

PROGRAMMING

FOR AMERICAN LEGION LEADERS



PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED BY MEMBERSHIP AND POST ACTIVITIES,
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS, THE AMERICAN LEGION, INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA



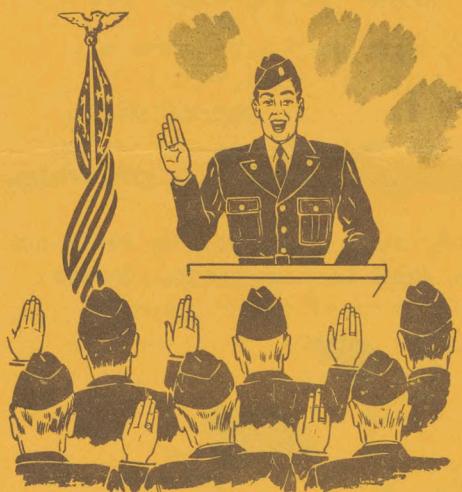
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HOW TO ORGANIZE A RITUAL TEAM:-

One of the best ways to build post prestige is to initiate all new members properly--according to the ritual described in the Manual of Ceremonies. Such a mass initiation should be held at least once a year at a post meeting open to the general public. With the help of a well trained ritual team you can have an "INITIATION NIGHT" meeting that will cause much favorable comment in the community.



Do it Right Do it with Ceremony

A lasting accomplishment for any post commander is the organization of a ritual team during his term of office. The following suggestions may be helpful in getting a ritual team organized.

FIRST STEP: Appoint a team Captain. He should have the complete responsibility to recruit, train and organize the team. It is important that he exercise the utmost discretion in the selection of team members. They should make the Manual of Ceremonies their American Legion bible.

SECOND STEP: Permanent parts should be assigned and team members instructed to memorize these roles. Six men will be required for the initiation team. In calling a tryout or audition meeting, the best qualified should be selected at that time. Each candidate for the team should read part of the Manual to denote clarity of voice, enunciation, expression and meaning given to the text.

Additional candidates should be assigned roles as substitutes or stand-ins for the regular members.

THIRD STEP: Training the team. Many practice sessions are necessary. Team should practice entire ceremony at each rehearsal, including marching into the hall, military movements on the floor, presentation and introduction of the team and posting of members to respective stations.

FOURTH STEP: Presentation. The team's first appearance should be on home grounds. Actual initiation of new members will give team confidence to present ritual in other posts throughout area.

SERVICE IS THE COIN OF COMMUNITY HELPFULNESS:-

If your American Legion post is to be a power for good it must spend the coin of community helpfulness.

All of your post activities should have a relationship to service to the community.



The unselfish community-minded American Legion post keeps a common-good project before the public continuously.

Each phase of community life has needs that must be met if your hometown is to be a better place in which to live. Examine those needs and fill them, if possible, by an American Legion service to the community campaign.

Typical services to the community could include: sponsoring Boy Scout Troop or Cub Pack; sponsoring American Legion Junior Baseball team; hobby show; accident prevention campaign; helping build a playground or swimming pool; providing ambulance or iron lung; founding a blood bank; erecting street signs, etc.

American Legionnaires, who are volunteers as draft board members, hospital fund raisers, civil defense workers, etc., are demonstrating they have that "sense of individual obligation to the community" we speak about in our preamble.

As a Post Commander you can take the lead in instigating such services to your community. Here's a few specific instances where The American Legion lent a hand:

A West Virginia post operated a teen-age canteen in their clubrooms for community youngsters at a cost of \$1,000 per year; used the meeting room for 4-H sessions, school activities, folk dancing, Rainbow Girls, square dances and jukebox dances. No other community center just like it. Chaperons were provided.

Post in Oregon sells tickets annually for a circus appearance. The purchasers turn back the tickets to the post, which are distributed by the child welfare agencies to more than 9,000 children, including 1,000 youngsters who receive their tickets from uniformed policemen. Local police rated this finest public relations.

In Maryland an American Legion post sponsors a hard of hearing clinic plus payment of tonsillectomies and appendectomies for indigent children. In one year the post paid for eight operations.



In Illinois one post contributed \$4,000 for building of a chapel at a Boy Scout camp.

A Pennsylvania post built six playgrounds in the town at a cost of \$10,000. The American Legion committee now attends all council meetings to see that the playgrounds are maintained.

A Massachusetts post donated its home to a church devastated by fire.

In Ohio a post provides a driver to take mentally retarded children to and from school.

A Virginia post purchased pediatric equipment for a general hospital ward.

A California post installed a direct telephone line from the bedside of a youngster unable to attend school.

It is not necessary to enumerate the many posts promoting Boy Scouting units--you should know more than 4,000 do so; more participate in the School Medal Award program recognizing 20,000 youths.

Other posts sponsor band concerts in their communities--organize 'learn to swim' programs--stage kiddies pet parades--hold summer camps--promote junior rifle teams.

But whether it's a project to repair toys for the kids of your town--to take the lead in a clean-up drive, or to provide manpower for the ground observer corps, The American Legion serves itself best when it best serves its community.

You will find by checking your membership records that in most instances your best membership totals were rolled up when your post was doing the most for your community.

Post prestige is the key to membership stability. When it is an honor to belong then membership enrollment remains steady.

Your American Legion has a proud record of service to the community, state and nation. Its membership represents a cross section of community life.

Help keep The American Legion a good name in your community by seeing to it that your post can be counted upon when there is a job to be done. In performing these services you'll reaffirm your belief "It's GREAT To Be An AMERICAN LEGIONNAIRE!"



GET ON THE FIRING LINE FOR AMERICA:-

"Education is a vital weapon in our fight against Communism," according to Lee Pennington, National Director of Americanism. "Accurate information is one of the basic requirements of an effective counter subversive activities program in your post. The FIRING LINE published by the Americanism Commission will keep your post chairman informed of all current activities in this field in addition to furnishing concrete suggestions for positive action," Pennington said.

Subscribe today. Use the handy subscription coupon.

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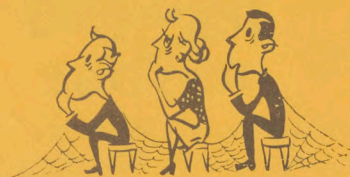
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Member Legion Post or
Auxiliary Unit _____

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