

The 2nd District American Legion Family Newsletter



Legion Commander:

Brad Pagel

Email: bppagel@gmail.com

Auxiliary President:

Robin Olson

Email: rrde72@gmail.com

Honorary Junior President:

Anastasia Donnelly

SAL Commander:

Russell Lietzke

Email: rjlietzke@gmail.com

ALR Director:

Kris Schneeberg

Email: kaschneeberg@gmail.com

****Newsletter News****

The newsletter email is district2mnlionfamilynews@gmail.com

Please submit all articles/pictures/posters etc. you wish to have published in the newsletter before the 22nd of the prior month.

To help the District cut down on expenses and time it takes with the mailings of the newsletter, it was decided at convention time to go all electronic for the newsletter. Please encourage someone from each Post, Unit, Squadron and Chapter to receive the newsletter via email and print it out for their meetings. It will also be available on the district website at www.mnlegion2nndistrict.com on the newsletter page.

Brad Pagel is still doing the newsletter, but if someone is more than willing to take it over and do it each month that would be great and awesome too.

Upcoming Events

Oct 1 Luverne Vets Home Fun Day 9am

Oct 19 District Rally - Halloween Costumes - Auxiliary in charge New Ulm MN 3pm

Oct 25-26 Dept Fall Conference Mahnomon MN

Nov 23 District Rally/Training Workshop Lake Crystal MN

Dec 7 Dept Pearl Harbor Rally Rosetown

Dec 14 or 15 District Christmas Party TBD

Jan 10-11 District Mid-winter Conference Sleepy Eye MN

Feb 8 Dept Sweetheart Rally

Feb 29 District Rally Slayton

May 9 District testimonials

June 5-6 District Convention TBD

Mark the Dates

Adrian SAL pancake breakfast last Sunday every month. 9-1

Bricelyn Post SAL steak fry 3rd Saturday every month.

Keister Post steak fry 4th Saturday every month.

Madelia Steak Fry 3rd Saturday every month 5-730pm

Pipestone SAL Omelet Breakfast 2nd Sunday every month September-April 9am-1230pm

Any post events please send them in to get in newsletters.

ATTENTION: ALL VETERANS
GREAT NEWS:

President Trump signed into law the LEGION Act (Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for National Service). **The new Law changes The American Legion's eligibility dates to now be open to all those who served during WWI and all veterans since Dec 7th 1941 with at least one day of honorable federal service.**

Minnesota's own Past National Commander Dan Ludwig, from Red Wing Post 54, was witness to and was a leading influence in getting this historic piece of bipartisan legislation passed. We welcome with open arms ALL of our fellow Veterans along with their families to be a part of The American Legion family!

The LEGION Act now opens up The American Legion's eligibility to approximately 6 million veterans which previously had not been eligible. It opens the eligibility for membership in The American Legion to anyone who had 1 day of federal active duty and has been honorably discharged or are still serving since December 7, 1941.

The existing American Legion membership applications are in the process of being updated but can still be used. It is recommended that prospective Legionnaires and recruiters write 'LEGION Act' in the eligibility date section of American Legion membership applications if they fall outside the previous war eras. The larger pool of veterans now eligible for The American Legion will also open their family members to eligibility in the Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary as well. Please contact your local post for application and further information.

Eligibility Requirements for American Legion Auxiliary Membership

Membership in The American Legion Auxiliary shall be limited to the grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, and direct and adopted female descendants of members of The American Legion, and to the grandmothers, mothers, sisters, spouses, and direct and adopted female descendants of all men and women who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during any of the following periods: April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918; and any time after December 7, 1941; or who, being citizens of the United States at the time of their entry therein, served on active duty in the Armed Forces of any of the governments associated with the United States during any of said periods, and died in the line of duty or after honorable discharge; and to those women who of their own right are eligible for membership in The American Legion

A woman who is eligible for American Legion membership is eligible to join the American Legion Auxiliary regardless of whether or not she is a member of The American Legion. However, eligibility of her female relatives (sister, mother, direct decedents) and/or spouse depends upon her membership in The American Legion.

Sons of The American Legion

S.A.L. members include males of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and were eligible for American Legion membership.

2nd District Commander Column



2nd District Commander

Brad Pagel

bppagel@gmail.com

605-366-3025

As I sit here putting together this month's newsletter, the weather is changing to more fall like conditions. I am taking this time to talk about my project for this year. This is a 3 way district project with the Auxiliary President and SAL Commander, at the Eagles Healing Nest Redwood Falls Facility. The project is to build an outdoor patio area with firepit and grilling areas with tables and chairs for socializing. The Redwood Falls facility is an apartment style for our veterans to reintegrate with their family's. Eagle's Healing Nest's mission is to provide assistance with the healing of the invisible wounds of war carried by our service men and women...past, present, and future. Eagle's Healing Nest is here to ensure we do not lose another generation of veterans to homelessness, broken family units, or suicide. We need to start taking care of our younger veterans in order to stop the 22 a day.

When sending in donations to the project mark them for the Redwood Falls facility outdoor patio project.

Eagle's Healing Nest

310 Highway 71 N, Unit 881

Sauk Centre, MN 56378

On another note we have scheduled “rallys”, yes they will be for membership, but as well as education on the American Legion Family. We are trying to brand ourselves as a family and we are going to start acting like it. Bring your sons, daughters, grandchildren to these district events, they are part of ours and your family as well, it’s well past time to include them in everything we do as they are the future of The American Legion Family and what we stand for and believe in. It’s well past time to get back to the basics and make this a big happy fun district family again. The registration form for Mid-Winter conference in Sleepy Eye is in this newsletter, please fill it out and return it ASAP if you plan on attending. Remember the District Oratorical Contest will also be held at the same time.

Auxiliary President News



2nd District President
Robin Olson
rrde72@gmail.com
507-525-3790

Hope everyone is enjoying this nice weather we r having.

I would like to say that we are in 2nd place for membership WAY TO GO!!!! But let's see if we can get in to first place. If we r the highest by fall conference we will win something that we have not won in a long time and that would be the Scallen Carlson Plaque so let's keep those memberships coming in. I would just like to say thank you for all your hard work that you all are doing for this it takes a team to make it happen.

THANK YOU ALL.

I had the honor of being at Lewisville for their membership supper. It was a good turn out we had Department President Mary Hendrickson and her husband , Department Vice Commander Bill Brockberg, 2nd District Membership Director Randy Olson, and myself. Would like to thank them for a wonderful meal and a great program that they put on.

Don't forget about in October we are having our membership rally in New Ulm at 3 and please make sure you dress up there will be prizes for the best costume and a few door prizes nothing big so please make sure you come and enjoy the rally and then stay afterwards to help support their steak fry that they will be having. Untill

next month have a great month and keep those memberships coming in you all are doing a great job.

LEGION MEMBERSHIP

Randy R. Olson
2nd District Membership
507-525-6532
rrolson734@gmail.com

Awesome Job 2nd District on your membership renewals! Thank you to those of you for renewing your membership before the 2nd notice from National! Please understand how much money is wasted by The American Legion sending out 2nd, 3rd, & 4th notices when your renewals are due every year July 1st! For those who haven't renewed yet, please make it a priority! Let's keep the funds going to Veterans in need, instead of asking you to continue your membership!

Posts Membership Directors, can I ask of you to send in membership as soon as you get them sent to you? This not only prevents National from sending out notices, but stops members from calling you & asking why they are getting a notice, when they have already renewed! It also prevents members from sending directly to National, when they may have already paid this year! It's just good practice!

Who has started building their Post up by signing up new members due to THE LEGION ACT or Veterans currently serving Our Country? We are looking at incentives for Posts who are out building their Legion Family! For every new Legion Member, there are Auxiliary, Junior Auxiliary, Sons of American Legion, & American Legion Rider potential members! Let's ALL take our membership to the next level this year! I know we can do it!

Important note on mylegion.org! Many Posts have signed into mylegion.org since 2010, but do you know if your Post has reset their password, so that you can easily renew, add new members, fill out Post Consolidated Reports, Officers Lists, Reports for deceased, learn about all of the Legions Programs, or download officer manual's, Posts Reports of members, or learn about the 4 pillars? mylegion.org should be used by every Post daily! Remember, I will offer you my help, any way I can, so that you

are successful! God Bless you all & Thank you for what you do for our Veterans, their families, & your Communities!

AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP

Raleen Tolzmann

raleen44aux@gmail.com

HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY! THE AUXILIARY IS 100 YEARS OLD – Let's make this year the year District 2 is 100% in membership!

This year we are going to sparkle – Every unit member is a GEM

Let's collect all those GEMS, now is a good time to do it.

Congratulations to the Okabena Unit 608 for winning the \$50.00 at the Harvest Rally for reaching 40% or more in membership.

Fall Conference is coming, the Scallen Carson Plaque will be awarded to the District with the highest percentage of goal. We were at 8th place 2 weeks ago and with this week's printout we are in 2 place – WOW! Let's go for the trophy at Fall Conference. The dates are October 25 and 26 in Mahnommen.

We can do this, as you look at your unit goals for 2019-2020 you will see that many of you have your goals reduced. So, let's go get those memberships to get the trophy.

Just a reminder of what you need to collect this year and send into Department –

SENIORS - \$24.00 JUNIORS - \$6.00

With the new Legion Law, everyone that has served in the service since WWII can now join Legion, this should help the Auxiliary with membership as these veterans join the Legion.

Also new this year is spouses of Lady Veterans can now join the Auxiliary if she belongs to the Legion. With so many women in the service now, the spouses want to be able to support and help these veterans.

On October 19th in New Ulm is a District Membership Rally. We the Auxiliary will be hosting this event with a costume party – bring your ghostly costumes and let's have fun with lots of membership.

If you have questions or need help, please feel free to call any one of us on the membership team, if we don't have an answer, we will get for you.

Thank you for all you do for the American Legion Auxiliary and for our Veterans and their families.

Your District membership Team.

Raleen Tolzmann – Membership Chairman

Team members – Tricia Pagel, Jeannette Mertens, Vickie Lowrie, and Diane Strassburg

2 nd DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP 2019-2020				
Unit No.	Unit Name	DNO /Goal	# of Mem	% of goal
32	Adrian	46	0	0%
276	Amboy	36	33	91.67%
576	Avoca	28	0	0%
309	Belview	37	0	0%
496	Bigelow	15	0	0%
89	Blue Earth	116	0	0%
464	Brewster	70	23	32.86%
165	Bricelyn	57	23	40.35%
329	Cambria	11	0	0%
529	Ceylon	36	0	0%
338	Chandler	25	0	0%
519	Clements	18	0	0%
244	Comfrey	33	0	0%
322	Currie	60	0	0%
486	Delavan	12	0	0%
632	Dovray	48	0	0%
386	Dundee	21	0	0%
617	Eagle Lake	119	0	0%
569	Easton	60	0	0%
42	Edgerton	47	1	2.13%
196	Ellsworth	17	0	0%
36	Fairmont	134	0	0%
318	Fulda	34	0	0%
616	Good Thunder	54	1	1.85%
365	Hanska	46	43	93.48%
478	Hardwick	24	0	0%
195	Hendricks	36	0	0%
224	Heron Lake	42	0	0%
399	Hills	18	0	0%
534	Holland	49	0	0%

130	Jackson	143	0	0%
133	Jasper	29	0	0%
401	Jeffers	22	20	90.91%
454	Kiester	26	0	0%
10	Lake Benton	51	7	13.73%
294	Lake Crystal	139	81	58.27%
285	Lake Wilson	129	0	0%
4	Lakefield	63	0	0%
41	Lamberton	109	0	0%
561	Lewisville	50	0	0%
636	Lismore	52	0	0%
467	Lucan	27	0	0%
123	Luverne	55	0	0%
19	Madelia	49	0	0%
269	Madison Lake	28	0	0%
11	Mankato	69	1	1.45%
274	Milroy	32	0	0%
287	Minnesota Lake	84	35	41.67%
132	New Ulm	181	7	3.87%
522	Northrop	73	12	16.44%
608	Okabena	66	37	56.06%
6	Pipestone	71	0	0%
38	Redwood Falls	77	19	24.68%
582	Revere	14	7	50.00%
461	Round Lake	85	14	16.47%
506	Ruthton	30	0	0%
286	Sanborn	43	0	0%
356	Sherburn	37	33	89.19%
614	Sioux Valley	12	8	66.67%
64	Slayton	58	10	17.24%
7	Sleepy Eye	34	0	0%
257	Springfield	170	0	0%
475	St. Clair	36	0	0%
33	St. James	83	0	0%
391	Storden	21	0	0%
373	Trimont	44	16	36.36%
115	Truman	37	1	2.70%
306	Vesta	13	0	0%
263	Wabasso	90	3	3.33%
267	Walnut Grove	69	57	82.61%
553	Welcome	42	26	61.90%
210	Wells	183	0	0%
206	Windom	62	0	0%
82	Winnebago	16	5	31.25%
5	Worthington	38	1	2.63%
2	District Total	4191	524	12.50%
AS OF WEEK 09/18/2019				

Attention Unit Presidents and Treasurers:

As per 2nd District Standing Rules D:2.

a. District Dues: Units shall pay District Dues annually in the amount of \$1.75 per member, base upon their last year's total membership. The first billing of the District membership dues will be published in the September issue of the 2nd District American Legion Family Newsletter.

Checks should be made out to:

2nd District American Legion Auxiliary

and mailed to:

2nd District Treasurer

Vida Bacon

110 N Payne St

New Ulm MN 56073

Ladies –

We have tried to reach some of you by phone and have reach a notice that the number is no longer in service. Please, if you have discontinued you 'land line' service and are only using a cell phone, be sure that we have your cell phone number. Membership chairmen and Unit Presidents especially.

Thank you

Unit #	Unit Town	Jr	Sr	Total	Jr. Assess	Total Dues	Unit #	Unit Town	Jr	Sr	Total	Jr. Assess	Total Dues
32	Adrian	3	42	45	\$1.00	\$ 79.75	123	Luverne		54	54	\$1.00	\$ 95.50
276	Amboy	3	32	35	\$1.00	\$ 62.25	19	Madelia	1	47	48	\$1.00	\$ 85.00
576	Avoca	7	20	27	\$1.00	\$ 48.25	269	Madison Lake	13	14	27	\$1.00	\$ 48.25
309	Belview	6	30	36	\$1.00	\$ 64.00	11	Mankato	3	65	68	\$1.00	\$120.00
496	Bigelow	0	14	14	\$1.00	\$ 25.50	274	Milroy	1	30	31	\$1.00	\$ 55.25
89	Blue Earth	5	109	114	\$1.00	\$ 200.50	287	Minnesota Lake	14	69	83	\$1.00	\$146.25
464	Brewster	25	44	69	\$1.00	\$ 121.75	132	New Ulm	6	173	179	\$1.00	\$314.25
165	Bricelyn	7	49	56	\$1.00	\$ 99.00	522	Northrop	16	57	73	\$1.00	\$128.75
329	Cambria		10	10	\$1.00	\$ 18.50	608	Okabena	4	61	65	\$1.00	\$114.75
529	Ceylon		35	35	\$1.00	\$ 62.25	6	Pipestone	2	68	70	\$1.00	\$123.50
338	Chandler	4	20	24	\$1.00	\$ 43.00	38	Redwood Falls	9	67	76	\$1.00	\$134.00
519	Clements		17	17	\$1.00	\$ 30.75	562	Revere		13	13	\$1.00	\$ 23.75
244	Comfrey	2	30	32	\$1.00	\$ 57.00	461	Round Lake	9	75	84	\$1.00	\$148.00
322	Currie	5	54	59	\$1.00	\$ 104.25	506	Ruthton		29	29	\$1.00	\$ 51.75
486	Delavan		11	11	\$1.00	\$ 20.25	286	Sanborn	5	37	42	\$1.00	\$ 74.50
632	Dovray	2	45	47	\$1.00	\$ 83.25	356	Sherburn	2	34	36	\$1.00	\$ 64.00
386	Dundee		20	20	\$1.00	\$ 36.00	614	Sioux Valley		11	11	\$1.00	\$ 20.25
617	Eagle Lake	8	109	117	\$1.00	\$ 205.75	64	Slayton	7	50	57	\$1.00	\$100.75
569	Easton	6	53	59	\$1.00	\$ 104.25	7	Sleepy Eye		33	33	\$1.00	\$ 58.75
42	Edgerton		46	46	\$1.00	\$ 81.50	257	Springfield	3	165	168	\$1.00	\$295.00
196	Ellsworth		16	16	\$1.00	\$ 29.00	475	St Clair		35	35	\$1.00	\$ 62.25
36	Fairmont	10	122	132	\$1.00	\$ 232.00	33	St James	1	81	82	\$1.00	\$144.50
318	Fulda	3	30	33	\$1.00	\$ 58.75	391	Storden		20	20	\$1.00	\$ 36.00
616	Good Thunder	7	46	53	\$1.00	\$ 93.75	373	Trimont	4	39	43	\$1.00	\$ 76.25
365	Hanska	10	35	45	\$1.00	\$ 79.75	115	Truman	3	33	36	\$1.00	\$ 64.00
478	Hardwick	3	20	23	\$1.00	\$ 41.25	306	Vesta		12	12	\$1.00	\$ 22.00
195	Hendricks		35	35	\$1.00	\$ 62.25	263	Wabasso	13	76	89	\$1.00	\$156.75
224	Heron Lake		41	41	\$1.00	\$ 72.75	267	Walnut Grove	6	62	68	\$1.00	\$120.00
399	Hills		17	17	\$1.00	\$ 30.75	553	Welcome	2	39	41	\$1.00	\$ 72.75
534	Holland		48	48	\$1.00	\$ 85.00	210	Wells	14	167	181	\$1.00	\$317.75
130	Jackson	24	117	141	\$1.00	\$ 247.75	206	Windom	6	55	61	\$1.00	\$107.75
133	Jasper		28	28	\$1.00	\$ 50.00	82	Winnebago	4	11	15	\$1.00	\$ 27.25
401	Jeffers		21	21	\$1.00	\$ 37.75	5	Worthington	4	33	37	\$1.00	\$ 65.75
454	Kiester		25	25	\$1.00	\$ 44.75							
10	Lake Benton		50	50	\$1.00	\$ 88.50							
294	Lake Crystal	7	130	137	\$1.00	\$ 240.75							
285	Lake Wilson	11	116	127	\$1.00	\$ 223.25							
4	Lakefield	6	56	62	\$1.00	\$ 109.50							
41	Lamberton	4	103	107	\$1.00	\$ 188.25							
561	Lewisville	3	48	51	\$1.00	\$ 90.25							
636	Lismore	1	48	49	\$1.00	\$ 86.75							
467	Lucan		26	26	\$1.00	\$ 46.50							

Luverne Veterans Home

Volunteers are needed for Tuesday October 1st fun day at the Vets Home. Starting at 9 am with blackjack followed by lunch at noon. Hamburgers, hot dogs, with salads.

Bingo at 2:30 pm

Come and have a good time.

VAVS Chair

Dennis Strassburg

ORATORICAL CONTEST

The 2nd District Oratorical Contest will be held on Jan 11 2020 at 1:00 pm, in conjunction with the Mid-Winter conference at the Sleepy Eye Post 7. Brad Pagel is the Oratorical Chair, contact him for this years packet.

Brad Pagel

605-366-3025

bppagel@gmail.com



Walnut Grove American Legion Auxiliary Unit 267 participated in the Tracy Box Car Day Parade.

Jr Shooting Sports

The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Department Chairmen had their conference and due to some updates to the 2019 – 2020 Official Match Program will not be able to have it on-line until just before the beginning of registration on 1 November.

So you are prepared for registration here are some of the changes you will see for this year's process.

1) Registration opens 1 November. Deadline this year is 15 DECEMBER 2019

2) All payments will be by credit card only.

a. Target prices will be \$15.00 per target set.

3) There will be an administrator (payer of target sets) and a coach function if needed. Administrator can give coach access to club to put in competitor information.

a. Competitor information will need to include competitor (or family) email address, phone number and CMP number

b. What type of rifle (Sporter / Precision)

4) Will need to fill in Post information that will prefill an Affiliation Form. You can either print, get Post Commander's signature and upload OR upload an Affiliation Form you may have

already gotten a signature on. However, we will not accept any Affiliation Forms signed prior to 1 September 2019. Affiliation Forms must be uploaded as part of the registration process. We will not accept any Affiliation Forms sent to National HQ for this year's registration.

5) You will not be able to pay for target sets until all the steps, including the Affiliation Form is uploaded, is complete.

We are also working on trying to make this an easier process on the target ordering side as well. While we hope to have this done, I can't guarantee it for this year. Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Bill Megnin

Youth Program Manager

Oratorical and Junior Shooting Sports

The American Legion National Headquarters

700 North Pennsylvania Street

Indianapolis, IN 46204

wmegnin@legion.org

The National Rifle Association Foundation provides grants to help start and maintain youth shooting sports projects. If you are looking at getting an American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Air Rifle Program going this would be a great place to start.

<https://www.nrafoundation.org/grants/>

<https://www.nrafoundation.org/grants/frequently-asked-questions/>

Any Questions please feel free to contact

Jerry Ludwig, 2nd District
Jr. Shooting Sports Chairman.

<https://www.legion.org> › shooting

A youth rifle safety and procedure program allowing children to participate in an Olympic skill sport while fostering healthy competition.

<https://www.legion.org/publications/229402/junior-shooting-sports-how-start-club>



Lee C. Prentice American Legion Post 36 Vice Commander Devin Haegeman presents a new flag to Fairmont Elementary School Teacher Jim Buss and several students learning about flag etiquette.

2ND DISTRICT MID-WINTER CONFERENCE

JANUARY 10-11, 2020

Sleepy Eye American Post #7

Serviceman’s Club,109 1st Ave S, Sleepy Eye, MN 56085

ROOMS: Americainn, 1100 Main St E., Sleepy Eye, MN 56055 Phone: 507-794-9494

When you call to make your reservation, ask for the “American Legion Mid-Winter Conference”. The rooms will cost \$115.00 plus tax each until December 10, 2019. After the 10th, the rooms will cost \$139.00 plus tax.

MEALS: Executive Board Supper (5:00 PM.): Fried chicken, mashed potatoes, sweetcorn and bars. \$7.00

Breakfast (8:00 AM.): Assorted pastries, coffee, water and milk. FREE

Lunch (12 NOON): Slice ham, scallop potatoes, green beans and bars. \$7:50

Name _____ Registration per person: \$10.00

Legion _____ Auxiliary _____ S.A.L _____ Aux Jr. _____ Riders _____

COSTS

QTY

Registration \$10.00 X _____ = \$ _____

Exe. Board Supper (\$7.00) \$7.00 X _____ = \$ _____

Lunch (\$7.50) \$7.50 X _____ = \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Make checks payable to: **American Legion Post #7**

Mail to: **Betty Jass**

P. O. Box 1303

Lake Crystal, MN 56055

507-351-1241

*****ALL REGISTRATIONS AND MEALS NEED TO BE SENT IN NO LATER THAN January 2, 2020.

Membership is the key to OUR success



By James W. "Bill" Oxford, National Commander

We are embarking on the next 100 years of The American Legion, and I would like to look at where we are going as an organization. It is critical to realize that we are the future of this organization. The things we did yesterday, the things we do today, and the things we will do tomorrow are the reason that my theme this year is building the "Foundation for the Future."

Our all-time high was 3.3 million members in 1946. This needs to be our ultimate goal, but we can- not expect this to happen over- night or even this year. The 2018- 2019 membership goal was just a little over 1.8 million members. We need to set and achieve goals that will act as stepping stones to getting us back to attaining our all-time high.

For the 2019 membership year, our retention rate for the whole organization finished at 86.3 per- cent, and we recruited 63,815 new members at the post level. Although these numbers are respectable, if we are going to have success and grow over last year's membership totals, we have to increase our retention rate and our traditional new recruiting. That is why I have set two personal goals for our great organization based on membership.

Goal one: Increase our overall retention rate to 90 percent. As of Sept. 18, our retention rate is 48.3 percent. So we are halfway to our goal. We have to continue personally contacting our members preferably with a visit, but otherwise through email, text messaging or a phone call. We cannot solely rely upon the renewal notices to make contact.

Goal two: Increase our traditional recruiting to bring in 100,000 new members. With the passage of the LEGION Act, there are an additional 4.2 million veterans now eligible to become Legionnaires. That gives us an eligible pool of over 19 million veterans. We just have to ask these veterans to join and educate them on what we do. Every member, post, district and department can help increase our visibility by engaging these veterans through our programs and events, such as a fish fry, family day, Boys/Girls State, flag retirement ceremony or an American Legion Baseball game. Invite and involve the American Legion Family to be a part of and welcome these veterans into our posts.

As we work to surpass our membership goals, we have to tell our story to complete the job. So the last goal I have is not based around membership numbers, but rather on the Consolidated Post Report (CPR). I want to increase our CPR response rate from 70 percent to 100 percent. Each post has a story to tell and when we speak collectively our strength is magnified.

As we submit our reports about American Legion programs and efforts, we must consider the people it took to make these things happen. I want to recognize any American Legion Family member for a job well done. Any Legionnaire, Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion or Legion Rider member who recruits three new Legion members will receive my commander's membership incentive pin. Any post, district, county or department that exceeds 103 percent of their membership goal, the commander and membership chairman will receive my pin as well.

With Veterans Day coming up, I cannot stress enough the importance of conducting a Buddy Check. This is not a membership drive, but solely a health and welfare check on current, past and potential members. This is one of our reasons for existence. Assisting veterans and checking on their well-being is the essence of one of the founding pillars of The American Legion. If you have not done so, please plan a Buddy Check event and personally contact veterans living in your community.

If we meet these goals I have set in place, we will set the organization up for success. Ultimately, we have to raise The American Legion's visibility in our communities if we are going to be successful in membership. It is how we will build a foundation for the future of our American Legion.