Department Staff Hard At Work in 2009

Fellow Legionnaires, I bring you greetings. We are rapidly moving further into this year as we work on our agenda and I wonder where the time has gone. At the Department Headquarters, the staff has been extremely busy, working hard, and giving a high level of performance while serving veterans, their families and communities.

We have made excellent progress with Children & Youth, the Oratorical Contest, Operation Wounded & Comfort Warriors, Membership, and other programs. Our officers have performed admirably by providing quality leadership at all levels (Department, District, and Post) and are commended for a “job well done”.

In January, a Children & Youth /National Security Forum was conducted at Post 29 in Glendale, with over 60 people in attendance. Legion and Auxiliary chairmen gave training to our Junior Auxiliary, Department officers, and members on a myriad of The American Legion Family programs. On the agenda; JROTC, Joe Foss Foundation, Wounded & Comfort Warriors, Membership, & Youth, the Oratorical Contest, Operation Boys & Girls State, Legion Baseball, Oratorical Contest, Junior Shooting Sports, Boys & Girls Scouts, just to name a few.

In early February, National Membership Director Billy Johnson and National Vice Commander Harley Ray (Oregon) visited Arizona to canvas the community and assist our membership team in acquiring another new Post #133 in Maricopa. The team operated from the First Baptist Church of Maricopa and even signed up the pastor! Thus far, our team has proudly added three (3) new posts and are currently working on others in Yucca and Cornville.

I also toured the ADVS Veterans Home and visited the VA Medical Center in Phoenix. At the home, I viewed the state-of-the-art medical equipment available to treat veteran residents suffering with dementia or Alzheimer’s. At the VA Medical Center, I attended the Auxiliary’s Creative Arts Festival and observed the different forms of art (knitting, carving, painting, etc.) made by veteran patients.

Our Legion Family came together to attend the post everlasting memorial service for Past Department President PattiJo Marlowe. PattiJo was a long time member of Unit # 1 and was dearly loved by all. Her service to The American Legion and Auxiliary was outstanding; she will be missed. Later in the month, the legislative committee delegation flew to Washington D.C. to attend The American Legion’s 49th Conference to discuss veteran issues with elected Arizona representatives on Capitol Hill.

Department Oratorical Winners

On March 7th, the Department Oratorical Contest was held at The American Legion Sipe Peterson Post 44 in Scottsdale. The following students participated in the contest: Katharine Mc Murray, Sonoran Science Academy, Tucson; Nicholas Everetts, Fountain Hills H.S., Fountain Hills; and Clayton Masterman, Fort Mohave H.S., Fort Mohave. These students did a terrific job and congratulations to each of them.

Clayton advances to the National Contest in Indianapolis in April. He automatically wins $1,500 for competing in the first round. If he advances to the second round he will win another $1,500. If he wins that round then he will compete in the final contest where the third place winner receives $14,000; 2nd place $16,000 and 1st place $18,000. We wish Clayton the best of luck in Indianapolis!

I would like to thank everyone who attended the contests. It is encouraging for the students to present their speeches to a large audience. A very special thank you to the cadets of the Civil Air Patrol Deer Valley Squadron 302 who were the escorts. The cadets are also members of Squadron 105 and Junior Auxiliary Unit 105 Westtown. Thank you to the judges - Julie Vietri, Neal Sundeen, Pam Joranstaad, Mark Joranstaad and John Tymczyszyn for the terrific job; to all of the volunteers who make this program such a big success, without you we can’t do it; and a special thank you to The American Legion Family of Post 44 for hosting the Department Contest and for providing breakfast and lunch for everyone-it was outstanding!

1st Place - $1,500 - Clayton
2nd Place - $800 - Nicholas
3rd Place - $500 - Katharine

Roger Munchbach, Chairman

Thank you to everyone who attended the Department Oratorical Contest. As you can see, we had a terrific audience and the students really appreciated speaking to a full room.
24 Year Old Promise

On March 12, 2009, Cheryl & I attended a reception for Arizona Governor, Jan Brewer. At the reception, I was given the opportunity to bring closure to a promise that I had made 24 years ago.

In the early 1980’s, I was appointed to the Arizona Vietnam Veterans Memorial Board. Our job was to design, fund and build the Arizona Vietnam Veteran Memorial. We dedicated the memorial in November 1985 and had invited President Reagan to the ceremony. He was not able to attend, but sent the Secretary of Defense, Casper Weinberger, to the dedication. The Secretary of Defense hand carried a letter from President Reagan and read it at the dedication. After the ceremony he gave the letter to the board. We discussed what to do with the letter because the State did not have a very adequate system for archiving paper documents and we felt the letter would be misplaced or worse, destroyed. I was selected to be the custodian of the letter until such a time that we felt it would be properly archived, protected and displayed at the State capitol in Phoenix.

In 1985, the then Senator Jan Brewer was an avid supporter of the memorial and other veteran issues. When she recently became the Governor, we decided it was time to turn the letter over to her. When I found out she was coming to Sierra Vista, I made arrangements to present the letter to her. The presentation went very well and the Governor was very pleased and moved by the presentation. Thanks to Post 36 in Tucson, for an exciting evening of dancing and the Eagle Leadership Award and to Post 65 in South Phoenix and Post 41 Phoenix, for the grandueur of the Inter-post Visitation and the smoothness of “oldies music”, respectively. A special thank you to PDC Louie and Gilda Pellon for the excellent barbecue ribs!!

The American Legion Riders (ALR) through Operation Wounded Warriors (OWW) are sponsoring fund-raisers (donation tables at Wal-Marts, raffles, motorcycle benefit runs, etc.) to help recovering, disabled and homeless veterans. They have also helped the families left behind by our military personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan.

All posts are encouraged to complete and turn in their Consolidated Post Reports (CPRs) and to take credit for all your Legion work, as it will be reported to Congress. The Department Convention will be held June 18th through 21st, at the Renaissance Hotel in Glendale.

Until next time, May God Bless you. Continue to “Just Ask” when recruiting new members. To reach our membership goals, we need to get in as many renewals as possible, and don’t forget about the National Commander’s membership incentives.

FOR GOD & COUNTRY
Henry Branch
Department Commander

Commander continued from page 1

Hill. The proposed flag protection amendment passage, VA health care, rights of veterans, GI Bill, national security, Global War on Terrorism, etc. were major issues of importance. The delegation urged lawmakers to support all critical legislation affecting veterans.

On March 7th, the Department Oratorical Contest finals were held at Post 44 in Scottsdale, with all three Department areas represented in the strong competition. The young people were well prepared and did an outstanding job speaking on the U.S. Constitution. Department Oratorical Chairman Roger Munchbach conducted the event that had over 100 people in attendance to hear the contestants. Clayton Masterman, a senior at Fort Mohave High School (District 7), won the competition. Clayton received a check for $1,500. We wish Clayton the best of luck at the National Competition in Indianapolis.

Ann and I have been traveling throughout our great state to many official visits, functions and activities. We thank you for the warm hospitality, delicious meals, wonderful gifts, and excellent presentations. Thanks to Post 36 in Tucson, for an exciting evening of dancing and the Eagle Leadership Award and to Post 65 in South Phoenix and Post 41 Phoenix, for the grandeur of the Inter-post Visitation and the smoothness of “oldies music”, respectively. A special thank you to PDC Louie and Gilda Pellon for the excellent barbecue ribs!!

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Thanks,
Larry Braden
Past POW/MIA Department Chairman
I cannot help but see some irony in most holidays. Memorial Day is one that especially hits home with me. I am sure we all know someone who is affected directly by this particular day. Still we only seem to honor those who gave it all, so we could enjoy it all, one day of the year. I see the faces of friends whose names appear on the Vietnam Memorial (The Wall) in Washington, DC.

Is it only to clear our conscience to do good things on certain days? Like the 4th of July where patriotism runs high for one day or Thanksgiving where we hand out food baskets and contribute to food banks to feed the poor and homeless for one day or Veterans Day, where we honor Veterans for their service every day, for one day or Mothers and Fathers Day, for one day.

It is good that we do set aside these celebrations to recognize service and sacrifice but we should not let these “holidays” be set aside only as a day off work or an opportunity for a family outing or a backyard barbecue.

On many Memorial Day’s in the past, I have had the honor and privilege to be a part of the commemorative service at Greenwood Memory Lawn Cemetery in downtown Phoenix. As a member of the Honor Guard of American Legion Post #1, I had the opportunity to reconnect with many fellow veterans that I do not get to see often. Looking into the faces of others who also have seen mans’ inhumanity to man close up, reestablishes the bond we have. I know that although we “do” Memorial Day once a year, these fellow Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines “do” Memorial Day everyday in their hearts and minds. We gather, poke fun at each other using the friendly inter-service rivalries freely. But as we watch the Flag go by and hear Taps, the tears are never far off.

Every day someone’s loved one becomes a Memorial Day statistic and we should not forget them either, not only the fallen, but the families of the fallen, for Memorial Day comes every day, somewhere.

I wrote an article several years ago in The Arizona Legionnaire about Lance Corporal Tim Davies. He was killed about noon on July 20, 1966. I wrote in the column that I could still hear the three shots that I later learned were fatal to my friend and fellow Marine. I was having a hard time, through survivor’s guilt, of understanding how I could make his passing anything but loss. It seemed to me that a life lost should be a plus somewhere, but how? I put myself in the position that if it were me and not him that fell that day, how would I want him to carry on. I knew I would want him to live a full and happy life, not mourn and become a casualty as well. This is how we should honor our fallen heroes, live a full and rich life and make their sacrifice a plus somewhere in our lives.

So to honor them, live your life to the fullest and keep Memorial Day in your hearts and thoughts every day.

Semper Fi,
Tom Hinsdale

For Some of Us
Memorial Day Is Everyday

The Arizona Legionnaire Department of Arizona
90th Annual Convention
June 18 – June 21, 2009

Hosted by
Earl E. Mitchell Post #29
Glendale, AZ (623) 937-3411

Renaissance
Phoenix Glendale Hotel
9495 W. Coyotes Boulevard, Glendale, AZ 85305
(623) 937-3700 or FAX (623) 937-3703

Pre-registration Form –PLEASE DON’T MIX LEGION, AUXILIARY OR S.A.L.

Please Print

Name: ___________________________ Post# ______ Title: ___________________________
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Name: ___________________________ Post# ______ Title: ___________________________

Send completed form and $10.00 per person pre-registration fee to:
EARL E. MITCHELL POST #29
6822 N. 57TH Drive, Glendale, AZ 85301

Registration fee at the Convention will be $12.00 per person.
Post 31 Gets Permanent Charter

Area A Commander Louis Romero looks on as District 2 Commander Ken Dowse presents the permanent charter to Ray Greely, who was standing in for Commander Manny Canez. Seated are Jerry Connors, Finance Officer; and Neva Rasmussen, Adjutant and acting Chaplain/Secretary.

On the 4th of March, Madera Post 131 of Green Valley was awarded its permanent charter. District 2 Commander Ken Dowse, accompanied by Area A Vice Commander Louis Romero, District 2 Adjutant / PDC Dave Roun, District 2 Sr. Vice Commander Gary Nelson and District 2 Historian Tony Rigney, read and presented the document at the March General Membership Meeting. The meeting was well attended by members and by future members of Unit 131, which expects its charter within weeks, and hopeful members of a Squadron 131.

Post 131 is the 1st of two new posts in District 2 established during Ken Dowse’s year as Commander. Post 131 already has a Post Home and the members are working tirelessly to get it into shape and, from what was witnessed today, they are making major headway. We all are expecting great things from this new post and its members.

Article/Picture submitted by Tony Rigney District 2 Historian

Found – WWII Medals

Approximately 15 medals and ribbons, likely from WWII, were found in the East Valley.

These would have been lost some time before April 5, 2008. Included in the medals are: Purple Heart, Silver Star, Bronze Star, U.S. WWII Victory Medal, Distinguished Service Cross and a Legion of Merit Medal. If anyone knows who the medals might belong to, please call Sherri Power, Mesa Surplus Store at (480) 644-2663 or (480) 644-4510.

Legion Volunteers Served Lunch at Fishing Clinic

Arizona Game & Fish Rangers hosted a fishing clinic at Red Mountain Park in Mesa in February for handicapped children in the Mesa School District. The students were given fishing poles and equipment for “catch and release” and then were served lunch by volunteers from The American Legion Family. It was a fun and exciting day for all!

Free Information Package
Reverse Mortgage or V.A. Streamline Refinance

Looking for extra cash to pay off your existing mortgage and fix up your home? If you’re a homeowner age 62 or older, the answer may be right in your own home. A reverse mortgage can give you tax-free* cash for what you want or need by allowing you to safely tap into your home equity. Use the cash to pay off your existing mortgage and make home repairs and improvements, from routine maintenance to special remodeling projects, or anything else. Contact us today to learn more.

- Choose a lump sum, line of credit, or combination
- Stay in your home and retain the title
- No monthly mortgage payments required
- No income qualifications

Legionnaire owned company Post 2

assisting veterans with VA disability claims - appeals only*

Theodore C. Jarvi, Attorney at Law
Retired JAG - Legion member
1050 E. Southern Avenue, Suite G-3
Tempe, Arizona 85282
Tel 480-838-6566; Fax 480-838-8810
E-Mail: Theodore.Jarvi@azbar.org

* Federal law prohibits the payment of attorney fees by the veteran for assistance with any VA claim prior to final, negative Board of Veterans Appeals decision.

Prescott Is Sold On

Fred Lindquist CCIM, Broker
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928-445-7600

Proud to be a Legionnaire
www.lindquistrealtors.com
Over 300 Participate in “Drill Down”

Over 300 JROTC Cadets participated in the “Drill Down” contest at the West-Mitchell 9th Annual Drill Meet held on February 21st at the 161st Air National Guard Base in Phoenix. In this contest the Cadets are given commands in rapid sequence and are “tapped” out if they miss one of the commands. This is quite remarkable to watch and keep up with. Overall, there were 33 schools who participated in the Drill Meet. “Hats Off” to Dan, Mason, Steve, Pete, Linda, and ALL of the volunteers who made sure the Cadets, Officers and visitors were taken care of.

WE ARE SENIORS HELPING SENIORS

This is made possible by a Government-Guaranteed FHA Insured Program for Seniors age 62 and older who qualify.

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- No possibility of ever losing your home
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Live in Your Home for the Rest of Your Life, or for as Long as You Choose and Never Make Another House Payment!
In this nation, the whites distrust those of other colors; brown, yellow, black, red, etc. Yet when these same whites go to other nations of other hues, they become suspect, followed, persecuted, questioned, as we do the minorities in this part of the world.

Why? Is it our upbringing, our friends, our national heritage? Political times, economic pressures? Yes, yes, and again yes to all of these.

The vast majority of us are considerate and ignorant of others differences, yet there is snickering at these.

In a nation overwhelmingly Christian/Judaic, the Muslims are the ones who hold the reins, the Republicans become majority makes “right & might”.

When the Republicans hold the majority, the Democrats become the bad guys, the spendthrifths, and the anti-establishment.

Then, miraculously, when the Democrats spend, it is the Judeo-Christian, the Muslims are the ones who hold the reins, the Republicans become majority makes “right & might”.

In this nation, the whites distrust those of other colors; brown, yellow, black, red, etc. Yet when these same whites go to other nations of other hues, they become suspect, followed, persecuted, questioned, as we do the minorities in this part of the world.

Why? Is it our upbringing, our friends, our national heritage? Political times, economic pressures? Yes, yes, and again yes to all of these.

The vast majority of us are considerate and ignorant of others differences, yet there is snickering at ethnic jokes, typcasting by color or nationality. There is typcasting in the work place, male against female, color against color, we look down on those with less education, a lesser earning ability, foreign birth, even the other persons looks, we often do this without conscious effort, never considering where these feelings come from.

We are all God’s creatures, and we should not find fault until we are perfect. This economic situation we are in is not the fault of either the Democrats or the Republicans, but the shortcomings of both parties.

Our racial tensions are mostly due to the teachings of our ancestors, not wholly our present generation – look at history! The Greeks fought the Athenians; the Egyptians fought the Persians; the tribes of Africa have fought and enslaved each other for thousands of years. The Shiites and Sunnis have battled since time began. Christians have warred against the Muslims since Christianity began. We are all God’s creatures, and we should not find fault until we are perfect. This economic situation we are in is not the fault of either the Democrats or the Republicans, but the shortcomings of both parties.

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American Legion - Department of Arizona

Membership Report

March 15, 2009

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Grants Totals: 41,355 | 40,315 | 97.87 |

District 1 - Commander: Dale Hiller

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<td>District 8 - Commander: Joe Duggan</td>
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<td>Mark A. Moore</td>
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District 7 - Commander: Ann Seney

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<td>Henry Berry</td>
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District 3 - Commander: David Lambert

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<tr>
<td>Luke-Greenway</td>
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District 11 - Commander: Bob Hicks

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District Totals: 7,690 | 7,181 | 92.34 |

District 10 - Commander: Jerry Boales

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District Totals: 4,970 | 4,970 | 100.00 |

As to religion, we were all made with the right to change as long as we had a belief in a higher being and followed those teachings. I have never found any religion to advocate the destruction of another; only warped teachings to justify the actions of the minority.

As to race, we are what we are and God loves us all. Can we not follow His teachings and change our lives little by little to accept those that are different from us?

Peace be with us all, and love to,

Richard Kepler, Department Chaplain

The Vietnam Veteran Traveling Wall will be at Verrado High School in Buckeye, AZ. The first full day of viewing will be on Friday April 3rd with a ceremony at 1:00 PM and then again at 5:00 PM. On Saturday, April 4th, there will be an opening ceremony at 10:00 AM, an evening ceremony at 5:00 PM; and on Sunday April 5th, there will be a closing ceremony at 1:00 PM and on Sunday April 5th, there will be a closing ceremony at 6:00 PM.

If anyone has a loved one’s name on the Wall and would like to have their name read at the Saturday ceremony, please contact Bob “Nomad” Lane at (623) 944-2545 nomadic@yahoo.com or Trish Carlisle-Thompson at (602) 284-9419 mistyad@ymail.com.
The Arizona Delegation has been assigned to the Galt House Hotel & Suites, 140 North Fourth Street (502) 588-4044. Rooms are limited and reservations will be on a first come, first served basis. Please indicate arrival & departure dates.

**NATIONAL CONVENTION RESERVATION FORM**

RESERVATIONS TO BE LISTED IN THE NAME OF:

Additional occupants shall include Leg/Aux/SAL   Arrive/Depart

Jr. Suite, 1 or 2 persons (only 10 available) $142.62 * $________

Double, 2 beds, 1 or 2 persons $125.36 * $________

Roll Away rate $25.00 per day $________

Arizona Party $25.00 per person $________

Registration (mandatory for Legion, Auxiliary and guests) $15.00 per person $________

Past President’s Luncheon (payable to Auxiliary) Call Auxiliary $________

States Dinner (payable to Auxiliary) $45.00 per person $________

National Commander’s Banquet (limited to first 20) $45.00 per person $________

TOTAL DEPOSIT $________

*The registration fee and 1 night’s lodging deposit, plus any other fees must be submitted with this reservation form. Additional occupant rates shall be included in the fee.

ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED AT DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS BY JULY 16, 2009

- Occupancy Tax in the amount 15.01% per room/night is already included in the room rate.
- $2.00 per room night is returned to the National Convention Corporation by the hotel.

CANCELLATION MUST BE RECEIVED AT DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS BY JULY 21, 2009

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**2009 National Convention**

Louisville, Kentucky August 21 - 28, 2009

The Arizona Delegation has been assigned to the Galt House Hotel & Suites, 140 North Fourth Street (502) 588-4044. Rooms are limited and reservations will be on a first come, first served basis. Please indicate arrival & departure dates.

**NATIONAL CONVENTION RESERVATION FORM**

RESERVATIONS TO BE LISTED IN THE NAME OF:

Additional occupants shall include Leg/Aux/SAL   Arrive/Depart

Jr. Suite, 1 or 2 persons (only 10 available) $142.62 * $________

Double, 2 beds, 1 or 2 persons $125.36 * $________

Roll Away rate $25.00 per day $________

Arizona Party $25.00 per person $________

Registration (mandatory for Legion, Auxiliary and guests) $15.00 per person $________

Past President’s Luncheon (payable to Auxiliary) Call Auxiliary $________

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