Let’s All Remember… “Take the Time to Ask!”

We have completed our organizational meetings and are ready to start our new year. Our officers are in place and we are ready to move on to a great year. With your help, we have put together a fine American Legion Team. They have pledged to work with every one of you this year to accomplish our goals. Our Vice Commanders want to make this a fun year.

My theme this year is “Back to Basics” which is based on “The Four Pillars”:

1. Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
2. National Security
3. Americanism
4. Children & Youth

Each of these Pillars encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our Veterans, service members and their families, (especially their children).

Each post should select the programs that would work best for the needs of their community. In working specific programs, this will ensure membership.

We have many veterans that are not members who just need to be asked to join. They are willing and able to help other veterans in any way that they can. “Take the Time to Ask”.

When you get a new member or a member who has transferred in, don’t just hand them a card, ask them to join a committee.

What skills or talents do they have?

Just Ask

Even members that are home bound can help.

Just Ask

Remember what it feels like to be left out of things?

Just Ask

The more we help others, the more they will help us.

Clarence Hill, our new National Commander, said that one of his membership goals was to reach out to all veterans from Vietnam era, post Vietnam era, and current war on terrorism veterans. We need to explore a highly untouched group, female Veterans; 16% of all U.S. forces are females. We also need to be aware of issues affecting women veterans. In using all of this we will accomplish our membership goals. Without this, we will slowly die.

This will take a lot of hard work by all of us. This means the whole “American Legion Family”. For every Veteran that joins, we can get possibly five or more members for the S.A.L. and Auxiliary.

My first official visit was to Post 97 in San Tan Valley. They held their first meeting on August 8th and they are already setting up teams to contact the schools in their area about the Oratorical, Baseball and Boys State Programs. I wish them much success!

August 14th, we went to Swasekgame Post 14 in Kingman, to help them celebrate their 90th Birthday. It was a wonderful night. They showed off their newly

Commander continued on page 2

Arizona American Legion Baseball 2009 Season Ends

The 2009 Arizona American Legion Baseball season comes to an end and this was one of the most competitive seasons yet. The top teams in Area “B” battled in the last two weeks to place in the State Championship games.

Alhambra High School, sponsored by Post 29, Glendale, had the best record at 16 wins and two losses, Mt. Ridge Black 2nd, Mt. Ridge Maroon 3rd and Florence placed 4th. This was the first year that the number two, three and fourth place teams participated in American Legion Baseball.

Tucson Area “A” line-up included Tucson High School/Post 7, Mayhem/Post 7, Northwest Red Raiders and Post 59/KFC. The top four teams competed in Tucson, Reid Park Fields for the State Tournament. At the State Tournament each game was a thriller with Area “A” teams eventually eliminating the Area “B” teams.

Tucson High School/Post 7, Mayhem/Post 7, and NW Red Raiders provided competition and eventually Post 59/KFC, of Tucson, won the State Championship advancing the team to the Western Regionals (Region 8). Post 59/KFC won its fifth state title since 2000, to go with three runners-up, under Coach Alex Gaynes.

The Regional Tournament

Cocio-Estrada Post 59/KFC, (54-12) lost to Las Vegas 12-8 in the Western Regional Tournament. Post 59/KFC, as Arizona State Champions, was only two games away from the American Legion World Series, which was held in Fargo, ND. In the Fairfield, CA vs. Las Vegas game, Las Vegas won and proceeded

Baseball continued on page 2
September 16
‘The American Legion Day’

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Senate has passed a resolution designating September 16, 2009 as “The American Legion Day.” The measure, Senate Resolution 260, was shepherded through last evening by Sen. Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, after submitting the resolution earlier in the day.

As she presented the resolution to fellow senators, Snowe praised the 90-year old veterans service organization, the largest in the nation, for its continuing work to aid wounded warriors and military families, for Legcionnaires’ legacy of community volunteerism and for the organization’s significant role in establishing important national legislation.

“As all of us in this chamber know, The American Legion remains today an active and vigorous advocate for service members, veterans and their families here on Capitol Hill,” said Snowe. “Among its greatest legislative achievements was the enactment of the …GI Bill of Rights.” Snowe added. “I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in supporting this well-earned measure, demonstrating our mutual esteem and reverence for this outstanding organization.” The measure passed without opposition.

A similar resolution was introduced in the House by Rep. Debbie Halvorson, D-Ill., in late July. House Resolution 679 is expected to be adopted early next week.

Clarence E. Hill, the National Commander of The American Legion, expressed great pleasure upon hearing of the resolution’s progress. “We, as an organization, are honored and humbled that Congress is recognizing the dedication that members of The American Legion have demonstrated on behalf of their fellow veterans for nearly a century now. I am very grateful to Sen. Snowe and her colleagues for their work last night. I also offer my sincere thanks to Rep. Halvorson, who I had the great pleasure of addressing yesterday during my congressional testimony, for her fine efforts to establish September 16th as ‘The American Legion Day.’”

With a current membership of 2.5-million wartime veterans, The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through more than 14,000 posts across the nation.
Try-and-True Methods Launch New Arizona Posts

From the Desk of the National Adjutant
By Daniel S. Wheeler

Getting “back to the basics” is a common war cry when rallying Legionnaires in the quest for recruiting new members. If you’ve ever attended a national, department or district membership workshop, chances are you’ve heard that phrase thrown around more than once. But they’re not just words - quite the opposite. In the midst of their simplicity, they speak loud and clear. When there was no Internet, Direct Mail Solicitation program or phone blasts, The American Legion still had a healthy membership in the millions. Legionnaires went door to door, asking fellow veterans to join. They talked about the Legion and its many incredible programs for veterans, servicemembers, their families and America’s youth. Pretty basic stuff maybe, but it worked. Moreover, nearly every community had a post, and people knew the Legion because the post was visible and active.

Now, it’s working again in the Department of Arizona where, during the 2008-09 membership year, Legionnaires were able to start seven new posts - believed to be the first time a department established seven new posts since Michigan did it in 1997. The results of the work of those Legionnaires are what give me hope that we are headed in the right direction in the membership battle.

Jeri Strande, a member of Post 135 in Cornville, Ariz., and the 2008-09 department membership director, said the “back-to-the-basics” approach began early in the membership year. Immediate Past Department Commander Henry Branch told Arizona Legionnaires that, because the department wasn’t going to have DMS members during his tenure, they were going to need to hit traditional membership methods even harder.

“Our commander basically said, ‘We need to get on it, doggone it!’” Strande said. “And we had several Legionnaires out there who reached out to us and asked if it was possible to start some posts as well. They also saw a need for those posts.”

Strande said the membership success was truly a top-to-bottom effort. While national stuff offered assistance, membership drives on the post level also included local, district and department Legionnaires, as well as some help from National Vice Commander Harley Ray.

“National sent out some letters for us, letting veterans in the area know we are coming in,” Strande said. “But in most cases, (Branch) was there. We had people from all levels of the Legion involved. The entire Department of Arizona did a very good job with this. It takes effort and work from people who are committed to go out and do the job. That’s what we had.”

Legionnaires went door to door, talking up their organization’s value. Strande herself had never gone through a grass-roots membership effort before last year. The process was an eye-opener. “I’m not a real arm twister; I think our product sells itself,” she said. “Even if we didn’t sign a person up, we were still getting the Legion message out. We were still letting people know what our organization is doing. We were getting the word out. We were getting those people into a conversation about The American Legion.”

Strande said the opportunity for growth among the new posts is strong. One post already has improved its membership by 435 percent; several are set to start Auxiliary units and Sons of The American Legion squads. The enthusiasm has carried over into the 2009-10 membership year. “My outgoing district commander (Joe Duggan III) asked me if we were still going to do another start-up post in this area,” she said. “When I told him that we were, he said, ‘Then invite me because I want to come and help out with that.’”

There are new, improved ways to pursue membership leads, and to not take advantage of those opportunities is a poor decision on our part. But for 90 years, we’ve always been able to count on face-to-face contact as a way to draw in new members. Tried-and-true methods are not to be forgotten. Just look at what Arizona did last year. “High tech” helps, but “high touch” gets the job done.
National Commander Clarence E. Hill Presents Testimony to a Joint Session of the House & Senate Veteran’s Affairs Committee

National Commander Clarence Hill appeared before a Joint Session of the Veteran’s Affairs Committees in the United States Congress on September 10, 2009. Commander Hill thanked the 111th Congress for recommending FY2010 Funding Allocations for many VA accounts that meet or exceed funding targets proposed by The American Legion. Commander Hill also thanked the Members of Congress for passing a comprehensive and effective post 9-11 GI Bill that more accurately reflects the sacrifices of America’s service members. However, he asked that the Congress consider making “on line” educational resources available to Veterans who elect to utilize this form of educational benefit.

Many Veterans, because of family and economic considerations, are required to immediately return to the work force rather than elect a full time education. An “on line” educational program would be of benefit to these Veterans that cannot go full time.

Commander Hill also asked that the Congress stay on top of changes in healthcare and technology for the “new generation” of Veterans. Commander Hill made several budget recommendations for the VA for healthcare, construction of medical facilities, state Veteran’s homes, state Veteran’s cemeteries and the National Cemetery.

In Arizona, we have one state Veteran’s home and one state cemetery that have received funding from the Federal Government; however, we are in need of an additional Veteran’s home in Tucson and a state cemetery for Northern Arizona.

Commander Hill also asked that the Congress consider advanced appropriations for the VA so that they can timely, predictably and sufficiently fund the VA medical system without having to go back to the Congress because there has been a budgetary shortfall. The American Legion believes this legislation would help resolve the question of timely and predictability that would not be affected by continuing resolution or other budget delays.

The American Legion would still have a normal appropriations process to request additional funding if the amount already approved appeared insufficient.

The National Commander also asked the Congress to pass a Medicare VA Reimbursement Act. This would allow the VA to bill Medicare when Medicare eligible Veterans have received care at a VA medical facility. At the present time, the VA is prohibited from billing Medicare for Veterans who receive medical care at a VA Hospital or other medical facility. However, Congress has required the VA to collect 3rd Party Reimbursements from Veteran’s healthcare insurance providers to help cover the annual discretionary appropriations for medical care.

If the VA had additional funding, the VA would be able to treat more priority Group 8 Veterans and this group of Veterans would also be allowed to obtain their prescriptions through the VA rather than some other source.

During our visit to Washington, we were able to discuss these issues with Senator Kyl and Senator McCain and their Legislative Aides. We also discussed the above Legislative Priorities with Congressmen Harry Mitchell from Congressional District 5 and Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick from Congressional District 1.

We were fortunate to have National Commander Hill with us when we met Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick and Congressmen Harry Mitchell. Congressmen Mitchell and Congresswoman Kirkpatrick are both members of the House Veteran’s Affairs Committee and actively participated in the hearing.

Senators Kyl and McCain have always been willing to meet with The American Legion representatives and we would like to thank them for their courtesy and time in discussing Veteran’s Affairs with members of The American Legion from Arizona.

Neal S. Sundeen
Legislative Co-Chairman

New Veterans Mural in Williams, AZ

This mural located above the shop windows at 117 E. Route 66 in Downtown Williams, was painted by local artists Mike and Sandy Rusinko. Make sure that you stop in Williams and enjoy this beautiful mural. John Ivens Post #42 Grand Canyon has their office in this building. What a terrific tribute to all of our Veterans past, present and future. Thanks to Al Dunaway for taking the picture.
The 91st American Legion National Convention membership delegates’ meeting was held at the Louisville Convention Center. The meeting was chaired by Past National Commander, Dale Barnett and National Membership Director, Billy Johnson. No resolutions were presented and plenty of membership success ideas were shared with 39 Department delegates in attendance. Direct Mail Solicitation (DMS) will resume in the near future after National recoups some of the related expenses from DMS. The delegates were asked NOT to depend on DMS rather, get out and actively recruit new members. Face to face contact and telling what we do as Legion members is more successful than a letter that may end up in “file thirteen”.

On the local level, we had a membership drive at Post 44 in Scottsdale on September 16th which is the day that Congress chartered The American Legion. I’m not sure if any others did the same, but it is something that could be done for the rest of the year at different dates.

My membership challenges and awards will be announced at Fall Conference in Lake Havasu City. Commander Carol will also announce her personal challenges for membership.

Hello S.A.L. Members and Legion Family

Our new year is underway and we are looking forward to a great year. This year the SAL will continue to focus on our programs. Child Welfare will still be one of our major programs; we will also put some added emphasis on some VA programs. VAVS and Fisher House will be two programs that I will be emphasizing throughout the year, as well as the Spinoza Bear program. We hope to raise lots of funds for these great programs this year.

As you all know, what we do cannot be accomplished without our members. Membership is the cornerstone of our organization and it is important to renew your members and recruit new members to help in our efforts. I would also like to invite any post that does not have an SAL squadron and would like to start one to contact us and we will be more that happy to help you in getting it started.

I want to thank all of my officers for their great work thus far this year and wish them success the rest of the year. Thank You for the opportunity to serve as Detachment Commander this year and I hope to get out and meet as many SAL members as possible.

Xavier Rodriguez
Detachment Commander

Female Veterans from the White Mountain area participated in the 2009 Fourth of July Parade. They had eight female veterans aboard their first time entry float and are looking to add a lot more for next year’s parade. Way to go Ladies!

A Pair of Special Events

The Department of Arizona Open House will be held on January 9, 2010 at Department Headquarters.

The Children & Youth and National Security Workshop/Conference will be held on January 23, 2010 at William Bloys Post 2 in Tempe.

Both of these events are open to everyone in The American Legion Family. Please mark your calendars now so you won’t miss these. We will be sending out flyers in future mailings to the Posts, Units and Squadrions. Hope to see you at both of the events.

I would like to let every member of our Legion Family know how inspired, as well as motivated, I am to help achieve the best membership year ever. The American Legion leadership at all levels in Arizona appears to be just as motivated. Hopefully, we can inspire our members to ask friends and family members that are eligible, to become members. We also have seven new Posts and I would like to ask everyone that might be in the neighborhood of these Posts, to stop by or call them and show your support in any way you can. Thank you and remember to invite a Vet to join…Back to Basics!

Andres “Andy” Jaime, Jr.
Membership Chairman

Assisting Veterans with VA Disability Claims - Appeals Only*
Thodore C. Jarvi, Attorney at Law
Retired JAG – Legion Member
1050 E. Southern Avenue, Suite G3
Tempe, AZ 85282
Tel: (480) 838-6566; Fax: (480) 838-8810
E-Mail: tjarvi@jarvilaw.com

*Federal law permits the payment of attorney fees by the veteran for assistance with any VA claim if Notice of Disagreement is filed after June 20, 2007.

Neal S. Sundeen
ATTORNEY AT LAW
CERTIFIED SPECIALIST INJURY & WRONGFUL DEATH LITIGATION
STATE BAR OF ARIZONA

Neal S. Sundeen, P.C.
Telephone: (602) 265-1200
Phoenix, AZ 85014, USA
I received a phone call recently from a man I have high regard for. He wanted to tell me he had enjoyed the article in our last Arizona Legionnaire that I wrote, titled “By God’s Grace”. He had the courtesy to say that this article showed insight, and intelligence.

I had to tell him that perhaps he had read the wrong article - I have never thought I had advanced insight, and certainly not above average intelligence. I just truly believe in God, and know that he expects the best we can give; honesty, integrity and, above all, a love for our fellow man.

I had good teachers as a child who taught by example, not with the adage of “do as I say, not as I do”. I learned to say “I’m sorry” when I wrong, “please” as a request and “thank you” for what was given to me; including “thank you” to God for his many blessings. I thank God daily for my five sons, 13 grandchildren, and now 14 great-grandchildren; yes, I am a good catholic who practiced follow God’s way.

We have but to truly believe, follow God’s teachings, and “give it to God in prayer”.

We have the power to change so much if we but follow those simple guidelines and live “By God’s Grace”.

Be with God,
Richard Kepler,
Department Chaplain

Tucson Hosts “BULGE” Veterans National Reunion

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge-the largest land battle in U.S. history-are to hold their national annual reunion in Tucson, October 6th through 11th, at the Hotel Arizona, 181 West Broadway. The reunion will mark the 65th Anniversary of the horrendous battle during which more than 19,000 U.S. troops were killed and another 62,000 injured. The battle included three airborne divisions, nine armored divisions, included three airborne divisions, nine armored divisions, as well as units from Britain, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

We have but to truly believe, follow God’s teachings, and “give it to God in prayer”.

We have the power to change so much if we but follow those simple guidelines and live “By God’s Grace”.

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American Legion - Department of Arizona

Membership Report

September, 2015

D. A.ень Бугель продолжается из предыдущего отчета.

Membership Report

District No. - Commander/Jud Beischel
Post Name          City         Goal      2010 % of Goal
5  William Bloyes Tomop  491  270      54.99
26  Meas  Mesa  1,126  637 56.57
27  Apache  Apache    2,504  1,278 51.04
34  Frank W. Wright CaveCov  307  167 54.40
36  Matthew J. Juan Chandler  726  383 52.75
39  Merrill-Mitchell Gilbert  583  287 49.23
41  Tony F. Soza Phoenix  838  441 52.63
44  Scipe-Peterson Scottsdale  1,163  673 57.87
51  John B. Shroeder  Sun Lakes  218  139 63.76
56  Fountain Hills Fountain Hills  429  262 60.07
61  Lena Vaughn Whitney Mesa  36  20 55.56
69  Alisondake Yuma  149  49 96.73
76  Richard H. Hamilton Phoenix  337  125 37.09
78  Sansablye  Sun Lakes  382  206 52.36
83  East Mea  Mesa  108  63  58.33
84  Ira H. Hoye Sahuarita  60  31 51.67
85  Wayne V. McMartin Chandler  187  67 35.83
97  Irving B. Selphner Phoenix  542  155 28.60
114  Bushmaster Scottsdale  54  4 7.41
115  North Scottsdale  Scottsdale  54  18 33.33
117  Par Tillman  Phoenix  73  46 63.01
124  Guadalete Veterans  Guadalupe  25  7 28.00
District Totals  10,392  5,362 51.60

In addition to Battle of the Bugle veterans visiting from all around the United States, Hon. Nicholas Mackel, Deputy Chief of the Luxembourg Embassy, Washington, D.C. will also be in attendance. Everyone is invited to visit the VBOB Hotel Arizona hospitality room during the reunion.

For more information, please contact KEITH TRANTOW, Southern Arizona Chapter 53, email: rawhidekeith@earthlink.net, (520) 888-2181 or (520) 975-9751.

FPA Not Likely in 2009

Although the Flag Protection Amendment has been introduced in both houses of Congress, it does not look hopeful for a 2009 vote.

In each house, it has been assigned to the Judiciary Committee. The Senate Judiciary Committee is chaired by Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and the House Judiciary Committee is chaired by Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA). Both of these Committees are well known opponents of the Flag Amendment.

All Legionnaires are urged to contact their own Senators and implore them to sign on as co-sponsors of S.J. Res. 15 and H.J. Res 47.

Fly your Flag, Maria F. Currie, C.F.A. Chairman

FYI

A great place to get a copy of your service records is: http://vetrecs.archives.gov
PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- Ticket to a Suns game
- The Military & Veterans will be involved with the Suns in-game presentation throughout the game
- Group Gift - Suns player jersey bag
- Team Welcome on the Jumbotron
- $5 goes back to the American Legion Veteran and Family Assistance Program

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