GOLDEN YEAR COUNTDOWN . . .

50-Year Fete Moves onto Launch Pad

HERE IT IS! Your 50th Anniversary Planning Guide!

Contained in this issue of ADVANCE are ideas and pointers that Post Commanders and their 50th Anniversary Chairmen around the country have been waiting for! Here in one small publication are the key things which, when accomplished, will help make your post's Golden Anniversary observance a much talked-about success.

This month's ADVANCE offers such features as—how to get started on your planning and how to get recognition for your program, how to organize your Golden Anniversary Team, what it should be doing to help you develop your program, and, hints and tips on how to keep your program rolling along in high gear for the duration of the 15-month observance.

Here, for example, is the kind of help you will get in this and subsequent issues of ADVANCE:

1. How to organize your Post Anniversary Program.

One of the most important jobs every chairman has is to get himself organized so that he can get his job done as easily and efficiently as possible. Read the helpful checklist on Page 3. It will help get your 50th Anniversary Chairman started in the right direction.

2. What to do to get publicity for your program.

This is a full-time job. Page 9 of this issue will help you handle publicity problems successfully. The principles outlined have proved successful in other great programs and they will work for you!

3. How to make the post Anniversary program come to life.

An observance of 15 months duration needs more than one event to maintain interest and enthusiasm. Outlined on Pages 10 and 11 are the guidelines for your Events Chairman and ideas that will help make the post program exciting each month of the observance. Future issues of the ADVANCE Planning Guide will develop these and new ideas as the celebration moves along.

4. Are you working alone? What is National doing?

You are never working alone. Behind you are 2½ million Legionnaires—in every town, in every state and in many foreign countries—all working together to make this the biggest, best 50th Anniversary ever. Your national organization is busy developing projects for the Anniversary year. Several are mentioned on Page 4.

5. The Anniversary doesn't start until the next National Convention, but what are we doing now to honor our fifty year members?

The 50th National Convention to be held in New Orleans, September 6-12, 1968, will officially open the Anniversary observance. But next month (March), posts have an opportunity to honor their fifty-year members. The center-fold section of this issue of ADVANCE contains information that will be helpful in planning recognition for our veteran members.

6. Is this it? Is this all the information we are going to get?

Absolutely not! Each month, ADVANCE will include a special Anniversary Planning Guide as a four-page center insert. You will be able to remove this section for easy filing along with this issue of ADVANCE. The guide will help you develop plans for activities scheduled several months in advance of the time they actually happen.

The preceding information is just a hint of the kind of help you will find in this and future issues of ADVANCE.

(Continued on Page 2)
50-Year Fete . . .
(Continued from Page 1)

Since success goes hand-in-hand with hard work and organization, you and your 50th Anniversary Chairman will need to read and understand the suggestions contained in the next few pages. Because of the limitations of space, we have condensed much of this material to essential principles and ideas. Keep this issue of ADVANCE easily available for ready reference, as well as future issues of the ADVANCE Planning Guide. As you move into your big year, your file will become a valuable source for ideas, procedures and planning guidance. It will not solve all your problems, but it will help you organize your program, stimulate your creative thinking, and answer some of your questions.

Successful Anniversary Chairmen do not overlook any bets! They use every opportunity to make their program more meaningful to the post membership—and they use each opportunity to inform the public about the post, its members, and their contributions to the community, state and nation.

In developing your successful anniversary observance, keep in mind your ultimate objectives—

1. To celebrate the victory of World War I.
2. To commemorate the founding of The American Legion and your post.
3. To note the accomplishments of your post and The American Legion during the first 50 years of its existence.
4. To signify the future role of your post and The American Legion.

This is the beginning of another great period in the history of The American Legion. Your dedication, labor and enthusiasm can, and will, make the 50th Anniversary observance a resounding success, and will bring into focus fifty years of service and achievement by Legionnaires everywhere.

THE AMERICAN LEGION
ADVANCE
Published monthly by National Headquarters, The American Legion, P. O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Ind. 46206—
for American Legion Post Commanders

February, 1968 Vol. XI, No. 2

Important Dates

The American Legion's 50th Anniversary begins with the gathering of the 50th National Convention in September 1968. At this time, the Legion will begin fifteen months of activity designed to commemorate fifty years of service to God and Country. Legionnaires everywhere will be looking ahead to another half-century of increasingly important contributions to their communities, states, and nation. With the influx of a new generation of war veterans, The American Legion is expected to continue to be a vital force in making our country a strong bulwark in the struggle for freedom.

The national anniversary program is being developed to include six important dates in six cities. These dates will be the high points of the celebration of the 50th Anniversary observance by the national organization. Many posts will wish to add other dates of more local appeal to their anniversary programs—for example, a post may wish to celebrate the post organization day as a major event.

September 6-12, 1968—New Orleans, Louisiana
The 50th National Convention heralds the beginning of the 50th Anniversary observance.

November 11, 1968—Washington, D.C.
The 50th Anniversary of the Armistice of World War I.

March 15-17, 1969—Washington, D.C.
The National Commander's Conference and Annual Dinner for Congress will commemorate the Paris Caucus. The 50th Anniversary commemorative U. S. Postage Stamp will be issued on this date.

May 8-9, 1968—St. Louis, Missouri
The semi-annual meeting of the National Executive Committee will convene in St. Louis to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the St. Louis Caucus of The American Legion, May 8-10, 1919.

August 22-28, 1969*—Atlanta, Georgia
The 51st National Convention will convene here to chart the course for the Legion's second half-century. (*Dates tentative at this time.)

November 11, 1969—Minneapolis, Minnesota
The 50th Anniversary of the first national convention of The American Legion marks the closing of the anniversary observance.

The ADVANCE, February, 1968
YOUR POST 50TH ANNIVERSARY program will need a strong foundation. The very first thing for the post to do is to select a real live-wire Legionnaire to be the 50th Anniversary Chairman. After he has been chosen, then every member of the post should wholeheartedly offer his time and effort to make the post observance something to remember. By following the checklist at the bottom of this page, the Post Commander and his 50th Anniversary Chairman will be well on their way to organizing a successful post 50th Anniversary observance.

Checklist For A Successful Anniversary Program

☐ 1. The first step is to plot the direction your post anniversary planning will take. In order to do an effective job, examine your community’s knowledge about your post’s activities. Ask Legionnaires, friends, non-members, civic and government officials, businessmen and neighbors what they know about your post and the Legion.

☐ 2. Draft definite objectives for your post program. Exploit the strong points brought out by your research and strengthen those areas that are weak.

☐ 3. The allocation of priorities is most important to your planning effort as well as the establishment of timetables for your observance. Strong direction is needed to keep the post programs on schedule and running smoothly.

☐ 4. Select the channels of communication. Consider (1) newspapers, radio, and television publicity; (2) advertising sponsored by local businesses; (3) exhibits and displays in schools, banks, and store windows; (4) close association with the American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, the Boy Scouts and other civic organizations; (5) special events and projects in honor of the anniversary; and (6) the use of available promotional aids such as billboard posters, postage stamps, medals, decals, postage meter advertising and U. S. postal cancellations.

☐ 5. Assign specific responsibilities to specific persons; fit the job to the individual who can contribute the most to it. Encourage everyone to participate in some way. Organize your personnel into a working team with clear-cut lines of authority. Beware of burdening projects that have to move ahead with too many stops along the way. Appoint a Publicity Chairman and an Events Chairman, now!

☐ 6. Carry out your post anniversary program in all of its ramifications. You should complete the first five steps before introducing your post anniversary program officially.

☐ 7. Evaluate your results. This is a must if your post program is to be a success. Check your progress, project by project. Remedy the projects that are weak and lagging behind. Be flexible. Be prepared to move with the ball when the going gets tough.

☐ 8. Finally, coordinate your activities. Keep all concerned abreast of your plans. The post will want to keep the district and the department advised so that those publicizing the observance at those echelons can keep up with events and give you the benefits of a much broader base of public recognition for the efforts put into your post programs.
National Programs

ENDING STATUTE AND PRESTIGE to the 50th Anniversary is the objective of The American Legion's national programs. Two blue ribbon committees have been formed—The Committee of One Hundred, an advisory group of nationally prominent men and women, and the National Entertainment Committee, a committee of well known personalities from the stage, screen, radio, television and the world of sports. Both committees will help bring recognition to the anniversary observance.

Other anniversary projects, such as a 50th Anniversary medal, a United States commemorative postage stamp, postage meter advertisements, a special 50th Anniversary postal cancellation and outdoor billboard posters are now in various stages of development.

Meredith Willson, noted composer of Broadway musicals, has written the 50th Anniversary March for The American Legion.

A nationwide campaign to plant and dedicate “Freedom Trees” is in the planning stages by your national 50th Anniversary Committee.

Each of the national programs, mentioned here and others to be announced later, are specifically designed to allow “tie-in” participation by the Legion post in its community.

Posts all over the world are working together, focusing the public's attention on the achievements of The American Legion. In your town, your post is The American Legion. Your friends and neighbors will judge the Legion by what you do during our big year.

What are you going to do to keep your post active during a 15-month 50th Anniversary observance?

To help answer this vital question, a list of monthly themes has been prepared. Each theme was selected as a way to communicate to the public the Legion's contribution to the welfare of the community, state and nation. Although broad in scope, and general in nature, the themes will help the Post Anniversary Chairman channel the 50th Anniversary effort along common lines with other posts around the nation.

Each month, the 50th Anniversary Advance Planning Guide will develop ideas and provide planning guidance to support the up-coming themes. You will receive your planning information several months in advance so that you may have sufficient time to plan your post activity.

This 15-month Anniversary period is your opportunity to arouse interest in the Legion, increase membership and to prove to your community that the hometown Legionnaire is really an outstanding citizen—an asset to the community!

Here are the themes for 1968! Remember, they are guidelines—not complete programs. Get together with your idea men. Work up their enthusiasm and create programs that will make the 50th Anniversary observance the big event in your town.

1968

September Citizenship and the Constitution. School opening is a natural opportunity to exploit this theme. Ceremonial flag raisings—school assemblies—a good citizen award, are easy and effective projects.

October Rehabilitation and Employ the Handicapped. Emphasize the work of the Legion for handicapped veterans. Encourage the employment of the handicapped. You may want to dramatize your concern by focusing attention to the aid of a recently returned handicapped Viet-Vet.

November November 11th is the 50th Anniversary of the Armistice. At Arlington National Cemetery, as well as other places around the nation, the Legion will honor the country's fallen heroes. Legionnaires should use this time to emphasize the Legion's role in keeping America free.

December Well-meaning groups everywhere will remember our servicemen in Vietnam. Keep in mind the thousands of men serving their country in other remote areas—Korea, Europe, Africa. A holiday greeting (be sure it's mailed in November) will bring a moment of cheer from the people back home.

The ADVANCE, February, 1968
A citizen of Distinction—the fifty consecutive year Legionnaire is the object of our attention during the month of March.

As The American Legion approaches the Fiftieth Anniversary of its founding, we should pause to honor those intrepid men who gave so much of themselves to the growth and success of the world's largest veterans organization. When the Legion was conceived in Paris, few could foresee the tremendous impact the organization would have on future generations of Americans. This month gives you an opportunity to call attention to our fifty year members, to their accomplishments, and to our Golden Anniversary which will officially begin later this year. Your 49th Birthday observance is the moment to present your longtime members with their "Golden 50" membership cards. It is a time for recognition and appreciation of their long service to God and Country. It can be a time for reunion—where contacts with Legionnaires of the past can be renewed, and, when new non-member eligibles can be invited to share our comradeship.
A birthday party with an important guest—your citizen of distinction—the fifty year Legionnaire—will afford your post an opportunity to show your community how the four great programs of The American Legion—Americanism, child welfare, rehabilitation and national security, as implemented by your post, have benefited your friends and neighbors.

Mr. Anniversary Chairman—this is your big chance to begin developing your Golden Anniversary program. Use this occasion as a steppingstone into the big year to come. Now is the time to start using some of the 50th Anniversary promotional aids. For example: Alert all of your business friends to the availability of the Pitney-Bowes Postage Meter Advertisements. Get them to use the ads in their mailing machines from now until the end of the observance. Contact the utilities, the banks and department stores—businesses that have large mailings and ask them to use the ads several times during the Anniversary year.

On March 15th, you can begin using the official 50th Anniversary stationery and envelopes. Procure the art for this colorful stationery from the National Adjutant.

Automobile decals and bumper stickers are available from National Emblem Sales as are various commemorative medals, medallions and distinctive jewelry. Start building interest and enthusiasm now by encouraging all Legionnaires, their families and their friends to display these promotional aids on their automobiles, places of business, and anywhere else that would attract public notice.

Get in touch with the newspaper, radio and television outlets in your town. Tell them about our 50th Anniversary. Ask them to give recognition to your fifty year members. Keep in mind that many companies publish magazines and newspapers for their employees and are always interested in human interest stories—your fifty year member, or some other member of the post might make an excellent feature for your company editors.

Tradition with a future aptly describes the Legion—and your post as it enters into the Golden Anniversary Year. On your big day, point out the ways your post has made significant contributions to the community during the last several decades. Emphasize that your post has been, and will continue to be, a partner in civic activities which benefit your hometown, the state and the nation. Bring to the attention of all, the achievements of individual Legionnaires and let your community know that it's great to be a Legionnaire!!

How do you read the newspaper? Most adult readers read first the front page, the sports or business pages and then the editorials where readers express ideas on diverse subjects through “Letters to the Editor.” Good letters, expressing meaningful thoughts about Legion programs will be used, read and will generate comment from a significant public.

Post members can write letters in the next 15 months to editors of local papers, employee, special interest or civic and religious publications. They will want to speak up for the Legion and its birthday and tell how the Legion serves as a good citizen in the community.
Station/Channel (........) extends its congratulations to The American Legion on its 49th Anniversary, March 15-17. On the eve of their Golden Anniversary, we thank the Legionnaires of (City) for a half century of dedicated service to the community, state and nation.

★ ★★★★★

This week marks the 49th birthday of The American Legion. Station/Channel (........) salutes (Name of Post) in this year's celebration will add to the festivities of some 16,000 community organizations of The American Legion throughout the nation and in several countries and territories overseas, by honoring (Full Names) upon their entrance into their fiftieth year of continuous service in the world's largest veteran's organization.

The American Legion was founded in Paris, France in the year 1919, shortly after the close of W.W. I, by representatives of the various outfits of the American Expeditionary Force. The organization now consists of veterans of W.W. I and II, the Korean War and the Vietnam era.

Post Commander (Last Name) reported that the Golden Anniversary Committee headed by (Full Name) will make the arrangements for the affair. Members of the Committee are: (Full Names).

Highlighting the observance will be a ceremonial dinner on the night of (Day and Date) at (Place) honoring fifty consecutive year Legionnaires, Commander (Last Name) said.

A portion of the birthday celebration will be devoted to a formal initiation of all new members. Vietnam veterans (Full Names) will join the ranks of The American Legion on the eve of its Golden Anniversary, which starts in the latter part of this year.

Legion Plans for 50th

........(Full Name), American Legion 50th Anniversary Chairman for (Name of Post) of (City) has announced tentative plans for the post's participation in The American Legion's 50th year observance.

During the period of observance, from August of 1968 through 1969, various segments of business, industry, education, civic, women's and youth groups, religious and community groups will be encouraged to join in a salute to the Legion and its birthday.

"The post will promote such programs as—the planting of a 'Freedom Tree' which will exemplify the sacrifices of American fighting men; the use of anniversary items in store windows and public places; the use of postage meter advertisements by businesses; and the use of sponsored advertisements during the celebration."

Chairman (Last Name) also mentioned that libraries might assemble collections of books and prints that portray the conflicts of the 20th century. Youth programs connected with the Legion are also prime targets of anniversary attention.
Shown on this page are the three new postage meter advertisements for the 50th Anniversary observance. These advertisements are available from Pitney-Bowes, Incorporated, Walnut and Pacific Streets, Stamford, Connecticut 06904, or from your local Pitney-Bowes Sales Office.

It is important that these advertisements start appearing on Legion mail early in 1968. We suggest that all Legion posts using postage metering equipment place their orders now to ensure prompt delivery of the plates.

All Legionnaires should make an effort to contact local business establishments using postage metering equipment for the purpose of placing our Anniversary advertisement on their machines. Particular attention should be given to public utilities, banks, department stores and other organizations which conduct mailings on a large scale. Most businessmen and large-scale mailers will be happy to purchase the advertisement as a public service gesture. Contact your local Pitney-Bowes representative and encourage him to make a special effort to promote our Anniversary advertisement. The local Legion Post and the Pitney-Bowes representative can make this program a meaningful part of our over-all publicity effort.

The meter advertisement plates illustrated above are available from Pitney-Bowes, Incorporated. The large size for the “R” line models or the 5300 series meters cost $15.25 each delivered. The small design for the DM or DM-3 series meters cost $10.25 each delivered. Please address all inquiries concerning the availability of postage meter advertisements to Pitney-Bowes.
It’s Great To Be A Legionnaire!

A MAJOR PART OF YOUR POST’S job during the 50th Anniversary is to tell the people in your community about The American Legion and its accomplishments. Each member of your post can help by speaking up for the Legion at every opportunity... and telling everyone that it’s great to be a Legionnaire.

But this is only half of the task. We must also utilize the mass communications media, your local newspaper, radio and television, company publications, billboard posters and other avenues that create public awareness. Be sure your post has an effective publicity-public relations organization. Whether one man or a committee, its task would be to keep the community informed about all your 50th Anniversary activities. Coordinate the development of 50th Anniversary plans with your P/R organization.

“Public Relations” means your relations and rapport with the community. Good public relations result from conscious, planned efforts for—a good impression—a good example—a good reputation! If the public has high respect for your post, your fellow townsmen will join with you in your anniversary activities. Put the post’s best foot forward and invite public attention to it.

Good public relations may determine the success or failure of the post anniversary program. Your public relations job will involve informing the community about the anniversary, creating a favorable climate for your membership campaign, publicizing the accomplishments of the Legion, and signifying the future role of your Legion post in your town. Pick up a copy of “Help For The Post Public Relations Officer.” It may provide solutions for many of your problems.

A Checklist For The Publicity-Public Relations Organization

☐ 1. Organize the post publicity team.

☐ 2. Set up a timetable for publicizing events.

☐ 3. Establish contacts with the news media.

☐ 4. Collect and report the results of your publicity effort.

Organize your publicity team first. Select members for their ability to follow through. Make certain that everyone knows his assignments and remind each well in advance of the event he is to cover.

Make a list of anniversary features. List the date, time and place of the event, release date, publicity contacts and special requirements. Put into chronological order and assign a publicity team member to one or more events. Give each one a copy of your timetable and maintain a master list noting the names of your team members and their events.

Establish contacts with local newspaper editors, feature writers and columnists, radio and television program directors, disc jockeys and newsmen at the earliest possible time. Meet with them personally to discuss anniversary news and feature stories. Don’t hesitate to use personal influence in establishing contacts. It opens many doors, but it won’t sell your story—that is your job!

An early start is necessary if you hope to develop a sponsored advertising program with local businessmen. Line up the support of your potential advertisers now. Ask them to participate in a sponsored ad campaign such as the “Postage Meter Advertisements.” For only a few dollars, users of Pitney-Bowes postage metering equipment can promote the anniversary for the entire observance. Contact the local Pitney-Bowes representative. He will help you sell his customers on the program. Sponsored advertising, with Legion friends participating, is a very effective way to reach the public with The American Legion story.

Advise everyone working on your post anniversary plans about the needs of your publicity job. All publicity material must be accurate and on time; this is of the utmost importance! Keep to your timetable!

Your post is trying hard to win recognition for its anniversary observance—your publicity program will achieve the community understanding you will need to improve the post’s public image. Your publicity effort will help bring in new members. Your job is of vital importance—now is the time to start pitching!
What Does Special Events Chairman Do?

To complete the post 50th Anniversary organization, the 50th Anniversary Chairman will need someone to be responsible for planning and executing the post anniversary events. The Post Special Events Chairman is an organizer... a do'er! He may be your second vice commander this year, or the guy who wants the job next year. Along with the Public Relations Chairman he will complete your basic 50th Anniversary team.

The effective Special Events Chairman, in cooperation with the 50th Anniversary Chairman and the Public Relations Chairman, will plan events that can create and sustain enthusiasm. His ideas, when put in motion, will be the vehicles upon which the Public Relations Chairman can promote publicity for the post's 50th Anniversary observance.

The Events Chairman should consider themes that will make the community more aware of your post and the part it plays as a good citizen. To help make his job easier, the 50th Anniversary Advance Planning Guide (which will be a part of each future issue) will contain ideas and suggestions to help him plan a successful post anniversary program.

Special Events Chairman's Checklist

1. Meet with the 50th Anniversary Chairman and the Public Relations Chairman to select special events. Look for tie-in possibilities with other happenings in your community.

2. Organize a Special Events Group to assist you. Assign tasks and a timetable for events as soon as possible.

3. Reserve facilities for your events early.

4. Make a list of names, addresses and phone numbers of your contacts. Give copies to the Anniversary Chairman and the Public Relations Chairman.

5. Work closely with the Public Relations Chairman. Your interests are his interests. Make sure he doesn't miss publicizing each important facet of your program.

In selecting events, be sure to start early, for many will require long-range planning. Have at least one all-out effort that will achieve community or statewide attention. Make a special effort to have potential new members attend your special events. Make your events interesting for everyone in your community.

Find out what is going on in your town before, during, and after the anniversary. Tie in your program with fairs, special shows, civic drives, conventions and other promotions. Use anniversary displays wherever possible. Consider entering a marching unit or a float in a parade.

Staff your events planning group with experienced Legionnaires. However, you will want to include young Legionnaires as well. Spread the work around, assigning specific jobs to each member of your team. Meet with them early and often. Use your timetable to make sure all jobs are completed according to schedule.

Plan your events early. Reserve your space and arrange for special requirements as soon as possible. Be sure the Anniversary Chairman and the Public Relations Chairman have a complete understanding of your plans.

Save all visual evidence of your work for the Anniversary Chairman. Your program will be a major part of his final report to the Post Commander.

The ADVANCE, February, 1968
HERE ARE 50 IDEAS that can contribute to a successful post 50th Anniversary observance:

1. Organize a youth forum. Invite experts to speak.
2. Select a hometown “American Legion Birthday Queen.”
3. Develop a “Going Away” kit for departing servicemen. Ask merchants to donate items.
4. Recognize hometown servicemen and returning vets.
5. Award Legion citation recognizing outstanding citizens of the community.
6. Have a “Good Neighbor” program in cooperation with a radio station to honor good citizens each day. Ask merchants to donate gifts. Present a Legion certificate to each.
7. Organize a “Youth Citizenship Day” when youth take honorary positions in city and county government.
8. Assist a wounded Viet-Vet. Make it a civic project.
9. Conduct a poll on a civic problem.
10. Issue a report on local Legion accomplishments.
11. Organize a town meeting to discuss civic problems.
12. Conduct a school on Americanism. Feature experts from various fields. Limit to evening sessions.
13. Write to state and national political representatives. Tell them of your plans and ask for their support.
14. Organize an “Americana Music Festival” and invite colleges, high schools and civic groups to bring their bands and glee clubs. Feature the 50th Anniversary March by Meredith Willson.
15. Refurbish or restore a war memorial.
16. Present The American Legion Story to libraries.
17. Have a weekly column in your newspapers.
18. Put Legion displays in public places.
19. Organize school assemblies on the citizenship theme.
20. Use the “God and Country” theme in summer church schools.
21. Ask merchants to display the 50th Anniversary emblem in store windows and in newspaper ads.
22. Have open houses or picnics for non-members and the general public.
23. Invite community leaders to a special meeting.
24. Celebrate your post organization. Invite VIP’s.
25. Establish or refurbish recreational centers for servicemen.
26. Ask editors to publish Legion editorial cartoons and mention Legion achievements on the editorial page.
27. Display 24-sheet billboard posters. Get at least one on each main traffic artery.
28. Sell newspapers one day. Get the publisher to donate the proceeds to a worthy cause.
29. Lead the fight to help school dropouts and under-achievers.
30. Install Legion signs with meeting times at the entranceways into your town.
31. Have a party for press, radio and television people.
32. Sponsor a special scholarship.
33. Sponsor a student poster contest.
34. Have a sidewalk art show.
35. Mark all Legionnaire grave sites.
36. Start a letter writing campaign to servicemen.
37. Spearhead a civic improvement or safety program.
38. Name a park, street, etc.—“The American Legion.”
39. Sponsor a “Battle of the Bands” for youth.
40. Have a special civic event for the “Old Timers.”
41. Improve your post home.
42. Put up street banners in the downtown area.
43. Use anniversary emblems on all Legion cars.
44. Adopt a military unit in Vietnam.
45. Organize a Speakers Bureau.
46. Plant a “Freedom Tree.”
47. Contact non-members and ask them to join the Legion.
48. Publicize Legion child welfare projects.
49. Ask radio and TV stations to use public service spots in honor of the Legion anniversary.
50. Back or lead a fund drive.
How To Sustain Interest And Enthusiasm

One of the ever-present problems facing the 50th Anniversary Chairman will be “How to sustain interest.” There is always the chance that your program may “burn itself out” before the observance ends. Keep in mind one of the main objectives of your planning—that is, to improve the rapport and understanding your community has for your post and The American Legion. You can build long-lasting good relations best with continuing activities which truly tell the public The American Legion story.

There are three basic factors which must be recognized in order for your program to maintain the interest and enthusiasm of your post, and your community. They are: (1) Participation; (2) Organization; and (3) Communication.

First—participation. Frequent scheduling of Anniversary events will help stimulate interest. Try to involve each post member not in just one event, but in a variety of events. Space out his responsibilities so that he will not be faced with working on two or three events in succession. An Anniversary event need not be big and splashy, requiring an all-out post effort. With good planning, a worthwhile event of real community interest may require only a few willing Legionnaires.

Second—organization. Surround yourself with willing, interested Legionnaires. With your help they will become an efficient team, helping you to plan and implement your post program. Give everyone a job, and then see to it he does it. Each theme within your observance should be designed to highlight an interesting facet of your post’s contributions to your community. Each meaningful event will create new interest and support, not only from the post membership, but from the public as well.

The third step—effective and planned communication. Everyone, inside or outside the Legion, must know what’s going on, what he or she is responsible for, when and to whom. You will need to have regular meetings with your planning group. You will be able to tell your post Anniversary story with the aid of newspapers, radio, television. Promotional aids, indoor and outdoor advertising, school assemblies and club meetings, postage stamps, cancellations, and postage meter ads are avenues of communication which should be used to inform and interest more people about the Legion and its 50th Anniversary.

Remember: “Nothing was ever accomplished without enthusiasm backed by hard work and sacrifice.” This has been the formula for the success of any American Legion endeavor. Its application belongs also to this 50th Anniversary observance.