

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS Department News



The American Legion Family



2019–2020 DEPARTMENT COMMANDER ROY WEBER

JANUARY 2020



AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY Membership Caravan 2020 TAKES COMMITMENT



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

AS OF
DECEMBER 20, 2019

TOP 10 DISTRICT AND DIVISION RANKINGS

District Commander

14	Schomer
20	Flowers, Jr.
15	Schlieper
13	Nichols
18	Rowe
8	Mitchell
17	Elder
23	Owens
10	Bucher
12	Hernandez

Division Commander

3	GOSNEY
4	SHAPLAND
2	POWROZNIK
5	PICOU
1	CALLAWAY

ARE YOU READY?!?!?...the Department of Illinois American Legion Family is coming your way...*why?*...because it's time for the annual American Legion Family Membership Caravan.

23 years ago a decline in membership after the holiday season was noticed by department leadership. The common question was as much then as it is still today "how do we get membership back on the minds of Legion Family members?" The answer was to have a caravan of close to twenty National, Department, Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion travel throughout Illinois picking up membership. This year 19 posts over the course of nine days the 2020 Legion Family Caravan will travel this January in doing the same as they did 23 years ago.

Membership Director Chad Woodburn, has checked the list twice, spoken to all of the division commanders, driven the route to ensure safe travels and recently sent letters to all 713 post Commanders. The letter was on behalf of Dept. Sr. Vice Commander Wayne L. Fischer, asking each commander to notify their members of when and where the caravan stops are and to post the caravan schedule in case they cannot make their local stop. Wayne's letter encourages all to come out and support not only our National guest, but also your Department, Division, and District leadership on the caravan, AND turn in all membership cards. He asked for district officers to pick up any cards if the post cannot attend a stop near them. "The hope is you will not miss the stop as there are several incentives and awards that can be earned if they meet their goal", said Fischer.

Since the caravan began, PNC Marty Conatser, said "membership numbers are now no less than five percent in January. In 2019, the caravan collected over 2,000 membership cards, making the commitment of each stop worthwhile". "It causes members to go out and work membership to get the renewals or sign up new members so they will have something to turn in at a caravan stop." "Instead of the big Christmas lull, it gets us back to the commitment of doing what we know we know should be doing, which is focusing on membership." said Conatser. Adding that "ours is truly a family caravan, we make it a big issue during our travels across the state that we ARE a LEGION FAMILY."

Each year a national leader also participates in the caravan, this year Richard A. Heigert of Missouri will join us as we travel through Illinois. "The caravan is a motivational tool for all of us," Conatser said. "It increases our membership, it gets us back to working membership, and it gives us a chance to take a national representative to an individual post. Many of posts will say that they never had a national officer visit before, so it's an honor that out of 713 Illinois posts 19 are selected."

The 2020 Caravan schedule is located on page 4 in this issue of the Department News.

From The Desk of Department Commander Roy Weber



I hope everyone had a Blessed Christmas and will have a safe and Happy New Year.

This has been a busy month preparing for the caravan approaching in three weeks, as well as the Big 4 meeting at Department Headquarters and Division/District meetings.

I know there were several Pearl Harbor commemoration events held, I attended the one at Post 924 in Teutopolis.

I want to Thank those Posts who are 100%, and the Membership Teams that are working on the Posts who are close to being 100%.

Now that we are into the new year, it is now time to put our best efforts in to building our membership, to keeping the great Legion programs going. Without the strength in membership many of our programs can go away.

In a few weeks the American Legion Family Caravan will be rolling throughout the state. I encourage every Post to participate at the stop in your area. National Vice Commander Richard Heigart will be speaking at every stop, our entire Legion Department Family leadership will also bring greetings. Each one has a great message to share you won't want to miss. While at each stop not only will we be looking for membership cards, we will be looking for your attendance. Our Division & District membership teams should be in contact with every Post, in an effort to make this caravan a huge success!! **VETERANS CAN DO!**

There are incentives for 100% Posts

as well as recruiting awards, it is important for our Membership Teams to get this information to each and every Post. Hard work deserves praise!

By the time you're reading this Department will have gone to Louisville, Kentucky for the site visit in order to prepare for our 2020 National Convention in August.

We had the Department Convention planning meeting on December 14th. The legion, auxiliary and SAL have most everything in place to for another successful convention in Springfield next July. Your department staff is hard at work to ensure that our conventions are successful, so keep July in your minds and plan to attend the ceremonies and the fun.

Legionnaires should be at the schools for our Oratorical, Boy's

(Dept. Commander continued on page 7)

From The Desk of Department Sr. Vice Commander Wayne L. Fischer



My Fellow Legionnaires, as you already know we are into the final half of our 2020 Legion Year. A lot of things have already taken place, but we have a tremendous opportunity ahead of us and of course, membership is on **"Top of our List"!!!**

At the time of this writing my hope is that we ended the first half of our year close to 81% of last year's total of 74,162. Just so you are aware, that total leaves us with more work to do.

Our Goal that National has set is 77,082 Legionnaires for the Department of Illinois or just under a 4% increase. **So, what can we do to accomplish this Goal?**

By now, we all are familiar with the **"Legion Act"** that was signed into

Law earlier this calendar year. That opened the doors to invite 4.2M Veterans to become Legionnaires who can enjoy the same opportunities that the American Legion; Auxiliary; and Sons of the Legion now enjoy and offer our legion family. Where to find them is can be a challenge. We really have no idea just how many of these now eligible Veterans, who now can join our Great Organization, live here in Illinois.

My guess is there are over 100,000 eligible veterans just here in Illinois. Let's say the actual number is only 50,000, just think of the positive impact they and their families would have on the Illinois American Legion Family, and we them. We just need to find them. They are our neighbors; our friends; folks that serve in various community organizations; or maybe even family members that live in areas where there is not an American Legion Post. It is our job to invite and sign them up into your Post. We want them to become familiar with and know the importance of who we are; why we

are here; and the Service we offer to our Fellow Veterans; our Active Duty; our Youth; and our Community. Who knows, maybe down the road they may want to start a new American Legion Post. **Sounds like something you may have heard about or are part of today. Right?**

Success will come with one renewal and 1 new member at a time. Let's all be part of that driving force. Don't be part of that "negative group" that complains about everything and cares nothing for any one else but themselves. They need to move on.

We accept our roles in the American Legion to positively and effectively serve our "4-Pillars"!!!

So, let's look at what's happening in January? **We are conducting our Annual Department of Illinois American Legion Family Membership Caravan.** This involves Legionnaires; Auxiliary Members and Sons of the Legion

(Dept. SVC continued on page 10)



From The Desk of Department Auxiliary President Sue Cunniff Coughlin



Happy New Year! It's hard to believe this is already January 2020 and this Legion Family year is almost half over.

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and that everyone was able to get some time to relax. It is now time for all of us to get back to working on our programs. As we plan our new year's resolutions, please include recommitting yourself to the mission of the American Legion Family. Our programs and services are vital to Veterans, their families and our communities.

In December, I had the opportunity

to visit three Veterans facilities for their Christmas Gift Shops and Gifts To The Yanks. It was an honor to be there and it was wonderful visiting with the patients. They truly appreciated the gifts and the visit. I am planning to visit more of the VAMCs in the coming months. If you have any time, talk to our VA Representatives or Deputies to schedule a visit to a facility near your home. The patients and our Reps and Deps would be grateful to have you.

Our American Legion Family Caravan is coming to an area near you soon! We will be traveling across the state January 16th thru January 25th. Please find something close to you and join us for this wonderful opportunity. Bring your Auxiliary members and your questions. I look forward to meeting many members of our American Legion Family during these stops.

Lincoln's Pilgrimage in Springfield will be February 11th and February 12th. On February 11th there is a reception with all the National guests. They will have time to visit with everyone that attends. It is a great opportunity to meet our National leadership on a more personal level.

Mark your calendars. The evening of March 19th, we are going to have our 100th Birthday Celebration at our Department Headquarters in Bloomington. Our National President Nicole Clapp and our Department Leadership will be there and you will have the opportunity to meet everyone. Hors d'oeuvre and refreshments will be available. The cost will be \$10. The following day is our Patriotic Conference at the Marriott in Normal starting at 9:00 AM. If you

(ALA President continued on page 7)



From The Desk of Detachment Commander Phil Stander

American Legion Family, a new year is upon us. I trust we all had a nice Holiday and celebrated the New Year with Family and Friends.

We have had a nice break in the action now it is time to work through the long days of winter a stay productive. The Son's will continue to work hard to promote the American Legion Family. Currently the Detachment of Illinois is in 14th place nationwide for membership and approximately 5% ahead of last year at this time. Four New Charters have been presented with two more waiting on Nationals stamp of approval.

There will be a good representation of the Son's on the Caravan this year. We will be excepting cards and for the Posts that we visit which do not have a

squadron we will have starter packets and representatives to explain the benefits of having a Squadron in your post.

The leadership team of the SAL is looking forward to greeting everyone along the route. If there is anything, we can do to help you achieve the greatest success possible please reach out.

If you have a flyer for an event you can Email that to myself and we will post it on the Detachment Facebook Page. Thank you to all of you that make this possible. Don't forget to post those Photos and Details on Snapshots of service and Legion town.

With the cold weather arriving remember to check on the sick and elderly. Make sure they stay warm and have the supplies they need to get through the winter.

The Sons of the American Legion Thank you all!

With a good "CAN DO" attitude we can "CELEBRATE THE PAST AND AWAKEN OUR FUTURE" while making sure "THE DRIVE IS ALIVE"



2020 AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY January 16 - 25, 2020 MEMBERSHIP CARAVAN SCHEDULE

JANUARY	Div#	Dist#	Post #	CITY	MEAL
JANUARY 16	3	16	8	WENONA	DINNER 6:00 PM
JANUARY 17	4	17	1115	SPRING BAY	BREAKFAST 8:30AM
JANUARY 17	3	15	1233	COLONA	LUNCH 12:00 PM
JANUARY 17	2	13	328	MORRISON	DINNER 6:00 PM
JANUARY 18	2	12	181	SANDWICH	BREAKFAST 8:30AM
JANUARY 18	2	11	75	GENEVA	LUNCH 12:00 PM
JANUARY 18	2	10	738	DEERFIELD	DINNER 6:00 PM
JANUARY 19	1	9	36	DES PLAINES	BREAKFAST 8:00AM
JANUARY 19	1	7	134	MORTON GROVE	LUNCH 10:30 AM
JANUARY 19	1	8	398	HAZEL CREST	SNACK 1:30 PM
JANUARY 20	CARAVAN DAY OFF ★ CARAVAN DAY OFF ★ CARAVAN DAY OFF				
JANUARY 21	3	14	6	MACOMB	DINNER 6:00 PM
JANUARY 22	3	20	279	JACKSONVILLE	DINNER 6:00 PM
JANUARY 23	4	19	458	NEOGA	LUNCH 12:00 PM
JANUARY 23	4	18	90	MARSHALL	DINNER 6:00 PM
JANUARY 24	5	23	20	NEWTON	BREAKFAST 8:30 AM
JANUARY 24	5	24	14	FLORA	LUNCH 12:00 PM
JANUARY 24	5	25	645	HERRIN	DINNER 6:00 PM
JANUARY 25	4	21	362	STAUNTON	LUNCH 12:00 PM
JANUARY 25	5	22	581	COLUMBIA	DINNER 6:00 PM



National Vice Commander
Richard A. Heigert will be our
special guest during the 2020 Illinois
American Legion Family Caravan.
Please make time to come to one of
the caravan stops nearest you to visit
with him. Also, if you plan on attending
the meal you need to R.S.V.P. the host post.



Bring all membership cards with you to turn in...even if it's just ONE!

Springfield Post 32, The American Legion

1120 Sangamon Avenue, Springfield, Illinois 62702-1853

www.springfieldamericanlegion.com spfldpost32@outlook.com

86th Annual National American Legion Pilgrimage to the Tomb of Abraham Lincoln February 11 and 12, 2020

The 86th Annual National American Legion Pilgrimage to the Tomb of Abraham Lincoln will be held in Springfield, Illinois, on Wednesday, February 12, 2020. Springfield Post 32, Auxiliary Unit 32, and The Sons of the American Legion Squadron 32 extend a most cordial invitation to you to attend and participate.

National Commander **Bill Oxford**, National President **Nicole Clapp**, SAL National Commander **Doug Bolt**, our Illinois Department Commander **Roy Weber**, our Department President **Sue Cunniff Coughlin** and our Detachment Commander **Phil Stander**, will be attending and participating in the activities. Additionally, many other Legion, Auxiliary, SAL and state and local dignitaries will be in attendance to honor President Abraham Lincoln on this very special day.

Please Note: The 86th Annual Pilgrimage Headquarters Hotel is different this year. The President Abraham Lincoln Doubletree Hotel will be the Headquarters Hotel for this year's Pilgrimage to Mr. Lincoln's Tomb. It is located directly across the street from last year's location (7th and Adams in Springfield). Room rates are \$105.00 plus tax per night, single or double occupancy, and the rate includes free parking. Call 217-544-8800 to reserve rooms (press 0 when prompted). If you register by phone, please tell the clerk that you are reserving a room for the American Legion Lincoln Pilgrimage to receive this special rate. You can also register online (preferred): https://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/S/SPIASDT-ALP-20200210/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG. All hotel reservations must be made by January 19, 2020.

The Pilgrimage Commemoration begins on Tuesday evening, February 11, 2020 with The American Legion Family Leadership Reception, 4:30 – 6:00 PM at the President Abraham Lincoln Doubletree Hotel. Come and greet our National Officers, meet old friends and make new ones. From 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM everyone will journey to an Open House at Springfield Post 32, 1120 Sangamon Avenue, Springfield. **A FREE SHUTTLE** will run continuously between the Headquarters Hotel and Post 32 from 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM. A delicious Buffet Dinner service will be available at the Mess Hall Restaurant between 4:30 and 8:30 PM. Reservations are recommended and can be made by calling the Mess Hall Restaurant at 217-523-3415 or email: spfldpost32@outlook.com.

A FREE open juke box will play your favorites from 8:00 to 11:00 PM.

The following program is planned for Wednesday, February 12, 2020:

- 8:00 AM The American Legion Family Breakfast with our National Commander Bill Oxford, our National President Nicole Clapp (Keynote Speaker), and SAL National Commander, Doug Bolt.
- 10:00 AM Pilgrimage departs the Hotel for journey to Abraham Lincoln's Tomb
- 10:30 AM Ceremonies and Placing of the Wreaths inside Mr. Lincoln's Tomb, Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield, Illinois
- 12:30 PM Lincoln Commemoration Luncheon with Distinguished Guests and National Commander Bill Oxford as the keynote speaker at the Headquarters Hotel.

Breakfast tickets are \$25.00 each and luncheon tickets are \$35 each with tax and tip included. Luncheon tables of eight will be assigned or may be reserved by sending your check for \$280.00 to the address given below. 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 email is: spfldpost32@outlook.org. **Please Note:** all meal checks and or reservations must be received or canceled by **February 4, 2020**. No refunds can be made after that date. Please make your reservations early to guarantee your reservations.

We sincerely hope that you will join us as we honor our 16th President, Abraham Lincoln, on his birthday in his "Hometown", and that you make time to visit the beautiful **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum**, located only three short blocks from the Headquarters Hotel. The Museum and Library will offer their Group Rate to our attendees. You need only show your membership card on February 10, 11 or 12, 2020.

Respectfully, Robert M. Wesley, General Chairman



Did You Know?... By Ray Toczek O: 312-980-4266 E: Raymond.Toczek@va.gov

DID YOU KNOW... 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, with some additions. 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 and make new ones, e-mail your doctors with medical questions, refill your prescriptions and print out test results.
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. It's not automatic, you must apply each year. 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? Did your college child drop out and join a rock band? 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 or your service medals? 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. 2019 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 pulled calf muscle you got in field training probably has gotten worse in the last 40+ years. Or that minor hearing loss from an explosion in Iraq is not so bad 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. Did you move? The VA benefits computer doesn't talk to the VA hospital computer. You must notify each one separately.
10. Finally, resolve to sign up at least one new member for your post. With a change in our eligibility, ALL veterans since December 7th, 1941 can join. 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.

(Dept. Commander continued from page 2)

State, Youth Cadet Law Enforcement School and the Essay Contest programs. Also remember to talk to the school counselors about the scholarships that are available through the American Legion for the graduating seniors. We have these programs in place it's our job to let our communities know how we can help.

In closing, stay healthy, travel safe, stay warm and please make time for a buddy check on our home bound veterans ensuring they are safe and warm too.

Last but not least, I hope to see full houses at each one of our caravan stops.

(ALA President continued from page 3)

have never attended, consider joining us. We will have some great speakers and many surprises planned for that day. Look for more details to come.

Please keep reaching out to your family, friends and acquaintances and tell them about our amazing American Legion Family and all the wonderful things we do. We need members to serve our Veterans, their families and our communities. We are down in membership. With the eligibility changes, I was hoping that we could have a great year. We still have time so we all need to keep working on recruiting, rejoining and renewing members.

As we start this New Year, keep this quote from Zig Ziglar in mind, "The past is your lesson. The present is your gift. The future is your motivation." Let's remember our lessons, enjoy today and get moving for our future!

National Commander's Pin Incentive Program

American Legion National Commander James W. "Bill" Oxford will award his national commander "A Foundation for the Future" membership excellence pin to any Legionnaire who obtains three new members into The American Legion.

A new member is any eligible person joining for the 2020 membership year who was not a member of The American Legion during the 2019 membership year.

Each member listed must be eligible for membership in The American Legion. Forward names of Sons of The American Legion members or Auxiliary members to your detachment or unit for use in their respective incentive programs.

Only one pin will be awarded per individual. Upon receipt, national membership staff will confirm the names and mail the pin directly to the person who earned it.

"A Foundation for the Future" incentive pin form



YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES 12/31/19!



RENEW YOUR DUES TODAY!

DON'T LET THE GRINCH STEAL YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

World War I Memorial begins construction



*Sabin Howard's sculpture, **A Soldier's Journey**, will be the focal point of the memorial. feature a freestanding sculpture wall with a fountain, an "island-shaped" walkway, a plaza, and a pool. The east face of the 59-by-12-foot wall would depict a sculpture of 38 roughly life-size soldiers, while the west face would present an inscribed quote.*

On Dec. 12, key leaders gathered on the site of the new National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C., to mark the start of construction, after the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission received a building permit from the National Park Service (NPS).

Those leaders included commission chair Terry Hamby, U.S. Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt, National Park Service acting director David Vela, commission special advisers Sen. John Warner and Adm. Mike Mullen, and American Legion representative to the commission Jack Monahan.

The first phase of construction will be a 360-day project to rebuild the former Pershing Park, and prepare the site for the eventual installation of the memorial bronze sculpture when it is completed. The building permit was awarded after the memorial design was approved by the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission earlier in 2019. The memorial is being built under the commission's authority by the Doughboy Foundation.

Hamby was very pleased with the receipt of the building permit and start of construction. "Finally, the 4.7 million Americans who left their homes to deploy to a country most had never visited, fight in a war they did not start, and were willing to die for peace and liberty for people they did not know, will be honored at this magnificent spot in our nation's capital," he said.

"The new, national World War I Memorial will join the other war memorials in Washington, D.C., each serving as a fitting tribute to the sacrifices that American men and women made to defend freedom throughout the world," Bernhardt added.

The bronze, entitled "A Soldier's Journey," is being sculpted in clay by Sculptor Sabin Howard and his team at his Englewood, N.J., studio, and will be cast in bronze at the Pangolin Editions sculpture foundry in the United Kingdom before being installed at the memorial site, along with the existing sculpture of John J. Pershing, General of the Armies of the United States, who commanded the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I. As well as the sculptural and landscape works in the park, the memorial will feature extended reality elements to enhance and extend the visitor experience. A detailed document of the approved National World War I Memorial design is available to the public; it can be downloaded as a PDF at ww1cc.org/memorial-design.

The commission's VSO/Military Affairs Director David Hamon added that the groundbreaking marks a "great opportunity for American Legion posts to be a part of this historical moment ... by making a donation to the memorial in the name of your post, you can forever be part of this great legacy by becoming an AEF Memorial Corps post." About 22 posts nationwide have joined in 2019. For more information contact Hamon at (540) 379-8584 or david.hamon@worldwar1centennial.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SAL Winter D.E.C.
2020 Membership Renewal Date
January 3
~ ~ ~

National M & PA Meetings
Indianapolis, IN
January 10 & 11
~ ~ ~

80% National Target Date
January 15
~ ~ ~

**Illinois American Legion
Family Membership Caravan
January 16—25**
~ ~ ~

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day
DEPT. OFFICE CLOSED
January 20**
~ ~ ~

90% Illinois Target Date
AND
3rd 100% Post Cash Award
AND
Cut-off for Lincoln Pilgrimage
(cut-off 1:00 PM)
January 31
~ ~ ~

4 Chaplain's Sunday
February 2
~ ~ ~

Americanism Essay Contest
Deadline (1st Friday in Feb.)
February 7
~ ~ ~

60% ALA Target Date
February 10
~ ~ ~

Lincoln Pilgrimage
Springfield, IL
February 11 & 12
~ ~ ~

80% National Target Date
February 12
~ ~ ~

HAPPY VALENTINES DAY!
February 14
~ ~ ~

**President's Day
DEPT. OFFICE CLOSED
February 17**
~ ~ ~

2020 National Renewal Date
February 26
~ ~ ~

Department of Illinois
Oratorical Contest
Crowne Plaza—Springfield, IL
March 7

Semi-Finals @ 9:00 AM
Finals @ 2:30 PM
(Contestant Orientation held March 6th)
~ ~ ~

Washington Conference
AND
DSO Training
Washington DC
March 8-11
~ ~ ~

90% NATIONAL TARGET DATE
March 11
~ ~ ~

American Legion's
101st Birthday
March 16
~ ~ ~

ALA Patriotic Conference
Bloomington, IL
March 20-21
~ ~ ~

SAL Spring DEC
&
Detachment Commander's
Homecoming @ Wauconda
Squadron 911
Wauconda, IL
~ ~ ~

95% National Target Date
April 8
~ ~ ~

GOOD FRIDAY
DEPT. OFFICE CLOSED
April 10
~ ~ ~

Easter Sunday
April 12
~ ~ ~

National Oratorical Contest
Indianapolis, IN
April 17-19
~ ~ ~

Spring DEC @ 1:00 PM
&
Legion Spring Meetings
Bloomington, IL
April 18

9-8-8 suicide crisis hotline gets Senate committee's unanimous approval



The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation on Wednesday, December 11th unanimously approved the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act, S. 2661. The American Legion sees this as a positive step to improve access to mental health help for veterans in need.

The bipartisan act, supported by American Legion Resolution No. 377, would require the Federal Communications Commission to designate 9-8-8 as the universal telephone number for a national suicide prevention and mental-health crisis hotline. Advocates for the hotline believe that designating a three-digit telephone number can transform access to mental health care.

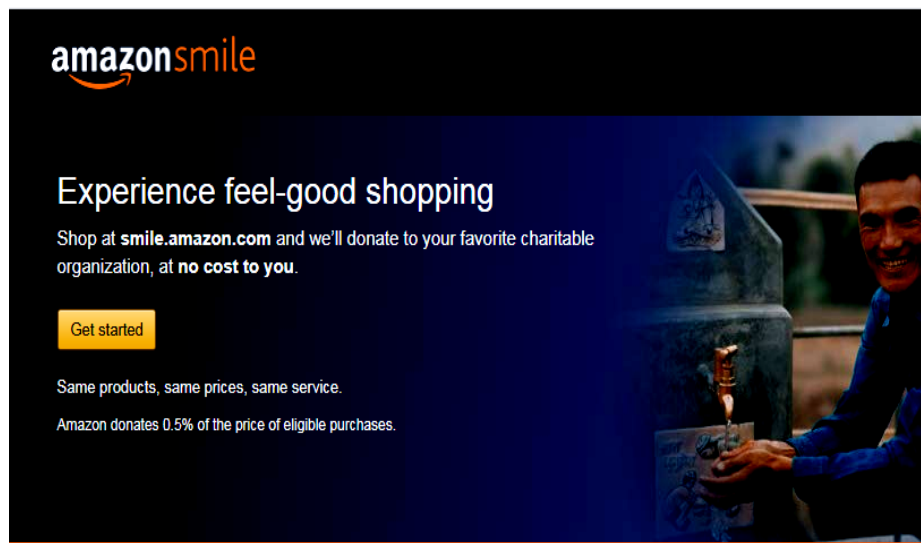
"This easy-to-remember number would make it easier for Americans dealing with a mental health crisis to receive life-saving support," said Sen. Cory Gardner, R-Colo. "With the Senate Commerce Committee's approval today, this bipartisan bill to create a three-digit suicide hotline became one step closer to becoming reality. I will continue to push Congress to create this three-digit hotline."

In addition to designating 9-8-8 as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, it would include a provision for the Veterans Crisis Line giving veterans fast and easy access to veteran-specific mental health support.

"When they dial 9-8-8, they will have a warm handoff to the veteran crisis line," American Legion Legislative Director Melissa Bryant said during a panel discussion in October. "The importance of connecting with someone who speaks veteran during a mental health crisis is crucial."

More than 45,000 people die by suicide each year in the United States, including more than 6,100 veterans, said Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Ill. "We need to do everything we can to prevent suicide, and that means improving the tools we have to help people who are suffering from depression or other mental health issues." Baldwin is happy the legislation is moving forward "so we can make it as quick and easy as possible for Americans in crisis to get the help and support they need through the National Suicide Hotline."

The act is sponsored by Sens. Cory Gardner, R-Colo., Tammy Baldwin, D-Ill., Jerry Moran, R-Kan., and Jon Tester, D-Mont.



amazonsmile

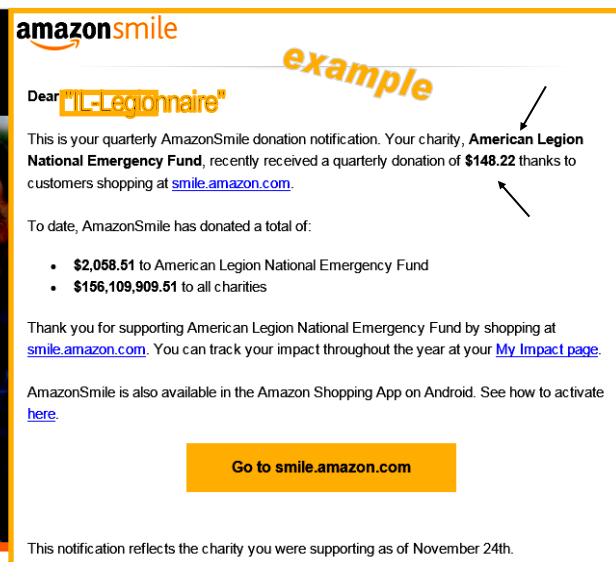
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Shop at smile.amazon.com and we'll donate to your favorite charitable organization, at **no cost to you**.

[Get started](#)

Same products, same prices, same service.

Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases.



amazonsmile

example

Dear **IL-Legionnaire**

This is your quarterly AmazonSmile donation notification. Your charity, **American Legion National Emergency Fund**, recently received a quarterly donation of **\$148.22** thanks to customers shopping at smile.amazon.com.

To date, AmazonSmile has donated a total of:

- **\$2,058.51** to American Legion National Emergency Fund
- **\$156,109,909.51** to all charities

Thank you for supporting American Legion National Emergency Fund by shopping at smile.amazon.com. You can track your impact throughout the year at your [My Impact page](#).

AmazonSmile is also available in the Amazon Shopping App on Android. See how to activate [here](#).

[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

This notification reflects the charity you were supporting as of November 24th.

When you join AmazonSmile you can...

Generate donations

Shop at smile.amazon.com and we'll donate 0.5% of eligible purchases to your favorite charitable organization—no fees, no extra cost.

Donate products to charity

Thousands of charities created AmazonSmile Charity Lists of items they need right now. Simply browse, order, and enjoy giving.

Start by picking your charity

Search from over a million local and national charities, like animal shelters, school groups, and religious organizations.

Enter charity name, location, or keyword [Search](#)

Or, browse by cause

Pets & Animals	Arts & Culture	Education & Youth
Environment	Faith & Spiritual	Health
International	Human Services	Veteran

Only shopping at smile.amazon.com supports charity.

Another way Illinois Can Help NEF... How do I use Amazon smile?

Change Your Amazon Smile Charitable Organization:

1. Sign in to smile.amazon.com on your desktop or mobile phone browser.
2. * From your desktop, go to Your Account from the navigation at the top of any page, and then select the option to Change your Charity.
3. * Select a new charitable organization to support. (above example shown the charity chosen is American Legion National Emergency Fund.)

How do charities get on Amazon smile?

According to the foundation's website, The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5 percent of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. The purchase price is the amount paid for the item minus any rebates and excluding shipping & handling, gift-wrapping fees, taxes, or service

(Dept. SVC continued from page 2)

Members. The purpose of this **“Membership Drive”** is to bring in Member Renewals; New Member Cards; and 2910 Transfers. At each of our stops we hope the Post sponsoring each gathering will be well attended by Division, District, Post Officers, along with members from posts surrounding these stops. Bring **“Member Cards”**, our Goal this year is to collect over 1500 paid membership cards and add them to our membership numbers. Please plan to join us so we get to meet and get to know you, and you get to meet and know us. We are all in this together.

Finally, as we enter the next half of our Legion Year, Membership along with our Youth Programs are a top priority. Our High School Oratorical Scholarship Program; Premier Boy's State; Girls State; Our Youth Police School; Essay Contest and local Post Youth Programs. The Department of Illinois has many unique and successful programs going on and we need all members to step up and step in to continue our Legacy of Success and build an even stronger **“Can Do”** Spirit that Commander Roy brings to the party!!!

See you at our upcoming Membership Caravan—Wayne

For those who buy instant lottery tickets, this is this years IDVA Lottery ticket, get them before they sell out!



COMMANDER WEBER'S SPECIAL PROJECT

NEF grants provide immediate financial assistance for American Legion and Sons of The American Legion members who have been affected by the natural disaster. Legion posts also qualify.

The NEF provides up to \$3,000 for Legion and SAL members with an active membership who have been displaced due to damages to their primary residence, and up to \$10,000 for posts that have been damaged by a natural disaster and whose programs and activities within the community are impacted.

"In these tough times, The American Legion's National Emergency Fund provides much-needed financial support to help American Legion Family members recover from tragedy.

When the federal government shut down last winter, servicemembers in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines continued to receive their paychecks. But on Jan. 15, 2019 members of the U.S. Coast Guard - *which falls under the Department of Homeland Security* - did not get paid.

That's when The American Legion stepped in, delivering **\$1,000,500** in Temporary Financial Assistance grants, assisting 3,120 children of 1,173 active-duty Coast Guardsmen service-members who were financially affected by the shutdown. That total was a record amount for a single-month of TFA grant distribution.

Illinois Can Help! Department of Illinois Commander Roy Weber is asking for your assistance by donating, *be it large or small*, to the replenishment of the National Emergency Funds thus ensuring these funds are available for the next persons time of need.

How Can Illinois Help?

**DONATE
TO THE NATIONAL
EMERGENCY FUND**

TO RAISE MONEY:

NEF relies on donations to help Legionnaires, posts and Sons recover from disaster.

Fundraisers such as motorcycle runs, fish fries or raffles are great ways to gather donations.

Proceeds from fundraisers may be donated to NEF. A full 100 percent of donations to NEF are turned into grants. Donations are not used to cover administrative and promotional costs.

To request a grant, download the form at www.legion.org/NEF

Contribution Form for Department Commander Weber's Special Project

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL OR POST: _____

POST #: _____ DIV #: _____ DIST #: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

PHONE NO.: _____ AMOUNT \$ _____

Payment Type: _____ Check -or- _____ Credit Card

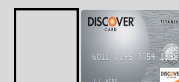
Please Charge \$ _____ on my Credit Card



Card No.: _____



Exp. Date: _____ Security Code: _____



Signature: _____

(Required)

☆ Please make checks payable to the Department of Illinois earmarked "Commander's Special Project - NEF Donation"

☆ Send contributions to:
The American Legion—Dept. of Ill
2720 E. Lincoln St., Bloomington, IL 61704

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

2020 AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY

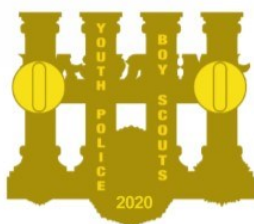
American Legion Department of Illinois

4 Pillars Pin

You can Help by showing your support for The American Legion Family Programs



(This stylish pin will be a 1.5" inch dual plated gold & silver 3D pin with gold and blue stones inserted in each pillar. Auxiliary & SAL on front, Youth Police and Boy Scouts on back)



\$100 each

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

- ★ **AUXILIARY**
IL State Veterans Homes
- ★ **SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**
Child Welfare Foundation
- ★ **BOY SCOUTS**
- ★ **YOUTH POLICE SCHOOL**

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

2020 American Legion Family ~ 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 _____

2019—2020 DIVISION & DISTRICT MEETING DATES

DATE	DIST. / DIV.	TIME	HOST POST	CITY
01/05/2020	24TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	MCLEANSBORO POST 106	MCLEANSBORO
01/12/2020	20TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	PLEASANT HILL POST 1048	PLEASANT HILL
01/12/2020	23RD DISTRICT	1:00 PM	RAMSEY POST 460	RAMSEY
01/12/2020	22ND DISTRICT	1:00 PM	NASHVILLE POST 110	NASHVILLE
01/12/2020	25TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	@ THE HAVEN	
01/15/2020	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	SESTERHENN POST 166 @ MORTON GROVE	MORTON GROVE
01/22/2020	9TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	MOUNT PROSPECT POST 525	TBA
01/23/2020	8TH DISTRICT	8:00 PM	REHFELDT-MEYER POST 474	MATTESON
02/09/2020	12TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	MARSEILLES POST 235	MARSEILLES
02/16/2020	13TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	POLO POST 83	POLO
02/19/2020	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	ROGERS PARK POST 108	EVANSTON
02/23/2020	18TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	KANSAS POST 539	KANSAS
02/26/2020	9TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	BILLY CALDWELL POST 806 @ WRIGHT COLLEGE	CHICAGO
02/27/2020	8TH DISTRICT	8:00 PM	CHICAGO HEIGHTS POST 131	CHICAGO HEIGHTS
03/15/2020	2ND DIVISION	TBA	LENA POST 557	LENA
03/15/2020	5TH DIV. & 24TH DIST.	12:00 PM	NASHVILLE POST 110	NASHVILLE
03/15/2020	16TH DISTRICT	10:00 AM	PRINCETON POST 125	PRINCETON
03/15/2020	17TH DISTRICT	UNKNOWN	LEXINGTON POST 291	LEXINGTON
03/15/2020	20TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	MT. STERLING POST 374	MT. STERLING
03/18/2020	7TH DISTRICT	7:30 PM	MORTON GROVE POST 134	MORTON GROVE
03/20/2020	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	LIBERTYVILLE POST 329	LIBERTYVILLE
03/22/2020	3RD DIVISION	1:00 PM	CAMBRIDGE POST 417	CAMBRIDGE
03/22/2020	4TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	CARLINVILLE POST 554	CARLINVILLE



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 2019 Gold Star 500 Team *THANKS* all their great supporters!

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You - we couldn't have done it without you!

On 24 September 2019, 36 bicyclists started an amazing 531 mile, five day journey! They rode 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 honor to meet and interact with many strong Gold Star Families, Veterans, Schools, Businesses, Communities, and well...just everyday Great Americans, as they rode through northern Illinois.

We lean heavily on our Veteran Service Organizations, especially the American Legion and VFW Posts in our communities to make this ride happen. You guys "Get It", you know what Gold Star means! We found out again this year that all of you are aware of your Fallen Heroes, their story and their Gold Star Families! As a Legionnaire, I was extremely proud to see that not only our Great American Legion Posts knew their Gold Star Families, but they also had their arms around them! Thank you for keeping them in your families!

This year again, I was honored to be a member of the support team for the duration of the ride. We definitely couldn't have completed this grueling 531 mile ride without the generous and caring support of so many. While conducting the pre-ride route reconnaissance and coordination in early summer, we were again overwhelmed with the response we received from everyone! Not only did they provide what we asked for, but to a tee everyone asked "how else can we help?" or "what else do you need?". During the ride, you again caught us off guard, often times leaving us overcome with emotions, as you did everything you said you would and then gave more!

You inspired your communities to recognize and promote the purpose of the ride, and reenergized and motivated our riders on the many grueling legs of the ride. The Flags, Honor Guards, and just showing up at the rest stops was truly uplifting. I'd like to personally single out some of the Great American Legion Posts that supported the Gold Star 500 this year. Please forgive me if I've missed any of you!

A big thank you also goes out to our Department of Illinois team! They did a great job hosting us while in Bloomington, promoting the ride locally and helping us get the word out to all the Illinois American Legion Posts!

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 Gold Star Families!

ALWAYS REMEMBER, NEVER FORGET!

Eric Murray, Gold Star Mission Volunteer / Gold Star 500 Ride Director

American Legion Post # 795 – Herscher
American Legion Post #100 – Washington
American Legion Post #1197 (Oxford) – Alpha
American Legion Post #122 – Cullom
American Legion Post #140 – Farmington
American Legion Post #212 – Hanna City
American Legion Post #255 – Orion
American Legion Post #386 – Virden
American Legion Post #522 – Prophetstown
American Legion Post #569 – Milan
American Legion Post #902 – Rock Falls
American Legion Post #905 – Kincaid
American Legion Post #979 – Limestone
Auxiliary Unit #1197 – Alpha
Auxiliary Unit #26 – Davenport, IA
Auxiliary Unit #386 – Virden
American Legion Riders #100 – Washington
American Legion Riders #568 – Gibson City
American Legion Riders #569 – Milan
American Legion Riders #661 – Washburn
SAL Squadron #1197 (Oxford) – Alpha
SAL Squadron #979 – Bartonville



American Legion
Department of
Illinois

YOUTH PROGRAM DATES TO REMEMBER

- ★ Oratorical Contest ☞ March 7, 2020
- ★ ALA Jr. Conference ☞ April 18th & 19th, 2020
- ★ Premier Boys State ☞ June 13th-19th, 2020
- ★ Illini Girls State ☞ June 21st-27th, 2020
- ★ Youth Police ☞ June 21st-26th, 2020

LAKE ZURICH POST #964

THE AMERICAN LEGION - SERVING VETERANS



SERVING AMERICA SINCE 1919



**PROUD SPONSOR OF "CHANCE" OUR
COMMUNITY THERAPY/SUPPORT LABRADOR**

TOMB OF THE
UNKNOWN SOLDIER



IWO JIMA



**CONTACT AMERICAN LEGION LAKE ZURICH POST 964
51 LIONS DR LAKE ZURICH, IL 60047-1313**

PHONE (847) 438-9477 EMAIL POST964@SBCGLOBAL.NET

VISIT OUR WEBSITE : WWW.ALPOST964IL.ORG

"Chance" is available for visits or entertainment at
Nursing homes, Schools, Assisted Living, Community Events.

out Ela Township and Lake County. In addition to his long list skills Chance also engages in equine therapy and is the official Lake Zurich village goose controller.

Lake Zurich American Legion Post 964 proudly sponsors Chance to go and do what he does best.

During his time off Chance is an avid sporting dog who loves to hunt and willfully jumps into frigid water to retrieve Bob's dinner.

Special thanks to Tom Marciciak for sharing Lake Zurich's "Who We Are and What We Do" Public Relations story.

Lake Zurich American Legion takes a "Chance"

Somewhere, sometime we all have heard about therapy/support animals. There's a variety of animals from domestic to exotic brought in to hospitals, schools, nursing homes, even after a tragic event to comfort those in need.

In 2017, a 3 year old Black Lab/Great Dane dog named Chance sat in the Animal House Shelter in Huntley, IL unsure of what his future held, however Lake Zurich resident Bob Warren did.

Bob, a 27 year member of Lake Zurich American Legion Post 964, adopted and trained Chance as a Certified Therapy/Support dog.

Chance wears a special vest bearing his name, certification and American Legion emblems. He visits local schools, hospitals, nursing and assisted living facilities with intent to provide that lost smile, find calm, most of all he shares his unconditional cuddly love to those in need.

Along with the moments of tranquility Chance also loves to perform his tricks and skills during many of the veteran, social and community events through-



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The American Legion**

I SERVED FOR *the open road*

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Email: hdsq@illegion.org Web: www.illegion.org

Department Commander Department Editor
ROY WEBER MARTY CONATSER

Now Is The Time To Stand Together For Our Flag

* One year Subscription to the Department News
\$10.00 for 11 issues

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

Department of Illinois ~ Official Member of The National American Legion Press Association



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Scan Here



JANUARY TRIVIA

1. The first ball to be dropped in New York's Times Square happened in what year?
2. The first time that January 1st was celebrated as the beginning of a new year was in 153 B.C. when the Romans moved the first month of their calendar back to January. For what reason did the Romans do this?
3. What famous Frank was born in Bayonne, New Jersey, on January 1, 1938?
4. On January 1, 1971, what kind of commercials were banned from American televisions?
5. The tradition of eating black-eyed peas on New Year's Day is believed to do what?
6. In some parts of the U.S., eating pancakes with butter, syrup, and whipped cream on New Year's Day indicates what?

ANSWERS:

1. 1908
2. To coincide with elections of the two highest ranking Republic positions.
3. Actor Frank Langella
4. Ads for cigarettes.
5. Bring prosperity for the next year.
6. You are having breakfast at Shoney's or Denny's.



Winter Word Find

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

COATS

COLD

FROST

GLOVES

HATS

HOTCHOCOLATE

ICICLES

MITTENS

SCARF

SKATING

SLEDDING

SNOW

