



## VOICES

*"It's what we do – we strengthen America. We help our brothers and sisters, and we help the community in general."*

*- American Legion Department of Indiana Commander Mark Gullion, after a \$10,000 donation helped Elberfeld, Ind., Post 351 fill two semi trailers with relief items – which included locally contributed food, clothing, diapers, generators, chainsaws, tools and more – and transport them to a distribution drop-off point to help communities in Kentucky that were devastated by the Dec. 10-11 tornado outbreak.*



# \$64,824.20

Amount in American Legion National Emergency Fund grants disbursed in December to assist 25 individuals and four local posts that were severely harmed by natural disasters, including the tornado outbreak of Dec. 10-11.



# 222,908

Number of Dec. 21 American Legion Online Update e-newsletters, or a month-best 26% of the subscriber audience, that were opened when the top story detailed ways in which Legionnaires had responded to the tornado outbreak in Kentucky and elsewhere 10 days earlier.



# 3,100

Approximate number of cemeteries nationwide that participated in Wreaths Across America, which placed more than 2.4 million holiday wreaths at veteran graves, including 257,000 at Arlington National Cemetery, in December. American Legion posts and districts throughout the country volunteered and assisted with the program, which resumed in force after it had to be scaled down in 2020 due to the pandemic.



# 51

Number of up-and-coming veteran leaders from across the country who graduated from American Legion College in December.



# \$6,970

Value of gift cards presented in December to personnel of the 442nd Fighter Wing stationed at Whiteman Air Force Base following a two-month collection drive led by Tirey Ford American Legion Post 21 in Independence, Mo. Clothing, toys and 15 brand-new bicycles were among other holiday gifts distributed to the Air Force families Dec. 3.



# \$17K

Approximate value of toys and bicycles delivered by Florida's 5th District American Legion Riders in a December Toys for Tots drive that included a motorcycle escort for Marines from Blount Island Command in Jacksonville and lunch at the post following the exchange.



# \$21k

Amount in American Legion Operation Comfort Warriors grants disbursed in December to servicemembers or veterans recovering from military-connected wounds or illnesses.



# \$621,660

Amount in American Legion Mission Blue grants disbursed in 2021 to assist local posts whose operations were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In December alone, 97 grants were issued to posts in 27 American Legion departments in the amount of \$135,000.

## ADVOCACY

*"We believe the value of Troops to Teachers cannot be understated. It provides employment assistance to transitioning veterans, which aids in lowering veteran unemployment; it alleviates nationwide teaching shortages, which improves education quality; and it increases access and representation among traditionally less-represented groups to teaching careers. Allowing the Troops for Teachers program to sunset would go against America's critical need to support our children's education."*

*-Joint letter to the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs from a coalition of veterans service organizations, including The American Legion, calling for reauthorization of the program after it was initially dropped from the National Defense Authorization Act of 2022; compromise language to save the program was installed by Congress and passed in December, assuring the program will continue at least through 2025.*



# 854

Number of competitors, representing 104 clubs, who registered for the first round of the 2021-22 National Postal American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Tournament by the Dec. 15 deadline.



# 25k+

Viewers who tuned in for a Dec. 4 online video game tournament put on by The American Legion and Regiment Gaming where 24 professional players were matched with 48 veterans and servicemembers as teammates. The Veterans Bash Tournament was streamed from 25 Twitch accounts.



# 358

Number of national American Legion recognition certificates issued in December for local achievements in Boy Scouts of America units.



# 322,400

Rounds of blank ammo provided in 2021 from The American Legion National Security Division for ceremonial use at posts and departments. Also provided through the military-equipment loan program were 749 rifles, 963 clips and 12 static displays.



# 116

Articles published on [legion.org](https://legion.org) as part of the two-year OUR WWII STORY series directed by an American Legion resolution in 2019 to honor the greatest generation in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of World War II's end. Stories, photos and videos are indexed at [legion.org/centennial](https://legion.org/centennial) under the heading Our WWII Story.

## TESTIMONY

*"Our servicemembers, veterans and their families should not have to worry about finding a suitable home whether they are changing duty stations, transitioning from the military, or simply buying a new home."*

*-American Legion Veterans Employment and Education Division Director Joseph Sharpe, in December testimony before Congress that revealed dramatic declines in acceptance of VA home loans in 2021, as prices climbed, inventory was scarce and sellers were fielding cash offers that exceeded their asking prices*



# 4,723

Number of audio downloads of the Tango Alpha Lima podcast, the fourth-highest monthly total.



# \$19,500

Amount in American Legion national youth scholarships disbursed in December.