallen and their families!

ALWAYS REMEMBER, NEVER FORGET!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

American Legion Family
Membership Caravan
January 17th--26th
~ ~ ~

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day
DEPT. OFFICE CLOSED**

JANUARY 21ST
~ ~ ~

90% Target Date
January 31st
~ ~ ~

Cut-Off for
Lincoln Pilgrimage
Cut-Off @ 1:00 pm
January 31st
~ ~ ~

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

Lincoln's Birthday
February 12th
~ ~ ~

Valentine's Day
February 14th
~ ~ ~

Division & District
Sr & Jr Vice Cmdrs
Planning Session
10:00 AM--3:00 PM
@ Dept. HQ
February 16th
~ ~ ~

**President's Day
DEPT OFFICE CLOSED
FEBRUARY 18TH**
~ ~ ~

Washington Conference
WASHINGTON, DC
February 24th--27th
~ ~ ~

Dept. Oratorical Contest
Semi-Finals @ 9:30 AM
Finals @ 2:30 PM
Crowne Plaza--Springfield
March 2nd
#

New membership retention incentives for posts and departments

American Legion National Commander Brett Reistad recently announced two new Team 100 incentives for American Legion posts and departments worldwide to collect financial rewards for returning members to their rosters, ramping up renewal rates and hitting their targets for 2019.

Posts will be awarded \$5 for every expired 2014, 2015, and 2016 member that rejoins the organization for 2019. And any American Legion department that achieve 100 percent of its 2019 membership target by May 8 will receive a \$2,500 reward. Departments that achieve 105 percent of its membership target by delegate strength date will receive an additional \$5,000.

Ads announcing these new membership rewards are available for posts and departments to use to spread the message to members. The Team 100 membership reward ads can be used in print for newsletters or flyers, Facebook posts and advertisement for websites.

To help departments, posts and Team 100 recruiters, a toolkit of resources, suggested strategies and more is available under Recruiting Legionnaires at www.legion.org/membership.

Spam emails on the rise



The American Legion National Headquarters IT Division is warning American Legion members to not immediately open attachments that come from what appear to be American Legion sources but may actually be spam.

There has been a recent in-

crease in spam email that appear to come from an American Legion source. If you receive an email from what you think is an American Legion account and it includes an attachment, consider the following before clicking on the attachment:

- The sender name is not quite right. Maybe it only has the last name, or the email address after the name is not @legion.org.
- The attachment pretends to be an invoice, bill, statement, shipping notification or any other document that makes you want to open it.
- You generally do not receive email from the user or email from this user with an invoice attached. If you do then be certain the rest of the message makes sense.
- The words and tone of the message are choppy, i.e. poorly written or in bad English.

If you do happen to open an attachment and the body of the document has text asking you to enable or allow anything, stop.

If you have a question and are concerned it may not be from an American Legion source, please call our Customer Service line at (800) 433-3318.

2018-2019 DISTRICT & DIVISION COMMANDER'S & SR. VICE COMMANDER'S		
DIV.	COMMANDER	SR VICE CMDR
1ST	Joe Lampert	Georgiann Callaway
2ND	Christopher Benigno	Ray Powroznik
3RD	John Davis, III	John Gosney
4TH	Limey Nargelenas	Ron Shapland
5TH	Wayne Madson	Ben Picou
DIST.	COMMANDER	SR VICE CMDR
1ST	Michael Mittelstaedt	David Frederick
2ND	Clemente Rodriguez	Lawrence Hippert
3RD	Frank Thompson	Harold Toney
4TH	Robert Przybylinski	Rodolfo Acevedo
5TH	Detrall Dearbone	Richard Baker
7TH	Shawn Hoffman	John Wowk
8TH	Donald Lange	Rickie Mitchell
9TH	George "Doc" Horn	Dale Tippet
10TH	Layton Pennington	Robert Bucher
11TH	John Reece, Jr	Kevin Leonard
12TH	Raymond Gerkitz	Ascension Hernandez
13TH	Leon Kraut	VACANT
14TH	Richard "Rick" Schomer, Jr	George Howard
15TH	Jon Johnson	Steve Schlieper
16TH	Sam Rice	Deanne Nighsonger
17TH	Arthur "Art" McCulley	Nancy Elder
18TH	Annette Rowe	Layton Warsler
19TH	Cheryl Walker	Gregg Roberts
20TH	Norman Flowers, Jr	Barry Struse
21ST	Mary Kulavic	Richard Rump
22ND	Charles Mueth	Donald Scheyer
23RD	Tracy Devore	Stephen Owens
24TH	Carole Sandusky	Zula Summers
25TH	David Wright	VACANT

More than 250 new laws go into effect in 2019

Illinois lawmakers completed the state's 100th General Assembly in its bicentennial year, and will ring in 2019 with 253 new laws on the books.

Some of the new laws imposed under outgoing Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner run the gamut from technical corrections in laws that will have little effect on people's daily lives to requiring parents of young children to keep them in rear-facing car seats longer, to blaze pink as acceptable for hunters' wardrobes, opioid abuse and school safety all will take center stage and a Route 66 centennial planning commission will convene.

An even busier year could be on the horizon in Springfield with Democratic Governor-elect J.B. Pritzker set to take over Jan. 14 and a legislative wish list that includes legalizing marijuana and sports betting.

Here's a sampling of Illinois' new laws for 2019.

- ★ **MILITARY VETERANS** - Veterans and active duty military service members who are believed to have physical or mental health problems may now be considered "high risk" if they go missing.
 - Health-care facilities will have to provide a free copy of a homeless veteran's medical records when requested by the veteran or an authorized agent for the purpose of supporting a veteran's claim for disability benefits.
 - G.I. Bill of Rights Day - Amends the State Commemorative Dates Act. Provides that the 4th day of November of each year is designated as "G.I. Bill of Rights Day", to be observed throughout the State as a day in recognition of the landmark legislation that provided benefits to World War II veterans, and would serve as the basis of future legislation to extend benefits to all who serve in the United States Armed Forces.
 - Veterans-Members Benefit Fund - Amends the Department of Veterans' Affairs Act. Provides that the Department of Veterans' Affairs may make expenditures from a members benefits fund, subject to approval by the Director of Veterans' Affairs, for recognition and appreciation programs for volunteers who assist the Veterans Homes.
 - Veterans Home-Spouses— A non-veteran spouse shall have the same priority for admission to a Veterans Home as a veteran if they are admitted at the same time to live together.
- ★ **FIREARMS** - A new law creates a 72-hour waiting period on all firearms, not just handguns.
Firearms restraining order: Allows family members or law enforcement to petition the court for an order alleging a person poses significant danger of causing personal injury to himself/herself or another by having in custody or control, owning, purchasing, possessing or receiving a firearm.
- ★ **PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY**: Every school in Illinois must conduct at least one active-shooter safety drill administered by local police annually.
 - Carnival operators must conduct criminal background checks on every ride operator they employ.
 - Stalking laws will expand to include unwanted messages sent through social media apps.
 - Missing persons with disabilities: Requires the Department of State Police to compile and maintain a data repository for missing persons with disabilities be considered a "high-risk missing person."
 - Human trafficking notice requirements: Adds the following to the list of establishments required to post notice under the Human Trafficking Resource Center Notice Act: massage establishments; public gatherings and special events conducted on property open to the public that require the issuance of a permit from the unit of local government; public and private elementary and secondary schools; and establishments registered under the Tattoo and Body Piercing Establishment Registration Act.
 - DCFS specialized placement trafficked youth: Provides that before July 1, 2019, the Department of Children and Family Services shall develop or enter contracts with agencies to provide specialized placements for youth who are victims of sex trafficking.
 - Concussion information: Requires the Department of Public Health to develop, publish and disseminate a brochure to educate the public on the effects of concussions in children and how to look for warning signs. Requires schools to provide the brochure free of charge to parents/guardians of children who may have suffered a concussion regardless of where the concussion may have taken place.
- ★ **OPIOID EPIDEMIC** - Those with licenses to prescribe opioids must complete three hours of continuing education on safe opioid-use practices before renewing their prescription licenses.
 - Another law bars insurance and managed-care companies from requiring prior notification for specified in- or outpatient substance-abuse treatment in order to get those with drug-use disorders the help they need quickly.
 - The state's Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, part of the Department of Human Services, will be renamed the Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery, and the law governing it will be rewritten to better reflect the priority given to the opioid-abuse epidemic. The aim is to provide clearer guidelines for medical and community-based organizations that provide intervention and treatment, and for insurance companies to adopt a standardized approach to such care.
 - Medication disposal: Broadens the definition of "unused medication" to include medications that are in liquid form. This would permit police officers and nurses to dispose of liquid medications that are located at death scenes.

(2019 Laws continued on page 11)

Registration open for 2019 American Legion Baseball season

Returning coaches may renew their teams or register new teams. New coaches should contact their department's chairman to find out more information about state-specific rules and deadlines.

Registration will run through the early deadline on May 15. Teams registered after May 15 will be subject to \$200 late fee through the final deadline on June 1.

Each state may set an earlier deadline for registration, however.

Teams registering in 2019 will spend the same amount in national fees and administrative fees as they did last season, while only spending \$6 more for insurance.

Fees for senior teams will remain \$50 for national registration, \$35 for administrative fees and either \$155 for season personal accident or \$225 for year-round coverage. General liability costs increased by \$6 to \$106.

Fees for junior teams will remain \$25 for national registration, \$35 for administrative fees and either \$130 for season personal accident or \$185 for year-round coverage. General liability costs increased by \$6 to \$74.

State fees, if applicable, will vary by state.

To learn more about your specific department's state fees and deadlines, contact your department chairmen.

For more information on Legion Baseball, visit www.legion.org/baseball. Insurance purchases will be available after Jan. 15.



(2019 Laws continued from page 10)

★ MISC.:

- Golden parachutes: Sets severance pay conditions for government employees in an attempt to prevent "golden parachutes." States that severance pay cannot exceed more than 20 weeks, so compensation and severance pay must be prohibited when the employee has been fired for misconduct. Introduced in response to recent situations where severance packages have cost taxpayers millions of dollars.
- Police can take temporary custody of dogs or cats exposed to weather conditions likely to result in injury or death.
- If you are required to use your personal phone or computer for work, your boss must have a reimbursement policy.

NEW IN 2019: VA's Health Care Rules will be Completely Rewritten this Year

MilitaryTimes.com

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump has been promising expanded health care choices for veterans dating back to his election campaign in 2015. But 2019 could be the year his administration actually makes that happen.

Veterans Affairs has been working on expanded community care rules for veterans' medical appointments since last summer, when Congress approved the VA Mission Act. Details of that work are expected to be released in early 2019, and a full set of new regulations is scheduled to be released in early spring.

Among other priorities, the legislation mandated a retooling of the department's policies for veterans seeking private-sector care, a massive undertaking that supporters have hailed as giving more flexibility and freedom to veterans who face long lines at VA hospitals and clinics.

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie in December hailed the work as part of "a real transformational period at the department." But critics have attacked the work as the first step toward privatizing key parts of the VA mission.

Democrats, including House members who will be taking control of the chamber this year, have promised intense oversight into the new outside care rules, to ensure they aren't written to siphon off needed federal resources to private businesses.

As written, the legislation requires VA to remain a core coordinator of veterans health care plans but also to ensure "the scheduling of medical appointments in a timely manner," "continuity of care and services," and "no lapse in health care services."

That leaves a significant amount of work to be settled in the details of VA's implementation plan.

Currently, the VA's Choice program — the best known and most used of the community care programs — is restricted to veterans who live more than 40 miles from a VA facility or face a wait of more than 30 days for VA services.

The new programs will likely jettison those rules in favor of a looser set of guidelines, including language for veterans who face "an unusual or excessive burden" getting their care at VA facilities.

Veterans groups have advocated for more flexibility for care options but also warned against abandoning the current Veterans Health Administration, a key safety net for millions of veterans across the country.

A congressional hearing previewing the Mission Act implementation work was scheduled for early December but was postponed due to the death of former President George H.W. Bush. That has only added more mystery and urgency to the drafts under consideration by top VA officials.

A Rolling Shrine to Our long History

American Legion National Commander Brett Reistad wore a smile while waving to the crowd for the entire 5.5 miles, two-hour ride on the Legion Family's Tournament of Roses Parade float. And after almost an hour had passed since Reistad stepped off the float, the same smile remained.

The experience stayed with, and likely will stay with, the national commander.

"It was a rush. It was a big rush," Reistad said. "It was exciting. You couldn't have had a better, more supportive crowd out there. It was like a parade that had no ending. It was just a phenomenal experience. I don't think that there's anything that I've ever done that compares to this level of excitement."

The parade had an estimated 700,000 people watching in person, while another 4 million were expected to tune in on either ABC, NBC, Hallmark Channel, Univision, RFD-TV or KTLA. "I really think it gave us some fantastic exposure," Reistad said. "People were very supportive as we passed. A lot of 'God bless the USA' and 'thank you for your service.' And they never stopped. The crowds just went on and on and on."

"And there were Legion Family members along the way that were very supporting, yelling out their post numbers. It was really great."

The American Legion float carried the message of "Still Serving America," highlighting every section of the Legion Family and its various youth programs. All of those components tied into the float's celebrating of The American Legion's centennial being celebrated this year.

"I don't think there was a better time to do this," Reistad said. "(Having) the goodwill of being out there, and people refreshing their knowledge and understanding of what The American Legion is, knowing we're out there still doing our good work."

The float's riders arrived at their spot in the lineup at around 6 a.m. It didn't take long for those walking up and down Orange Grove Boulevard to stop to thank those on the float and grab a photo op with one or all of the four Medal of Honor recipients riding along the Legion's float.

Once the parade began, those lining Orange Grove, Colorado Boulevard, Sierra Madre Boulevard and Villa Street – most areas along the route jam packed with parade watchers three, four and five persons deep – greeted those on the float with cries of "thank you," applause, salutes and often standing ovations.

Those reactions moved Walter "Joe" Marm – who joined fellow Medal of Honor recipients Hershel "Woody" Williams, Ron Rosser and Britt Slabinski on the float. "It's very humbling," Marm said. "We're in the greatest country in the world. It's just an honor to be here representing some of the veterans of our country. It's very special."

Marm said before that he felt honored to be in the parade. That opinion didn't change after the parade. "It was very, very special," he said. "The crowds were tremendous. It was just an honor to be here."



Cristina Molina, a member of Hollywood Auxiliary Unit 43 and an American Legion Rider, also felt moved by the response from parade watchers, for a very special reason.

"It reminds me of my dad, my dad's service to this country and how proud I am of what he did," Molina said. "It makes me feel proud to be an American because veterans sacrifice a lot. They go and they serve to protect this country, and to hear people

acknowledge that, especially the little kids, it's amazing."

Sharing the float with Marm and the other Medal of Honor recipients also made an impact on Molina. "It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It was amazing. Humbling. You look around and you're on there with four Medal of Honor recipients. It's surreal. I couldn't believe it the whole time."

U.S. Air Force Airman First Class Kathleen Clingerman, one of a handful of active-duty military personnel on the float, said she was proud to represent her branch of service. The experience on the float itself "was overwhelming, I guess, for just the appreciation that people have for the service," she said.

For Sons of The American Legion National Adjutant Anthony Wright, the opportunity to ride on the float was "very eye-opening. The experience was great because I felt as a member of the Sons of The American Legion I was honoring my grandfather's and my father's service."

Wright was happy to see the Legion Family featured as prominently as it was on the float. "The American Legion Family is that: a family," he said. "To have The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of The American Legion and the American Legion Riders shows unity and that we're one group."

American Legion Past National Commander Dan Dellinger came to California last week to help with decorating the float. Seeing it go from a bare frame to fully decorated and passing along the parade route while he watched from the viewing stands was a memorable experience.

"I was sitting across the aisle (in the stands) from a two-star Marine general, and he stood up and clapped (when the float passed)," Dellinger said. "I thought that was very apropos for our float. Everyone in the stands gave a warm welcome to us. That made me feel really good."

Dellinger believes having a float in the 130th running of what is one of the world's most well-known parades made a positive impact on the nation's view of The American Legion.

"I think it was a great step forward," he said. "I think there was a lot of pride across the country. I think people around this country saw us at our best. One hundred years of service to America, and we're going to continue to do so."



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 comarades who are alone or can not get out!



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 to make sure they are
 warm and have food



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Not every establishment offers a discount, but it never hurts to ask, when in doubt ask the manager. Go to link below for complete listing.

<https://www.legion.org/veteransbenefits/military-veteran-discounts>

The American Legion Membership Application

 (Name) (Phone)

 (Mailing Address) (Date)

 (City) (State) (Zip) (Post #)

 (Membership ID# former member) (Email Address) (Dues)

Please check appropriate eligibility dates and branch of service below

- Aug 2, 1990 – cessation of hostilities as determined by U.S. Government
- Dec. 20, 1989 – Jan. 31, 1990
- Aug. 24, 1982 – July 31, 1984
- Feb. 28, 1961 – May 7, 1975
- June 25, 1950 – Jan. 31, 1955
- Dec. 7, 1941 – Dec. 31, 1946
- April 6, 1917 – Nov 11, 1918
- U.S. Army
- U.S. Navy
- U.S. Air Force
- U.S. Marines
- U.S. Coast Guard
- Merchant Marines 12/7/41 – 12/31/46 (only eligibility)



I certify that I served at least one day of active military duty during the dates marked above and was honorably discharged or am still serving honorably.

 Signature of applicant Name of recruiter

30-009 (2012)

Receipt of Dues (Please Print)



From _____ for 20____ Post # _____
 \$ _____
 Recruiter's Name _____
 Recruiter's Signature _____
 Recruiter's Phone # _____

JOIN
 TEAM
 100
 TODAY

2018—2019 DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST. / DIV.	TIME	POST	CITY
01/06/2019	22ND DISTRICT	1:00 PM	VENICE-MADISON POST 307	GRANITE CITY
01/13/2019	5TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	DUPO POST 485	DUPO
01/13/2019	19TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	CERRO GORDO POST 117	CERRO GORDO
01/16/2019	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	MORTON GROVE POST 134	MORTON GROVE
01/20/2019	25TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	THE HAVEN	CARBONDALE
01/23/2019	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	PALATINE POST 690	PALATINE
01/24/2019	8TH DISTRICT	8:00 PM	REHFELDT-MEYER POST 474	MATTESON
02/03/2019	23RD DISTRICT	10:00 AM	BLUFORD POST 1193	BLUFORD
02/17/2019	12TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	SYCAMORE POST 99	SYCAMORE
02/17/2019	13TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	BYRON POST 209	BYRON
02/20/2019	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	EVANSTON POST 42	EVANSTON
02/24/2019	11TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	HUNTLEY POST 673	HUNTLEY
02/27/2019	9TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	FRANKLIN PARK POST 974 (AMERICANISM)	FRANKLIN PARK
02/28/2019	8TH DISTRICT	8:00 PM	EVERGREEN PARK POST 854	EVERGREEN PARK
03/03/2019	17TH DISTRICT	11:00 AM	MT. PULASKI POST 447	MT. PULASKI
03/03/2019	18TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	CHEBANSE POST 408	CHEBANSE
03/10/2019	16TH DISTRICT	10:00 AM	BRADFORD POST 445	BRADFORD

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 1-2, 2019 (Springfield, IL)

Boys State--June 8-14, 2019 (Charleston, IL)

Illini Girls State--June 16-22, 2019 (Charleston, IL)

*** Youth Police---June 23-28, 2019** (Springfield, IL) *CHANGE in LOCATION—2019 session will be held at the NATIONAL GUARD FACILITY (same as 2018).*

Legionnaires Deliver Gifts to Yanks That Gave



On Monday, December 17, 2018, The American Legion Post 328 in Morrison, IL delivered 38 "Gifts to Yanks That Gave" <https://giftstotheyanks.org> to veterans living in the three nursing homes in Morrison. Veteran residents are given a choice of usually three different gifts, which vary from year to year. Luther chose a blanket this year, while he wore his sweatshirt that he received last year. Clary had a chill, so he chose to drape his new blanket over his shoulders. Both Ted Luther and Jim Clary are residents of Windsor Manor Assisted Living Community, 403 Scenic Street, Morrison.

Pictured left-to-right are resident Ted Luther; Legionnaires Ken Petersen, Jerry Brearton, and Larry Zuidema; resident Jim Clary.



Blue Star Memorial Dedication

In a remembrance ceremony on Veterans Day was held in dedication of a Blue Star Memorial Marker to honor all veterans in the village of Downers Grove.

The ceremony was a partnership with the Alexander Bradley Burns American Legion Post 80, and the Garden Club of Downers Grove, with many officials and citizens of the village in attendance.

It was noted by Mayor Tully that 40 citizens in the village are currently serving in the military.

Pictured on the left carrying the wreath is 2nd Division Commander Christopher Benigno.



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Department Commander MICHEAL M. CARDER
Department Editor MARTY CONATSER

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JANUARY TRIVIA?

1. What animal did the Carthaginians use to defeat the Romans at sea during the third century B.C.?
2. How were the height and width of modern American battleships originally determined?
3. What two nations were involved in a year-long conflict that was popularly known as the Pastry War?
4. What was the name of the barbaric German tribe that overran Gaul, Spain and North Africa and sacked Rome in the fifth century?

1. Snakes. The Carthaginians catapulted earthenware pots of poisonous snakes onto the decks of the Roman ships.
2. The ships had to be able to go beneath the Brooklyn Bridge and through the Panama Canal.
3. France and Mexico in 1838. It was triggered by Mexico's refusal to pay for damages done by Mexican army officers to a restaurant run by a French pastry chef in Tacubaya, now a section of Mexico City.
4. The Vandals.

ANSWERS:



New Year's Word Search

C F B E G I N N I N G F G Y O P R X C X
 C E R X Y R A U N A J O H N A H X B V L
 C L L A B T O O F M E O J O Y O P Z X I
 G A M E S C Y L I P K D K E S Q Y L I K
 N I A I B C D D O F H F A Z P S N U C Z
 E I T D C R N H P P A R T I E S A V C I
 W X J L R I A O D L Z I C I P I W M O O
 T N T T G P J T T D A E D N M X N R M O
 Z U Z H P F A M I L Y N W C F E C Y B L
 C U T Y Y A D I L O H D S R H L I I X S
 E X P E C T A T I O N S E C V G H D A O
 P A R A D E S Y E N G S V F P A T D B U
 V P R S V M O A E O O E H G U R F G B K
 Z P M T U T U Z S L G Q P B R Q M O O Q
 W P J Q E H O U U C J Z N J V S Y B O Q
 T P B I L K M T Y U G N G H D C H L V I
 C L Q P C Y I C Z D N E H J V X P L C L
 I E O K K O Q J V E L J J C V K V C W S
 O B E N N U B K L J X X O I X K L L X X
 K U U S C X Z X K Z V U I W S W V Q V Q

Words to Find!

- | | | | | | |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|---------|-------|-------------|
| BEGINNING | CELEBRATIONS | EXPECTATIONS | FAMILY | FOOD | FOOTBALL |
| FRIENDS | GAMES | HAPPY | HOLIDAY | HOPE | JANUARY |
| MIDNIGHT | NEW | PARADES | PARTIES | PLANS | RESOLUTIONS |
| TIME | YEAR | JOY | | | |